

**An ecological investigation of the willingness to communicate
(WTC) in English of adult migrant learners from Iran
in a New Zealand tertiary classroom**

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Abstract

Willingness to communicate in English is an “umbrella” concept encompassing a variety of individual factors which, when combined, describe a readiness to speak in the target language. Whether Willingness to Communicate (WTC) is a permanent trait or is modified by situational context has previously been investigated in various studies. More recently, the importance of using dynamic systems theory to describe the complex and interrelated properties of WTC has been revealed (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011). Moreover, the nested ecosystems model (van Lier, 2002) may be one means of describing a dynamic operating system such as WTC. A few WTC researchers have endeavoured to situate their subjects within such nested systems, in an effort to take full account of the various layers of context by which learners are influenced and affected. However, a combination of both these theoretical approaches has yet to be fully explored in the WTC research field.

As a result, this study used mostly qualitative methods to obtain data from ten adult Iranian migrants studying English in New Zealand, as well as their ten classroom teachers, in order to exemplify the nature of this dynamic system (WTC). Semi-structured and stimulated recall interviews were conducted several times with the participants and their teachers, after observations had taken place in their classrooms and a questionnaire completed. In order to create a more detailed picture of the participants’ WTC, it was designed as a longitudinal study carried out over a period of eighteen months and included an investigation of variables affecting WTC from outside the classroom, as well as past learning experience.

Findings suggest that a range of variables influenced the classroom WTC of these learners, both *external* factors (out of the students’ control), such as the teacher, texts and methods used, and class activities, as well as *internal* factors, such as self-perceived English-speaking competence, confidence, anxiety, motivation, and personality. Such antecedents were found to create individually different dynamic fluctuations in the levels of participants’ WTC. Thus, the inherent variability yet interconnectedness of a dynamic system was highlighted. In addition, two individual case studies, represented in an ecosystems framework, revealed the way in which various factors influenced their WTC through the porous nature of the four layers (i.e., *micro-*, *meso-*, *exo-*, and *macro-*).

Therefore, the contribution of this study of WTC is to explain how Dynamic Systems Theory can provide an ecological perspective, and thus more fully contextualise language learning and use, particularly for migrants. It extends the pyramid model of MacIntyre et al. (1998) to include an element of time as supported by ecosystems theory. It expands the scope of research to WTC *outside* the classroom and finally suggests a new extended definition of WTC to guide other researchers in the future.

Moreover, by revealing how contextual factors combine to enhance or inhibit students' WTC, the findings of this study encourage language teachers to understand their students as holistically as possible and to accommodate variations in their daily WTC, which could be the result of both *in-* and *out-of-class* influences. Such investigations into the WTC of L2 students, especially new migrants, are warranted, as, globally, migration has become a very prominent issue in many countries.

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|---|
| AH | At Home |
| AUT | Auckland University of Technology |
| BANA | British, Australasia and North American |
| CALL | Computer Assisted Language Learning |
| CDS | Complex Dynamic Systems |
| CDST | Complex Dynamic Systems Theory |
| CLT | Communicative Language Teaching |
| DipEL | Diploma in English Language |
| DST | Dynamic Systems Theory |
| EAL | English as Another Language |
| EAS | English for Academic Study |
| EFL | English as a Foreign Language |
| ELF | English as a Lingua Franca |
| ESE | Employment Skills English |
| ESL | English as a Second Language |
| ESOL | English for Speakers of another Language |
| ESP | English for Special Purposes |
| GLL | Good Language Learner |
| IAE | Introduction to Academic English |
| IELTS | International English Language Testing System |
| ILN5 | Intensive Literacy & Numeracy Level 5 |
| ILN6 | Intensive Literacy & Numeracy Level 6 |
| IT | Information Technology |
| L1 | First Language |
| L2 | Second Language |

| | |
|-------|---|
| LBC | Learning Beyond the Classroom |
| NZ | New Zealand |
| RQ | Research Question |
| S1 | Semester 1 |
| S2 | Semester 2 |
| S3 | Semester 3 |
| SA | Study Abroad |
| SEM | Structural Equation Modelling |
| SLA | Second Language Acquisition |
| SOLC | School of Language and Culture |
| SPCC | Self-perceived Communicative Competence |
| TESP | Tertiary, Secondary, Primary state education |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| unWTC | Unwillingness to Communicate |
| USA | United States of America |
| WTC | Willingness to Communicate |

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signature: Denise Cameron

Date: August 10, 2019

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to Dr Alexander Scobie (1939-2000), a scholar and an inspiration.

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The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám (1st ed.) (E. Fitzgerald transl.)

Quatrain LI.

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,

Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit

Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,

Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

زین پیش نشان بودنیا بوده است

پیوسته قلم ز نیک و بد فرسوده است

در روز ازل هر آن چه بایست بداد

غم خوردن و کوشیدن مایه سوخته است

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 The Issue

As an English language teacher with 40 years' experience in a New Zealand (NZ) university teaching pre-university classes, my "Eureka" or "aha" moment (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 62) came, when I heard a lecturer from a Tehran university present a paper at a conference in Hamilton (Vaezi, S., 2007). She described her difficulties in encouraging her students in Iran to communicate in English. In my classes, Iranian students, generally speaking, could be relied on for their willingness to communicate (WTC) orally to classroom interaction activities, so I began to investigate the possible reasons for these differences in WTC from the Iranian to the NZ context. If the context of their English learning had been radically changed (i.e., a move to NZ from Iran), then perhaps their motivation, and other personal factors which contribute to their WTC, could be affected either positively or negatively. Moreover, they were permanent migrants, who had made a commitment to remain in an English-speaking environment, and as refugees, which most of them were, they no longer had the possibility of returning to live in Iran. Therefore, they had a great deal more at stake than Study Abroad (SA) students or learners of English in 'Foreign Language' (EFL) settings where it is not needed for daily life transactions.

Thus, the WTC of these English learners may have been influenced by their past language learning experiences in Iran, present classroom experiences in NZ, and by experiences outside the classroom in both countries. In fact, Ushioda (2009, p. 220) has described learners as "persons-in-context" in a constantly evolving interaction with their environment, and advises that they need to be understood as holistically as possible. Such an understanding, however, I felt could only be achieved by an in-depth investigation over a prolonged period, using the viewpoints of the learners and their teachers, and contextualised in the educational and cultural milieux of both Iran and NZ.

In particular, the relative role and importance of communicative language teaching (CLT) methodology in the philosophy of Iranian and NZ teachers and administrators is significant when tracking the experiences of these learners. It has been assumed since the advent of CLT in the 1970s that oral communication should be a priority in the second language (L2)

classroom. As stated by MacIntyre and Charos in 1996, “recent trends toward a conversational approach to second language pedagogy reflect the belief that one must use the language to develop proficiency, that is, one must talk to learn” (p. 3). On the other hand, it could be argued that willingness to communicate may not lead to actual participation, and unwillingness to communicate may be due to a variety of factors possibly linked to cultural or personality attributes. Nevertheless, without actual observation of their WTC behaviour, we cannot know clearly whether a student would be capable of coping in English outside the classroom environment, which, for teachers in an English as a second language (ESL) environment, must be the ultimate aim.

To describe and compare the individual cases of these Iranian learners in NZ, it is necessary to use a framework which allows the different contexts where their WTC is now, and has been manifested in the past, to be revealed as interconnecting and interdependent. Therefore, an ecological approach based on the principles of dynamic systems theory seems the most appropriate way to examine such “a moving tapestry of interacting systems” (Larsen-Freeman, 2016a, p. xi). As a result, I decided to include in my investigation the *microsystem* of the classroom, the *mesosystem* of the learners’ past language learning experience and activities outside the classroom, the *exosystem* of curriculum design, and finally the *macrosystem* of the educational and sociocultural context of both Iran and NZ (see Bronfenbrenner, 1993; Peng, 2012).

The importance of context to descriptions of the construct of willingness to communicate has been significant since MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, and Noels (1998) defined WTC “as a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2” (p. 547). Since then, researchers and theorists have continued to strive for an adequate description or definition. Recently, Yashima, MacIntyre, and Ikeda (2018) described the precursors of L2 WTC:

Context, including topic, group-level affective state, ambience, other students’ reactions, and exquisitely contingent processes interact to trigger fleeting, momentary psychological reactions that include feeling self-confidence and a desire to communicate at a particular moment with a particular person (or persons)

– this is the definition of WTC and the final psychological step prior to L2 use. (p. 132)

1.2 Background

The notion of WTC arose out of studies into Unwillingness to Communicate as a personality trait (Burgoon, 1976). Willingness to communicate as an individual difference (ID) variable was originally conceived in the 1980s by McCroskey and Richmond as “an individual’s predisposition to initiate communication with others” (McCroskey, 1997, p. 77). Although they were referring to the speaker’s first language (L1), there have been two aspects of the willingness to communicate construct that have commonly been considered applicable to the second language classroom, namely, an individual’s level of apprehension about communicating, and how ready they are to communicate (MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément & Noels, 1998).

In the past, WTC was regarded as an enduring, trait-like disposition, but more recently it has been recognised as dynamic with both transient and enduring characteristics (e.g., Cao & Philp, 2006; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011; Pawlak, Mystkowska-Wiertelak, & Bielak, 2016). In fact, Dörnyei (2010a) has dismissed as an “idealized myth”, the notion that individual differences (IDs) in learners are stable and monolithic traits (p. 252). Instead they display “a considerable amount of variation from time to time and from situation to situation” (p. 252). Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in the L2 has been regarded as one of these variables or IDs since its initial conception more than two decades ago. However, the key question, which has continued to be a topic of WTC research since its conception, is whether it is a personality-based, trait-like predisposition which remains constant over different communication situations, or whether it is situational, contextual, and open to change.

This exploration of language learner characteristics or individual differences has been a tradition in second language studies since the 1970s (Dörnyei, 2005). It was suggested by MacIntyre and Noels (1994) that this type of research was originally prompted by the quest to identify the strategies of a “good language learner” (p. 269). In 1994, however, MacIntyre and Noels predicted that research into the effects of single variables would be replaced by

future studies which would have an “increased sensitivity to various learner contexts and goals” (p. 280). Perhaps as a result of this, in 1998, MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, and Noels collaborated in the creation of a heuristic model, which related specifically to the combination of variables they regarded as contributing to WTC.

This Pyramid Model of WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998) was the first structural representation of the components of L2 WTC, divided into both situational and stable features, or ‘Individual Differences’. It integrated psychological, linguistic, educational, and communicative dimensions previously studied independently, in order to predict a willingness to converse in the L2 which would lead finally to *L2 Use* at the top of the pyramid, and is famously described by Dörnyei and Ottó (1998, p. 56) as “crossing the Rubicon” of communication (i.e., the point of no return).

The elements of this pyramid, whether individually or in various combinations, remained the foci for empirical WTC research over the next decade, as researchers endeavoured to identify a range of affective/individual and social contextual variables (or individual differences = IDs) which contributed to WTC. The intertwining threads or themes of WTC research since the creation of MacIntyre et al.’s (1998) model appear to cover five major areas: an investigation into the variables which contribute most or least to WTC; a discussion as to whether these are trait or situational; WTC inside the classroom learning environment; WTC in a range of different cultural or geographical contexts; and more recently the application of a variety of psychological and behavioural theories to describe or explain WTC more comprehensively.

1.3 Previous research

Subsequent to the publication of MacIntyre et al.’s (1998) model, a number of WTC research studies were carried out by MacIntyre and his associates, primarily in the context of French immersion and non-immersion classes in Canada. Using correlational analysis and a WTC scale created by McCroskey and Baer (1985), they revealed that the variables which were the strongest predictors of L2 WTC were a lack of communication anxiety and a high level of perceived communicative competence (also termed self-perceived competence, or self-perceived communicative competence – SPCC) (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; MacIntyre, Baker,

Clément, & Donovan, 2003a & b). These are the two components of L2 self-confidence (MacIntyre, 2007).

Tests of MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model in EFL contexts, where the L2 (i.e., English) is spoken only in the classroom, or with SA (Study Abroad) participants who are temporarily in an English-speaking country, have now been carried out in several East Asian and Middle Eastern countries. As with the Canadian studies, quantitative methods based on self-report questionnaires (as developed by McCroskey, 1992 or MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod, 2001) were generally used to analyse the data collected. In this EFL context there have been studies in Korea (Kim, 2004); China (Peng, 2007a); and Japan (Matsuoka, 2008; Yashima, 2002). Turkish students of English were investigated by Çetinkaya (2005) and Iranians by Ghonsooly, Khajavy, and Asadpour (2012). As well as the factors incorporated in the original model of MacIntyre et al. (1998), such as motivation, self-confidence, personality, and attitudes, a range of other variables, such as international posture, beliefs, the role of teachers and interlocutors, and particular social and learning contexts, have also been identified as possible influences on WTC. However, there have been few studies which place the characteristics of a learner's WTC in a wider context beyond the classroom, and the narrow focus of quantitative studies means that only predetermined variables of WTC are investigated.

Although quantitative WTC studies were previously in the majority, in the last few years qualitative or mixed methods investigations have become more common. This development was predicted by Yashima in 2012: "As the field develops and matures, L2 WTC research is likely to experience considerable methodological innovation and diversification, as researchers gradually move away from the field's quantitative origins" (p. 130). Rather than focussing on pre-selected factors, which may or may not affect participants' WTC, qualitative or mixed method investigations have painted a more holistic picture of learners in their environment or context, and made it possible to discover why these factors are significant for particular individuals (see Cao, 2011; Eddy-U, 2015; MacIntyre, Burns, & Jessome, 2011; Syed & Kuzborska, in press; Yue, 2016; Zarrinabadi, Ketabi, & Abdi, 2014). Common methods employed by researchers have been focussed essays, interviews, and observations, in combination with questionnaires such as those also administered in quantitative studies. Moreover, the opportunity to study and observe learners' changes in

WTC over a longer period of time for some qualitative researchers (e.g., Bamfield, 2014; Lyons, 2014) has begun to produce a more detailed portrait of learners' WTC rather than just a hasty sketch.

1.4 Theory

In terms of theory, certain features of WTC have been viewed as 'dynamic' and situational since the creation of MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) original construct, but the label, 'dynamic system', has only very recently been applied to the WTC construct. Gregersen and MacIntyre (2013, pp. 211–212) describe WTC as "an element in a dynamic system – being worked upon and working with other influences", such as anxiety, beliefs, cognitive abilities, motivation, language learning styles and strategies. Moreover, Mulvaney (2015) regards WTC as a "situationally emergent behavioral intention, rather than as a generalized trait-like disposition" (p. 50). Therefore, "WTC can be viewed as something which *emerges* in relation to the conditions of the system in which it is nested" (p. 55).

A number of recent WTC researchers have used this CDST (complex dynamic system theory) to explain the phenomena they have observed in regard to their participants (e.g., Cameron, D., 2015; Eddy-U, 2015; Yashima et al., 2018; Yue, 2014). Further investigation of the suitability of this theory to describe and explain WTC is necessary, particularly when some recent theorists claim that "abstract phenomena (e.g., L2 proficiency, L2 motivation) differ from systems because they do not produce an outcome by themselves, and must first be located within an agent who experiences and acts on them" (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2016, p. 5). Such a claim could be levelled against WTC, although the agency of the learner should be an integral part of any research into the WTC phenomenon.

Other behavioural and psychological theories have been referred to in order to explain the construct of WTC, e.g., socio-educational theory, action control theory, expectancy value theory, self-determination theory, and theory of planned behaviour (see Cao, 2014; MacIntyre & Blackie, 2012; MacIntyre & Doucette, 2010; Yashima, 2009; Zhong, 2013). It is unlikely that any one theory or model can explain all aspects of WTC but they all seem to fit broadly under the canopy of dynamic systems theory (see de Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007), which sees language as a complex adaptive system and "language evolution as a dynamic process, characterized by continuous change" (Larsen-Freeman, 2012, p. 75). As suggested

by MacIntyre and Blackie (2012, p. 541): “It is important to gain an understanding of the language learner as a person, with multiple competing (sometimes conflicting) motives and priorities, using the many conceptual tools we have at hand.” As a result, it may be possible to interpret the findings of this study using a variety of different lenses.

Although both Dörnyei (2009a) and Larsen-Freeman (2012) have suggested that finding an appropriate methodology for *researching* complex dynamic systems is not straightforward, the ecosystems model may be one means of *describing* a dynamic operating system such as WTC. Ecology refers to the “study of the relationships between all the various organisms and their physical environment. It’s a complex and messy field of study about a complex and messy reality” (van Lier, 2002, p. 144). It describes the complex interaction between an individual and the surrounding environmental characteristics. A few WTC researchers have endeavoured to situate their subjects within such nested systems, in an effort to take full account of the various layers of context by which learners are influenced and affected (e.g., Cao, 2014; Kang, S.-J., 2005; Peng, 2012; Yashima et al., 2018). In turn, these systems co-adapt to each other so that the various elements of the ecological model interconnect and intertwine, and also operate on different timescales (see Cao, 2011; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, L., 2008a & b; Mercer, 2015). Therefore, a case study approach as adopted by this investigation was considered to be an appropriate way to highlight the interplay between WTC variables and the learners’ social, cultural, and academic contexts on a more long-term basis.

Yashima et al.’s (2018, p. 119) suggestion that WTC is “a dynamically changing” phenomenon which “can be conceptualized on different timescales” also provides an answer to the perennial question as to whether WTC is a trait, state, or situational construct. They describe the WTC of learners in the L2 classroom as a combination of trait-like characteristics developed through past learning experiences interacting with “contextual contingent factors” which emerge in the process of acquisition in this environment (p. 119). Unfortunately, most researchers in the WTC field, as a result of the methodology used (i.e., quantitative questionnaires and short-term studies), have only been able to provide a “snapshot” of their participants’ learning experiences (Schumann, 2015, p. xv). Longitudinal investigations are rare, particularly those lasting more than a university semester, so the possibility of observing changes in the WTC of learners over a prolonged

period, as suggested by CDS theorists, has not yet been fulfilled. Some exceptions are Zhong (2015) and Cao (2009a), who followed the progress of their students' WTC over 18 and 20 weeks respectively in New Zealand; Edwards and Roger (2015) who tracked their participant for two years in Australia; and Derwing, Munro, and Thomson (2008) and Derwing and Munro (2013), who monitored the same two migrant groups in Canada for fluency and WTC for seven years. As could be predicted, some characteristics of WTC fluctuated (situational and state) and some (trait) remained the same.

Another aspect of timescale exploration, which relates to both CDS theory and nested systems and has not often been employed by WTC investigators, is the significance of learners' past L2 learning experience, whether in their own country, or in the case of migrants, their previous country of residence. It has been suggested that such experiences, particularly if they are negative, can have an effect on the present WTC of learners (see Cameron, D., 2013, 2015; Liu, M. 2005; Lyons, 2014; Peng, 2012). Traditionally, however, as a result of the use of standard WTC questionnaires, subjects have only been asked about theoretical present or future willingness (e.g., MacIntyre et al., 2001; McCroskey & Richmond, 1987). Moreover, previous opportunities for the learners' use of the L2 *outside* the classroom have not been examined.

Although some researchers have focussed on learners' utilisation of the target language beyond the classroom and incorporated questions on this aspect of WTC in their questionnaires or interviews (e.g., Cao, 2011; Gallagher, 2013; Peng, 2014), it seems especially important in the context of migrants learning the language of the community in which they intend to permanently settle. Up to this point in time, few studies have been made of the WTC of this type of participant who, unlike a temporary sojourner such as a Study Abroad student, is likely to be motivated to learn for both instrumental and integrative reasons (Dörnyei, 2005). However, Zhong (2013) found that, although a range of linguistic and socio-cultural factors affected the WTC of her Chinese New Zealand residents, the sizeable Auckland Chinese community in which they lived made it possible for them to cope, even if they spoke only a little English outside the classroom. In fact, in 2013, there were 118,230 Chinese living in Auckland, a city of 1.3 million (Stats NZ, n.d. b). Edwards and Roger (2015), on the other hand, discovered in their 'good language learner', a Mauritian in Australia, a strong desire to integrate. In these cases what made the difference?

Unlike the Chinese migrants of Zhong's (2013) study, the Iranian community of Auckland is relatively small in number, possibly no more than 2500, and this makes up 76% of their total population in New Zealand (Stats NZ, n.d. a). There are a few restaurants and shops which cater to their members, but in dealings with most services, a reasonable level of English is required. Iranian students were selected for this study as they made up a substantial group in the mixed nationality classes at the university where I teach, and all had had English language learning experiences in Iran before migrating to NZ, so their past and present WTC could be compared. Their previous relatively high levels of education in Iran may have encouraged them to take up further study in NZ (see Chapter 3, Table 3.2 below). In fact, Iranian students' numbers are increasing exponentially all over the world, especially at PhD level (Ardavani & Durrant, 2015; Papi & Hiver, in press), so their nature and needs as an educational group are significant for teachers, especially at tertiary levels.

In Iran itself, there has been a very recent proliferation of mostly quantitative WTC studies of EFL learners published in English language journals, based on questionnaires by early researchers such as MacIntyre et al. (2001), and McCroskey (1992), as well as some locally produced versions (e.g., Baghaei, 2011; Khatib & Nourzadeh, 2015). Links have been made between WTC and language learning orientations (Zarrinabadi & Abdi, 2011); context and interlocutor (Barjesteh, Varseghi, & Neissi, 2012); openness to experience and self-confidence (Ghonsooly, Khajavy, & Asdapour, 2012); motivation, shyness, and teacher immediacy (Fallah, 2014); instrumental and integrative motivation (Ghanbarpour, 2014); instructors, age, and gender (Amiryousefi, 2018); and corrective feedback (Tavakoli & Zarrinabadi, 2018); emotions and enjoyment (Khajavy, MacIntyre & Barabadi, 2018). However, no reports have been published so far specifically targeting the WTC of this nationality or cultural group in other countries.

Although there have been many investigations into the WTC, or rather unWTC, of East Asian students in Japan, China, and Korea (e.g., King, 2013a & b, 2014; Liu, M., & Jackson, 2008; Liu, Y., & Park, 2012), it is unclear whether their reticence is the result of personal factors, such as past language learning experiences and classroom atmosphere, or underlying cultural traits. Peng in her study of the WTC of Chinese students gives particular emphasis to the cultural aspect of L2 learning, although she emphasises that culture too is a dynamic entity which is "fluid and ever-evolving" (2012, p. 204).

Whether it is appropriate in terms of research ethics or cultural philosophy to focus on a particular ethnic or language group, such as the Farsi-speakers from Iran in this study, could be debated. However, it does allow for some homogeneity, which can foreground any differences more clearly. In support of this, Wang (1999, p. 4) has suggested that: “The choice of homogenous first language (L1) controls for the possible effects of L1 as well as cultural effects on [the participants’] experiences and perceptions of learning ESL”. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that in terms of culture, Iran is quite diverse, due to its size and the presence of large ethnic groups such as Turks and Kurds. However, according to Sharifian (2013, pp. 92–93), “[t]he country as a whole, however, still revolves around a predominantly Persian culture, which is very much unique and indeed quite different from the cultures of its neighbouring countries”, and “[o]ne of the bearers of the Persian culture is the Persian language itself”. Moreover, Kramsch (1998) suggests that:

Culture can be defined as membership in a discourse community that shares a common space and history, and common imaginings. Even when they have left the community, its members may retain, wherever they are, a common set of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting. These standards are what is generally called their ‘culture’. (p. 10)

Therefore, even though the participants in this study had emigrated from their homeland to settle in New Zealand, it could be expected that they still shared certain values and experiences, particularly related to past language learning and educational provision, which are the areas especially relevant to this investigation of their present and past WTC in English. The findings of previous studies I carried out into the WTC of Iranian participants from the same university also suggested that this area of research was worthy of further in-depth investigation (Cameron, D., 2013, 2015).

1.5 Gaps

In summary, the areas which I have focussed on in my investigation are the use of qualitative methods, which are more appropriate to describe and analyse the past and present language learning experiences of Iranian learners who have migrated to NZ. I have used Dynamic Systems Theory to explain this phenomenon and the structure of an

ecosystems framework to illustrate my findings. In a longitudinal study, I have expanded the area of investigation to the use of English as an L2 outside the classroom and included the views of teachers as well as those of the researcher and the students themselves.

1.6 Aim

Therefore, the overarching question which I am addressing in this study is: To what extent is the WTC of Iranian migrant learners of English in NZ a dynamic phenomenon both inside and outside the classroom and when viewed as a past and present experience over an extended period of time? As a focus for my study, I framed four research questions as outlined below.

1.7 Research Questions

- RQ1** *What are the factors which influence Iranian learners' WTC inside and outside the classroom, in Iran and in NZ, in their, and their teachers' opinions?*
- RQ2** *How do the learners' levels of WTC vary from their classroom in Iran to their classroom in NZ?*
- RQ3** *How do the learners' levels of WTC vary from one semester to another in NZ?*
- RQ4** *How can the factors affecting learners' levels of WTC be interpreted within an ecosystems framework?*

1.8 Methodology & Design

In total, 10 students and their 10 class teachers took part in this 2½ year study in a NZ university. The students' pre-university classes covered the four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, but this study focussed on their willingness to communicate in the *speaking* aspect of their course. They were interviewed and observed over a period of 12-18 months and up to three different class levels. The participants' class teachers were also interviewed to provide another viewpoint of their students' in-class WTC behaviour, in order to supplement my perspective as the researcher/observer of classes.

Data were generated using four different data collection methods. The first was a questionnaire for the learners, which was adapted from Cao and Philp's (2006) WTC scale.

As a second source of data, an observation schedule, was used by the researcher/observer in the participants' English classes to track the learners' WTC behaviour in class. Stimulated recalls were the third method used. Immediately after each observation, the learners were interviewed by the researcher in order to discuss their reactions to the written data collected by the observer, and the recordings of their spoken contributions to class. Semi-structured interviews conducted by the researcher provided a fourth method of collecting data. As a result, the learner participants were interviewed individually by the researcher at the beginning and end of each semester. Interviews with the participants' classroom teachers were conducted at the end of each semester to enable them to comment more fully on their learners' WTC.

As the transcriptions of the semi-structured interviews with teachers and learners were completed and examined carefully over the period of 18 months, emerging themes were identified. The goal was to create preliminary categories as a framework for analysis. These categories were modified or replaced as the analysis progressed. The key was to recognise and identify patterns (Yin, 2003).

Finally, the data were represented and visualised. As an ecological approach had been taken in the design of this study, Bronfenbrenner's (1993) four ecosystems were used as a descriptive framework for the findings, that is, describing the effects on learners' WTC of the *microsystem* of the classroom where their individual cognitive and affective characteristics come into play, the *mesosystem* of learners' outside class activities, and the external factors which influence them, such as their past experience, the *exosystem* of curriculum design and assessment, and the *macrosystem* of the social, educational and cultural systems of NZ and Iran.

1.9 Significance

The possible contribution of this study to the development of theory, validation of and extension to existing findings, and enhancement of pedagogical practice is discussed below.

1.9.1 Contribution to theory

As can be seen in recent publications incorporating psychological theories in an analysis of WTC studies such as Dynamic Systems, Action Control, Self-Determination, Planned

Behaviour, Self-Efficacy etc., this area of language learning research is continuing to evolve. The application of Complex Dynamic Systems Theory and the use of nested ecosystems to create a framework for the results of this study appeared to be appropriate vehicles to examine and present the WTC of these participants. In fact, according to Block (1996), language learning and “the workings of the human mind are far too complex to be understood by one theory alone” (p. 78). To complete this task this effectively, the whole context of the participants’ learning experience needed to be explored, both their present and past classroom contexts, as well as the wider context of the society which they had migrated to, as well as the one which they had left behind in their country of origin.

1.9.2 Contribution to the field of knowledge

Although previous researchers have endeavoured to isolate various individual factors which affect a learner’s WTC, this study reveals other variables which are pertinent to its participants in their specific context. In fact, a more holistic approach, which describes WTC as an interaction between an individual and surrounding contextual characteristics, was considered to be appropriate in this case, because from a complexity perspective “we cannot separate the learner or the learning from context when we measure or explain SLA” (Larsen-Freeman, 2012, pp. 79–80). Thus, the picture has been broadened rather than a completely new one painted. The largely qualitative approach of this study could not measure the comparative strengths or correlations of individual variables, as SEM modelled studies have in the past. However, the ‘stories’ of the cases chosen for in-depth investigation should provide valuable insights for other researchers and teachers in terms of understanding the unique learning context which each individual student brings to the learning process, as a result of his or her differing experiences and history (Larsen-Freeman, 2012).

1.9.3 Contribution to pedagogy

According to MacIntyre and Doucette (2010), “WTC is a necessary part of becoming fluent in a second language, which is the ultimate goal of many L2 learners” (p. 169). It is certainly likely to be an important goal for migrants to a new country. Therefore, the more their English language teachers understand the nature of their WTC, and the factors that have influenced this characteristic, the more they can assist their students to become

communicatively competent. If the styles of teaching and classroom interaction patterns are significantly different from those which they have experienced in their country of origin, they will need to go through a period of adjustment, which, in itself, may be a cause of language anxiety. Minimising this anxiety will enhance their 'state of readiness' to communicate in English. Consequently, this study encourages teachers to view their students as individuals, possibly with an already existing history of language learning, which may affect their participation in their NZ classroom. It reveals potential differences in the students' present and past WTC as a result of their levels of exposure to CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) methods and approaches, since according to recent researchers, CLT methods are still not widely practised in Iran (see Akbari, 2015; Ghonsooly, Khajavy, & Asadpour, 2012; Hassaskhah, Mahdavi Zafarghandi, & Fazeli, 2015; Kennedy, 2015; Papi & Abdollahzadeh, 2012; Yaghoubinejad, Zarrinabadi, & Nejadansari, 2017). The Iranian students in this study are also permanent migrants to NZ, which means that their motivation and WTC could be different from those of learners who are studying English for academic and vocational purposes, as in previous studies conducted in EFL contexts (e.g., Japan, China, and Korea), and Study Abroad students who are returning to their own country after a short period of time.

Since this university has a large number of domestic students for whom English is a second language, both in this School of Language and Culture, and also in many other degree programmes, new information for teachers which may assist them to cater more effectively for these students can only be beneficial. In terms of generalisability, many educational institutions around the Western world have English language classes for permanent migrants, so this study may contribute to their understanding of the WTC of such students, and Iranians, in particular.

1.10 Structure of thesis

This thesis comprises eight chapters. Following this introductory chapter, **Chapter 2** briefly reviews the history of WTC research, its definition, and the methods of measuring WTC commonly used by past researchers. Key empirical studies of WTC related to individual differences, dynamic systems theory, and ecosystems theory are reviewed and discussed. As context is an important feature of such systems, the educational and cultural systems of

both Iran and NZ are compared. Gaps in previous research as presented in this chapter are identified and the research questions framed which form the basis of this study.

Chapter 3 describes the methodological approach and procedure for this qualitative investigation. It elaborates on the research questions raised at the end of Chapter 2 and then gives details of the design of the study, providing reasons why a multiple case study was chosen. After describing the data collection process, it explains how the data analysis was carried out and the findings were revealed. Issues of trustworthiness and ethics are also examined.

Following a cross-case analysis of the ten participants, **Chapter 4** and **Chapter 5** outline the key findings as they relate to the *Research Questions 1-3*. Chapter 4 focuses on identifying the salient variables which affect the participants' levels of WTC, while Chapter 5 explores the variation in their levels of WTC from Iran to NZ, and from one class to another in NZ.

Chapter 6 presents two in depth case studies in the form of an ecological framework, from *micro-* to *macrosystems*, which illustrates the holistic nature of WTC and the need to see the construct not as an isolated set of psychological variables, but as part of the complex interrelated picture of a language learner. These findings provide a response to *Research Question 4*.

Chapter 7 discusses the findings reported in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, in relation to theory and previous empirical research as well as classroom practice.

Chapter 8 provides a conclusion to this report, summarising the main findings of the study, while revealing its contribution to theory and the field of knowledge, as well as providing pedagogical recommendations that may assist language teachers to foster the willingness to communicate of their learners.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature both theoretical and empirical which relates to the main areas of interest in this study of willingness to communicate (WTC) in another language.

First, in Section 2.2, a brief historical background is given to explain the notion of willingness to communicate (WTC) as a concept and the evolution of its definition in SLA (Second Language Acquisition). Definitions of the construct and measures used to ascertain levels of WTC are then evaluated. A discussion follows of the main methods used to measure this “behavioural intention” (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996, p. 17) in a variety of communication contexts.

Since the 1990s, many researchers in this field have attempted to describe the links between a range of personal factors and their positive or negative influences on learners’ WTC. Therefore, Section 2.3 provides a general background into individual differences in SLA, in order to provide the historical and theoretical context for research into willingness to communicate (WTC). This is followed by the key theoretical studies which have related such variables to the willingness to communicate (WTC) phenomenon. A survey of empirical studies which have investigated such factors is presented, both inside and outside the classroom, and in Iran, NZ, and elsewhere. Learners’ perceptions of their own WTC as well as their teachers’ views are examined where they feature in the literature.

Section 2.4 focuses on the question as to whether learners’ levels of WTC vary or are constant, a topic of research which has been the subject of debate since the identification of this construct in the 1980s. The question is whether this phenomenon is purely contextual, or the result of a stable personality trait which extends to multiple situations. In other words, is WTC a dynamic or trait human characteristic? From a theoretical stance, Dynamic Systems Theory is presented as a possible explanation for such variation, and the empirical studies which have used this theory as a basis for investigating WTC are reviewed. Reasons for variation in WTC, such as a change in learning context, particularly related to time and geographical situation, and its influence on WTC are also highlighted in such studies.

In Section 2.5, a possible solution to the question of how to interpret and represent the situational or contextual nature of the WTC construct is discussed. Ecosystems theory and the use of the ecosystems framework is considered in relation to the positioning of the L2 learner as a ‘person-in-context’ (Ushioda, 2009). As a result, previous empirical studies which have taken this ecological approach to represent the interaction of the many variables affecting learners’ WTC are analysed and reviewed.

At the end of this chapter in Section 2.6, the overall aims of this study are outlined, and four research questions are raised in response to the gaps identified in past theoretical and empirical research. The application of the chosen theory and methodology for this study is then explained and justified.

2.2 WTC - definition and measurement

2.2.1 Definitions of WTC

The concept of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in an L2 developed from studies in the 1980s by McCroskey and his associates into the individual difference variable – Unwillingness to Communicate in *a first language (L1)*. They described WTC in the **L1** as “a personality construct” and therefore a trait-level variable (McCroskey & Richmond, 1987, p. 129). However, even they conceded that context and situation can have an effect: “Willingness to communicate, then, is probably to a major (though as yet undetermined) degree situationally dependent. Nevertheless, individuals exhibit regular willingness-to-communicate tendencies across situations” (p. 129).

When this construct was adopted by MacIntyre and Charos (1996) for research into *second language (L2)* speaking and learning, they introduced the notion that other personal variables, such as motivation, lack of speaking anxiety, and perceptions of language proficiency, influence the decision to speak. Importantly, they also emphasised the role of context: “the path from context to willingness to communicate indicates that increased opportunities for interaction directly affect one’s willingness to communicate” (p. 17).

MacIntyre et al. (1998) went even further to suggest that such opportunities should, or even *must* be provided in L2 education, as WTC was “the primary goal of language instruction” (p. 545). However, such a strong claim may reflect the prevailing Communicative Language

Teaching (CLT) approach at that time and a less dogmatic acceptance of the different learning styles and strategies of students may represent a more current view (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Lightbown & Spada, 2013). MacIntyre et al. (1998) also described WTC as “a behavioural intention”, expressed by the statement: “I plan to speak up, given the opportunity” (p. 548). Their definition of WTC as “a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2” (p. 547) is valuable for researchers because it suggests that even if the opportunity to communicate is presented, WTC may not necessarily translate into action. Thus, the phenomenon may occur of students in class who apparently have the ability to participate in spoken activities but choose not to at a particular time, or conversely, students who seem less able are nevertheless keen to contribute. Such behaviour focuses attention on the possible lack of connection between proficiency or competency and actual spoken performance. Therein lies the problem for WTC researchers who are trying to measure a ‘willingness’, which can only be self-reported or evidenced in the act of communication itself.

However, most theorists and researchers appear to share the goal of identifying possible contextual variables, which, singly or in combination, may have a greater or lesser influence on the individual’s WTC. This knowledge may also lead to a clearer understanding of the nature of their WTC in a particular context or moment in time. Therefore, the ‘pyramid’ model of MacIntyre et al. (1998), which included 30 of these linguistic, communicative, and social psychological factors, and suggested a possible relationship between them, provided an early and major contribution to this aspect of WTC research (see Section 2.3.2 below).

In 2005, Dörnyei (one of MacIntyre’s 1998 associates) also recognised the possible gap between an individual’s L2 competence and actual use of the language and concluded that a range of psychological, linguistic, and contextual variables formed a layer of mediating factors between theoretical ability and practice. Therefore, he described L2 WTC as:

...a composite ID [individual difference] variable that draws together a host of learner variables that have been well established as influences on second language acquisition and use, resulting in a construct in which psychological and linguistic factors are integrated in an organic manner. (p. 210)

However, he saw the need for more research into the interrelationships between these variables and “the role of time and temporal fluctuation” (p. 210).

By 2007, MacIntyre had built on the earlier notion of WTC as a behavioural intention by describing an individual’s level of WTC as a precursor to a *volitional* act, where a decision is made to speak (or not) at a particular moment. The variables which affect this behaviour had previously been described as ‘trait’ (more long-term personal characteristics), ‘situation-specific’, or related to a person’s ‘state’ of mind at a particular time. His focus, however, was on “moment-to-moment choices ... such as choosing to speak up or to remain quiet” (p. 569). He likened these influences to driving and restraining forces (cf. Lewin, 1951) causing the participant to approach or avoid communication in an L2. He concluded that: “if we examine the process of creating a WTC at a specific time with a specific person, we see a fascinating, complex process” (p. 573).

Although MacIntyre et al.’s (1998) definition had included the interlocutor as an essential part of the dialogue where WTC could be manifested, it was MacIntyre et al. (2011) who made it clear (as the earlier ‘pyramid’ model had suggested) that WTC should be regarded as “a socially constructed, dialogic process” (p. 93) and not just an individual difference variable. Thus, it follows that the social context as well as the internal attributes of the participant are equally worthy of research. In fact, Yue (2016) expands the notion of L2 WTC to “a process of becoming ready to engage in meaningful communication with the *other* [emphasis added]” (p. 275).

Over the last two decades, variations on MacIntyre and his associates’ definition of WTC as a behavioural act leading to an act of volition have not added significant changes to this interpretation, but, as one of the most recent to date, Gallagher (2019) sums up the current approach of many WTC researchers in regard to defining WTC:

... despite being originally regarded as an individual difference, one’s L2 WTC may nonetheless vary from one setting to another. L2 WTC is therefore also seen as a momentary readiness to speak up, conditioned by changing psychological states and situational variables that combine and interact to push a person to use the L2, or, alternatively, to suppress actual communication. (p. 196)

To summarise, WTC has variously been regarded as the ultimate goal of L2 learning and teaching, an emergent behavioural intention, a culmination of volitional behaviour, or even an 'umbrella' term to describe the effect of a constellation of variables or antecedents which combine to drive an L2 learner to contribute to a communication event at a particular point in time. What is important is that, from the beginning, WTC was regarded as a contextually dependent social phenomenon, and this significant aspect of the construct is reflected in the methods I have chosen to investigate its nature.

In this study, I report only on those variables which, for my participants in the contexts of Iran and NZ, inside and outside the classroom, affected their WTC either positively or negatively, as well as identifying variations in the levels of their WTC in both geographical situations. I also describe the ecological background of some of the situations where they were able or unable to show their willingness to communicate in English, as members of society in their previous country of residence, and now in their new country of migration.

In defining WTC for the purposes of my study, I draw on the work of previous researchers, as discussed above, to acknowledge that it is a construct which describes an individual's readiness to speak given an appropriate opportunity or context, and is influenced by a range of particular linguistic, psychological, and social variables. The longitudinal nature of my investigation allowed me to probe the data for both trait and situational characteristics which my participants felt were influential on their levels of WTC, both in the past in Iran and now in NZ. These specific influences on my participants are revealed in my Findings Chapters 4-6 below and as a result I have extended this definition in the Conclusion Chapter 8, Section 8.4.2.

2.2.2 Measurement of WTC

The measurement of **L2** WTC has largely been based on McCroskey and Baer's (1985) 20 item scale, originally developed for **L1** communication research, which asks respondents to estimate the percentage of time they are willing to communicate in everyday situations (but not in the classroom). Thus, the purpose was not to measure a general decontextualised feeling of wanting to communicate, whether in L1 or L2, but a response to specific environmental circumstances. The intention was to measure WTC levels in public, meetings, groups, dyads, with strangers, and with friends. Results were derived from descriptive

statistics related to scores in these areas. McCroskey and Richmond (1987) warned that this scale could not predict *actual* WTC behaviour, which could only be determined by observation. They then proceeded to discuss what they considered to be the ‘antecedents’ of WTC, such as introversion, anomie, self-esteem, cultural divergence, communication skills, and apprehension. In other words, they were seeking to understand the ‘why’ of WTC rather than just the level.

However, their **L1** scale has continued to be used for **L2** communication up until the present day, with some modifications for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) situations such as in Iran (Baghaei, 2013), and the need to include items more relevant to students who may only be able to speak the L2 in the classroom (Cao & Philp, 2006; Peng & Woodrow, 2010). In addition, MacIntyre et al. (2001) were the first to create items which involved both in and out-of-class communication.

The acknowledged weakness of this form of measurement is that, unless it is administered multiple times, it provides a limited, self-reported picture of an individual’s WTC. Supporting such quantitative results with observations, interviews, and other types of qualitative research methods has become more frequent over recent years (e.g., Cao, 2011; Peng, 2014; Yashima, Ikeda, & Nakahira, 2016). Moreover, studies which focus solely on measurements of WTC are uncommon. As suggested by the creators of the original scale (McCroskey & Baer, 1985; McCroskey & Richmond, 1987), in order to gain a broader understanding of the reasons why people feel disposed or not to communicate in different situations, the variables which are affecting their WTC should also be examined. As a result, other scales to measure, for example, anxiety, self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC), and motivation, were administered at the same time as the WTC scale, and quantitative analyses were often carried out to reveal any significant relationships between these variables and WTC behaviour. Therefore, it is also appropriate to establish the role that research into such individual differences has played in the history of SLA research.

2.3 Individual variables/differences in Second Language Acquisition and WTC

2.3.1 Theory of IDs affecting Second Language Acquisition

Before a discussion of the specific variables that have been associated with L2 WTC over the last two decades, a background to this area of research should be presented. The study of

language learner characteristics or individual differences (IDs) has been a tradition in second language studies since the 1970s (Dörnyei, 2005). In the opinion of Dörnyei and Ryan (2015), it is “an essential part of the study of second language acquisition (SLA)” (p. 1). They suggest that this research was initially prompted by the quest to identify the variables which foster the achievements of a ‘good language learner’. Such a “holy grail approach” was motivated by the belief that particular internal characteristics of the learner could predict success or failure in SLA (Dewaele, 2012, p. 159).

A wide range of IDs have been researched in the last 40 years, largely quantitatively and based on test batteries. “They have usually been seen as background learner variables that modify and personalize the overall trajectory of the language acquisition processes” (Dörnyei, 2009a, p. 231). Motivation, language aptitude, learning styles, and learning strategies were the four first ID factors to be widely researched in order to answer the questions as to “why, how long, how hard, how well, how proactively, and in what way the learner engages in the learning process” (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, p. 6). However, the number of variables under investigation has continued to expand, with the result that Larsen-Freeman in 2018 has stated “that more than 100 dimensions in which learners differ have been identified, and I expect the list to grow longer in the future” (p. 59).

Moreover, previous views of these learner IDs as being distinct, stable, and independent of each other and the environment, have been superseded. They are now considered to be elements of complex constellations, which interact with other variables and change according to the context in which the learner is situated (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

However, it is also evident that attempts to isolate individual variables that affect SLA still continue to be a feature of applied linguistic research and, with relevance to this study, those factors which influence WTC. In addition, it should be pointed out that there has been a range of terms used by researchers and theorists to describe these IDs, for example, determinants, antecedents, variables, factors, influences, dimensions, and propensities. However, in this study, I use these terms interchangeably with no intention to distinguish them.

2.3.2 Individual variables/differences affecting WTC – theoretical background

In 1994, MacIntyre pointed out the limitations in McCroskey and his associates' solely personality-based sources of **L1** WTC (see Sections 2.2.1 & 2.2.2 above). He proposed that other types of variables should be investigated for their influences on the development of WTC and that "specific situational characteristics also would provide a potential avenue for future research" (p. 140). In another article in the same year (i.e., MacIntyre & Noels, 1994), in regard to the characteristics of good language learners (GLLs) of an **L2**, presupposing that GLLs "are likely interested in the communicative value of language learning" (p. 279), he and his co-author suggest that learners come to a language with a range of IDs and "that a comprehensive model of language learning must account for this" (p. 280).

Therefore, the heuristic model of WTC created by MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, and Noels in 1998 may have been a response to this perceived gap in L2 theory and research. Their 'Pyramid' Model of WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998) was the first structural representation of the components of WTC, divided into situational and stable features or IDs (see Figure 2.1 below). It integrated psychological, linguistic, educational, and communicative dimensions, previously studied independently, in order to predict a willingness to converse in the L2 (MacIntyre, Clément, & Noels, 2007). According to MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) interpretation, the base of the pyramid is formed by long-term individual differences providing stable or enduring patterns (i.e., *Intergroup Climate and Personality*). The next layer captures the individual's typical affective and cognitive context (i.e., *Intergroup Attitudes, Social Situation, and Communicative Competence*). The last layer of enduring influences is made up of motivational propensities including *Interpersonal and Intergroup Motivation and Self-Confidence* (perceptions of communicative competence coupled with a lack of anxiety). Here the possible discrepancy between an individual's *actual* competency in an L2 and the level at which they *perceive* themselves to be competent is regarded as significant by MacIntyre et al. (1998). The top three layers of the pyramid were regarded as more situational – the proximal or "here and now" factors (MacIntyre et al., 2007, p. 287). *Desire to Communicate with a Specific Person* and *State Communicative Self-Confidence* culminate in the *Willingness to Communicate*, which leads finally to *L2 Use* at the top of the pyramid, which Dörnyei and Ottó have famously depicted as "crossing the Rubicon" of communication (i.e., the point of no return) (1998, p. 56).

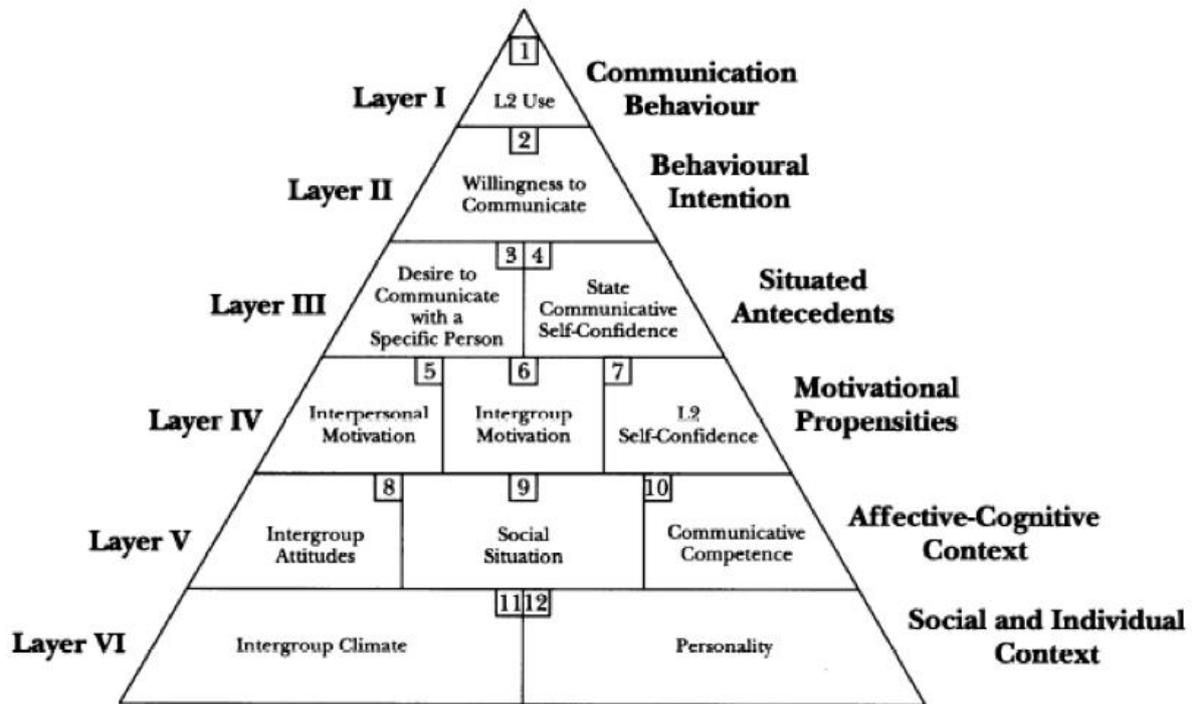


Figure 2.1 *Heuristic model of variables affecting WTC*
(MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547)

The problem with this model, as MacIntyre (2003) himself acknowledged, is that it is one-dimensional and does not adequately reflect the interrelationship between the various components. The transition from distal to proximal effects is also not a simple hierarchy, as at times the more distal influences can override or bypass those which are more proximal (Dörnyei, 2005). Moreover, MacIntyre et al. (1998) considered the model to be a “work-in-progress, more of a starting point than a finished product” (p. 559). Nevertheless, the elements of this pyramid, whether individually or in various combinations, remained the foci for empirical WTC research over the next decades, as researchers endeavoured to identify a range of affective/individual and social contextual variables (IDs) which contributed to WTC.

As most recent theorists and researchers seem to agree that these IDs interact with each other and should be examined within the context in which the language learner finds her/himself, I use the terms ‘individual’ and ‘contextual’ in this study, not as mutually exclusive terms, but in combination to cover a broad range of possible factors which affect L2 language learning.

2.3.3 Empirical studies of variables influencing WTC

Following the publication of MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model, research into the topic of WTC has become increasingly popular. In the process of preparing this literature review, I have surveyed more than 140 articles and books. In order to provide some kind of framework with which to examine the studies most relevant to this investigation, I have loosely categorised them into three areas: studies which focus on the individual variables which influence WTC (in this Section 2.3.3); studies which focus on variations in the context, including time and geography (Section 2.4.4 below); and studies which focus on the linkages and intersections between the factors (Section 2.5.2 below). However, such distinctions could be considered arbitrary and some researchers incorporate all three aspects of WTC in their findings.

Variables affecting learners' WTC (elsewhere in the world)

In order to test MacIntyre et al.'s 1998 'pyramid' model (see Section 2.3.2 above), a large number of studies ensued which used a 'variable-analytic' approach to understand the relationships between various factors and WTC. For example, Clément, Baker, and MacIntyre (2003) and MacIntyre et al. (2003b) found that higher levels of WTC were strongly correlated with the perception of competence in the L2 (also termed self-perceived communicative competence, SPCC) and lower levels of language anxiety. A number of other similar studies were carried out by MacIntyre and his associates, primarily in the context of French immersion and non-immersion classes in Canada. Although they were attempting to isolate particular variables, which may have had a positive or negative influence on WTC, they were still using the WTC scale of McCroskey and Baer (1985) or that of MacIntyre et al. (2001), which are contextual in nature (see Section 2.2.2 above).

The application of MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model to EFL contexts, where the L2 (i.e., English) is spoken only in the classroom, or the SA (Study Abroad) participants are temporarily in an English-speaking country, has been carried out in several East Asian countries such as Japan (Hashimoto, 2002; Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004), China (Peng, 2007a; Wen & Clément, 2003), and Korea (Kim, 2004). European countries, such as Spain (Lahuerta, 2014) and Poland (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2011) are also represented. Turkish students of English were investigated by Çetinkaya (2005), Şener

(2014), and Öz (2014). As with the Canadian studies, quantitative methods were generally used to analyse the data collected.

Therefore, MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC model has remained a key feature in WTC research studies in a wide variety of countries. A range of affective/individual and contextual variables have been the foci of these investigations, most of which were components of the original pyramid model, with the addition of international posture as being specific to the EFL situation (Yashima, 2002; Yashima et al., 2004). Culture and frequency of communication have also been highlighted as being important factors in this learning environment (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2011; Wen & Clément, 2003; Yashima et al., 2004).

Tests of the WTC model of MacIntyre et al. (1998) have been almost exclusively carried out using quantitative analysis. However, more recently, mixed method or solely qualitative case study type research approaches have become more popular. It has been suggested that this process is more suited to the investigation of the dynamic situational variables underlying WTC (MacIntyre, 2007). Qualitative studies have added other variables elicited from the data provided by learners, e.g., S.-J. Kang (2005): excitement, responsibility, and security; Peng, (2007b) and Zhong (2012): beliefs; D. Cameron (2013) and Yue (2016): past language learning experience; and Syed and Kuzborska (in press): physiological factors such as hunger and sickness. Perhaps more appropriately in a qualitative study, it is possible for the researcher to ask *why* a particular variable is important to the participant. As many of these qualitative studies focused more on the interactions between the variables, they will be discussed below in Section 2.5.

Variables affecting English language learners' WTC in Iran

As discussed above in Chapter 1 (Section 1.8 above) and below in Chapter 3 (Section 3.4.3), I chose to focus on the WTC of Iranian migrant students in NZ for this study. Therefore, reports on the WTC of Iranians learning English in Iran became an interesting source of comparison. In fact, since the beginning of this decade, investigations into the WTC of English language learners in Iran have been very numerous, with a large number of studies being published in English language journals (I have located over 120 articles). Although most are quantitative in method, there are a small but increasing number of qualitative studies being conducted.

Although a specific WTC scale was developed by Baghaei (2011) for the Iranian context, most quantitative researchers in Iran have continued to use the scales developed by McCroskey and Richmond (1987) or MacIntyre et al. (2001) (see Section 2.2.2 above) to identify and analyse the variables which influence WTC. Those variables identified in the MacIntyre et al. (1998) model (see Section 2.3.2 above) have remained the foci of these investigations, although recently other factors and theoretical constructs have been surveyed for their connection to WTC, such as curiosity and enjoyment (Mahmoodzadeh & Khajavy, 2019), self-regulation (Atrian, Ghanizadeh, & Rostami, 2016), emotional intelligence (Rahbar, Suzani, & Sajadi, 2016), and directed motivational currents (Zarrinabadi, Ketabi, & Tavakoli, 2019). In this brief survey of studies based on factor analysis, for reliability reasons, I have included only those articles published in peer reviewed journals, although they are only a small minority of the total published output from Iran.

Some of the first Iranian researchers to publish in English language journals, Ghonsooly, Khajavy, and Asadpour (2012), concluded that the existing socio-educational model of Gardner (1985), as well as MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC model, were a good fit for the data they collected. They found in their study of Iranian undergraduate students ($n = 158$) that while L2 self-confidence was the most significant predictor of L2 WTC, openness to experience as a personality trait also affected L2 WTC indirectly via attitudes to the international community (international posture). Fallah's (2014) study supported the finding of Ghonsooly et al. (2012) that communicative self-confidence was a significant predictor of WTC. Her investigation into the WTC of 252 university English language majors in Iran also found that motivation was a key factor. She added desire to learn English and immediacy to the MacIntyre et al. (1998) list of factors.

The focus for Ghanbarpour (2014) and Rajabpour, Ghanizadeh, and Ghonsooly (2015) was the motivation of their Iranian university level English language learners. Both studies employed the MacIntyre et al. (2001) scale, but the focus of Ghanbarpour's (2014) study was to determine the type of motivation which was most significant in regard to WTC. She found that instrumental motivation was a better predictor of WTC than integrative. She felt that this may be due to the EFL (English as a foreign language) context of Iran where there is little opportunity for students to practise their English, which would account for the fact

that this result was the opposite of that found by MacIntyre et al. (2003a). Rajabpour et al. (2015) used the motivational self-system theory developed by Dörnyei (2009b) to create a hypothetical model incorporating the ideal L2 self, attitudes to language learning, and anxiety, and their relationship to WTC. They found that the ideal L2 self and attitudes to learning English positively predicted WTC, whereas anxiety played the most important role in negatively predicting WTC.

Personality, another key element in the MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) pyramid, was the focus of Khany and Mansouri Nejad's (2016) study, where they examined the relationship between WTC and unWTC and two personality traits, i.e., openness to experience and extraversion, in the Iranian context. Openness to experience and extraversion were found to be significant predictors of WTC, although not related to unWTC.

Therefore, the factors first introduced as a combination in MacIntyre et al.'s 'pyramid' model of 1998 also remain foci for quantitative researchers in the EFL situation of Iran. Qualitative studies which relate more to the interaction between factors are discussed below in Section 2.5.

WTC outside the classroom – in Iran

Most of the WTC research which has taken place in Iran, is classroom-based, although a few researchers have also investigated the *out-of-class* English language experiences of their participants. With the advent of the model of MacIntyre et al. (1998), and their proposal that **L1** and **L2** WTC could be different, a new scale devised by MacIntyre et al. (2001) included in-class as well as out-of-class situations. When this scale has been used in Iranian studies, results from outside the class have often been given more emphasis.

For example, Alemi, Daftarifard, and Pashmforoosh (2011) employed this scale and unexpectedly discovered that their more highly proficient English language learners in an Iranian university were less ready to communicate *outside* the classroom. They attributed this result to the situational nature of WTC, but did not provide any possible reasons related to the Iranian context. On the other hand, Zarrinabadi and Abdi's (2011) study found a strong correlation between language learning orientations and WTC, particularly WTC *outside* the classroom. No explanation is given as to why this may be so, but they contrast their results with those of MacIntyre et al. (2001), who found that such orientations

positively influence WTC both in and out of class. Maftoon and Najafi Sarem (2013) also detected no difference in their participants' WTC in or out of class, but they related this to the lack of authentic exposure to English outside the classroom in Iran. Taheryan and Ghonsooly (2014) also warn that the unique situation in Iran, particularly at the time when their study was conducted, when almost no actual opportunities existed for Iranian English learners to practise speaking in the community, could make the results of such studies less reliable.

Even qualitative studies in Iran involving interviews and observations, as far as I have been able to discover, are solely classroom-based, so there is limited evidence of what takes place in the wider Iranian community in terms of spoken English communication. For example, Elahi Shirvan and Taherian (2016), despite their use of an ecosystems framework (see Section 2.5 below) to discuss the WTC of their participants, only briefly mentioned the applicability of classroom English to *out-of-class* communication situations. Therefore, in this study I rely on the memories of my participants to provide information on this aspect of WTC in Iran.

WTC outside the classroom – Elsewhere & NZ

As with the research situation in Iran discussed in Section 2.3.3 above, because of the use of the WTC scales of McCroskey and Richmond (1992) and MacIntyre et al. (2001) (see Section 2.2.2 above), many studies of WTC have incorporated results from both inside and outside the classroom. Nevertheless, as they were purely quantitative studies, they have focussed only on the differing levels of WTC, rather than the reasons for such changes.

Some recent studies in Turkey and Hungary have found that their English language learning participants experienced higher WTC outside the class, possibly because they felt more anxiety in the competitive classroom environment, and that it was more natural to communicate in English with *non-native* speakers of their L1 (Başöz & Erten, 2018; Ekin, 2018; Nagy & Nikolov, 2007). On the other hand, Peng (2013), in her investigation of the Chinese context, discovered that the opposite was the case for her participants, who felt more confident speaking English in class. Perhaps the difference in geographical contexts and the availability of English language speakers outside the classroom are factors in these conflicting results.

Moreover, the Study Abroad context could also be considered to be 'outside the classroom'. In this situation, students of a second language travel overseas, either to improve their language skills or study another course in a country where this language is spoken widely in the surrounding environment. Gallagher (2013) created a SEM model incorporating L2 WTC *outside the classroom*, where he concluded that it played a significant role in his Chinese SA participants' experience of "the irksome daily events involved with living in a new culture" (p. 69). In the same UK context, Badwan (2017) discusses the case of a SA student from the United Arab Emirates, whose negative experiences with English in out-of-class communication situations left him feeling voiceless and unwilling to communicate.

In fact, Benson, Chappell, and Yates (2018) suggest that access to English in English-speaking countries for SA students as well as migrants can be attributed to learner factors such as willingness to communicate with locals. In their case study of a Colombian student in Australia, they determined that where and when her interactions in English took place in the city were important dimensions in her success and resulting WTC. Another case study from Australia of a SA student, who then became a citizen, supports the notion of "the cyclical interaction" of L2 proficiency, self-confidence, and WTC (Edwards & Roger, 2015, p. 11 of 14). Their participant sought out 'high risk' communicative contexts through stand-up comedy and presentations to his colleagues in order to increase his L2 self-confidence.

Finally, in the NZ context, Tanaka (2007) has revealed that, for Japanese high school students, limited L2 proficiency negatively affects their WTC outside the classroom while studying abroad. Moreover, the host family plays "a vital role in determining the quality and quantity of the interaction between the host and the student" (p. 49). In addition, Macalister (2015), in his two case studies of Malaysian English language teachers, contrasted their commitment to using their English in the local NZ environment. One took every opportunity to practise her English and demonstrate her WTC, while the other found it easier to "stick with" her Malaysian friends (p. 238). Both Tanaka (2007) and Macalister (2015) recognise the role that personality might also have to play in these differing levels of WTC outside the class.

The WTC of Iranians - inside and outside the NZ classroom

As far as I am aware at this time (late 2019), there are no empirical studies of the WTC of Iranian English language learners outside Iran published in English, either as Study Abroad students or migrants, except for the two exploratory investigations I conducted in 2010 and 2011 (Cameron, D. 2013, 2015). In these studies, my focus was on determining which factors were important to the WTC of the participants, who were migrants to NZ learning English at pre-university level, and the influence their past learning experience had on their present WTC in NZ.

In the first study (Cameron, D., 2013), using mostly qualitative methods (interviews plus a questionnaire), I determined that self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC), personality, anxiety, motivation, and learning context, including the methods and approaches of their teachers, were variables that positively or negatively affected their WTC. Their past English language learning experiences in Iran also had an effect on their present WTC in NZ. In addition, my findings supported the contention that L2 WTC is a dynamic rather than trait phenomenon, which has been a topic of discussion among researchers since MacIntyre et al. suggested this to be the case in 1998. These results complemented those of Cao and Philp (2006) and Cao (2005, 2006, 2009a & b, 2011), who at that time were the only researchers to have investigated the topic of WTC in NZ. However, I felt the limitations of this preliminary study were the single administration of the questionnaire, and lack of triangulation in the form of observations to provide other evidence of the participants' *actual* WTC in class, rather than just their self-reported levels.

As a consequence, in the second study (Cameron, D., 2015), I conducted a series of observations and interviews with the participants, also Iranian migrants to NZ, and administered the WTC questionnaire twice over the longer period of two semesters (8 months). To provide another viewpoint, their teachers were given similar questionnaires to complete about their students' WTC in class. The variables which were important to these students' WTC were confidence, motivation, personality, and anxiety. Moreover, their WTC fluctuated from their past learning experiences in Iran, and also from semester to semester in their NZ classes. An additional factor related to their out-of-class experiences was the difficulty they had with migrant settlement issues, which is not an area that has been fully

investigated in relation to WTC so far. However, in the NZ context Zhong (2013) and Zander (2016) have noted that these were problems shared by their migrant participants.

After conducting these exploratory studies, I felt that there were areas of research related to the WTC of such learners that were worthy of further investigation. Increasing the number of participants, extending the length of the investigation, and involving more teachers in the study would increase its generalisability. Focussing more on the factors outside the classroom which impacted on the students' WTC in the local NZ community would help to draw a larger picture of the learner-in-context (Ushioda, 2009). To provide more detailed evidence of the variables Iranian learners in NZ considered to be influential on their WTC inside and outside the classroom, it would be important to explore their perceptions in more depth than just administering a questionnaire or conducting a single short interview.

Learners' perceptions of their WTC

Researchers into motivation have suggested that it is "necessary also to explore participants' own perspectives" (Ushioda, 2015, p. 49), and to describe "the learners' own subjective interpretation of the relevance and meaning of respective contextual factors" (Mercer, 2016, p. 17). This could be regarded as equally applicable to investigations into WTC.

In fact, it could be argued that almost all studies of WTC are based on learners' perceptions, as the scales used to measure their levels of WTC are self-reported. Moreover, accompanying scales related to anxiety, self-perceived communicative competence, motivation etc., are also rated by the participants themselves. Therefore, to provide a more in-depth viewpoint, qualitative or mixed method researchers in this field have employed other tools, such as interviews and stimulated recall, to investigate this phenomenon.

As a result, new variables affecting WTC have been revealed. From interviews with her participants, S.-J. Kang (2005) added *excitement*, *security* and *responsibility* to the factors displayed on MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) pyramid model, while I discovered that *past learning experience* and *a change in the geographical learning context* were important to the learners in my study (Cameron, D., 2015). As well as contextual and psychological influences

previously mentioned in other investigations into WTC, Syed and Kuzborska (in press) reported on a variety of *positive and negative emotions* (see also Cao, 2014), and physiological factors, such as *hunger* or *sickness*, which were mentioned to them during interviews and stimulated recall events, and in learners' diaries. They also identified *perceived opportunity* to speak in class as valuable, with some students actively seeking out chances to demonstrate their WTC, while others missed out as they relied on their interlocutors and the teacher, in particular, to provide an appropriate context for conversation.

Such opportunities (or the lack of them) to turn a theoretical level of WTC into actual speaking events were identified by the participants in a range of qualitative studies. Jackson (2003) and Rao (2002), both reported that their Chinese learners in China linked lower levels of WTC to the lack of classroom opportunities for discussion and conversation, and the fact that they were living in an EFL situation. Moreover, in Pakistan, Mari, Pathan, and Shahriar (2011) stated that the most common inhibitor of their university student participants' WTC was "the lack of an authentic communication environment" *outside* the classroom and "opportunities for using language" (pp. 19 & 20 of 22).

Such difficulties were also encountered by migrants in Canada (Wang, 1999; Zeng, 2010) and in NZ (Zander, 2016; Zhong, 2013). Despite the fact that English was the dominant language of the country, Wang's (1999) participants, who were Chinese migrants to Canada, lacked situations where they could speak English, even though they had a high level of motivation and WTC. In Zeng's (2010) study of the WTC of Chinese university students in Canada, some of whom were permanent settlers, she found that even if they had high levels of WTC and professed an interest in the culture of the language they were learning, there were low levels of social contact. Zander's (2016) NZ migrant participants also found the new culture to be a barrier and the differences they perceived between their culture and that of their new country led to lower levels of WTC. Moreover, Zhong's (2013) study of the WTC of Chinese migrants to NZ revealed that they too had little contact with the target language group outside the class, which made pair and groupwork inside the class more important for their WTC.

Such insights into the learners' own perceptions of the reasons for their high or low levels of WTC were only revealed through interview-type studies, although findings based *purely* on participants' interpretation of WTC factors might mean that other influences, which previously have been regarded as important, are ignored (Eddy-U, 2015). As a result, learners' perceptions should be corroborated by other research methods such as observations, and consultation with their teachers, who have had greater opportunity to monitor their WTC behaviour.

Teachers' beliefs about WTC and teachers' perceptions of learners' WTC

Although, for the foreign language teachers (n = 311) in Gkonou, Mercer, and Daubney's (2018) study, the "second most important psychological variable [of their learners] following motivation" (p. 506) was the construct of WTC, little research has been carried out into the views of teachers as regards WTC, in general, and their students' WTC, in particular. This is despite the fact "teachers have the potential at any moment to increase or decrease WTC among the students" (MacIntyre et al., 2011, p. 88). Moreover, according to researchers such as Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014), teacher and learner psychologies are complementary and, therefore, worthy of greater investigation.

Perhaps with this in mind, Cao, in her PhD thesis (2009a), also included interviews with the three teachers of her participants from a NZ language school. As a result, she was able to add the perceptions of one teacher in regard to the WTC of six of his students, whose case studies she reported in depth. However, although Cao's interview questions for teachers included some pedagogical strategies for increasing WTC, this was not an area she developed further in her thesis.

On the other hand, in Indonesia, Sari (2016) canvassed the opinions of her four EFL teacher participants as to their beliefs about which interaction strategies were the best practice to develop and maintain their learners' WTC. She found that they were convinced their students' WTC in English "significantly contributes to building interactions in the target language" (p. 14), and the teachers' most successful strategies to increase this WTC were based primarily on their choices of teaching techniques, understanding the students' level of linguistic competence, appropriate time management, and giving the students opportunities to choose their own topics for discussion. Zhou (2015), however, found that the teachers

and learners in her study in a Chinese university sometimes had mismatched views about the importance of oral involvement in class, with some students placing more importance on opportunities to show their WTC than their teachers.

Another contradiction was found to be the case by Vongsila and Reinders (2016), but in their study, it was a difference between the teachers' (five NZ ESL practitioners) professed desire to encourage their students to use their English outside the class environment, and their lack of any reference to this in the classes which were observed by the researchers. On the other hand, the teachers believed they played an important role in helping their students to increase their levels of WTC in class by using warm-up strategies, encouraging group work, and choosing topics for discussion that were relevant to the students' culture and their life in NZ.

As far as I am aware (by this date, late 2019), one of only two more extensive investigations directly involving teachers in interviews about their students' WTC behaviour, as well as the techniques used by these teachers to promote oral communication, is that of Cao (2016), who conducted her study in China by observing classes and carrying out stimulated-recall interviews with thirty-three students, and semi-structured interviews with twelve teachers. She found that these teachers identified three cultural themes that related negatively to their students' levels of WTC: Chinese culture in general; influences from their previous English learning experiences; and their regard for the teacher as an authority figure. However, the teachers had a range of strategies to deal in a positive way with this perceived lack of WTC: prolonged waiting and thinking time; focus-on-meaning activities; teacher immediacy; and teacher elicitation techniques.

The other study of teachers' perceptions of WTC was conducted in Iran by Zarei, Saeidi, and Ahangari in 2019. They used focus group interviews with 19 English language teachers to determine which teaching strategies they used to enhance their learners' WTC. They identified developing positive relationships with their students, appropriate choice of topics which would engender interest, and an encouraging teaching style, as facilitating factors; whereas the traditional authoritarian role of the teacher, a dominant teaching style, and institutional expectations such as a restrictive syllabus, were all hindering factors. According to Zarei et al. most of these negative influences can be traced back "to the cultural context

of Iran, which affects the system of education and teacher-student interaction” (p. 8 of 11). However, they concede that times are changing, and language learning classrooms are becoming more relaxed and open to communication.

However, no studies seem to have compared the learners’ perceptions of their individual WTC behaviour with that of their teachers in any great detail. In that way, a comparison could be made between the students’ professed and actual WTC as observed over a period of time by their teachers. If this was added to observation data by a neutral researcher, it would create a more in-depth portrait of the behaviour.

2.3.4 Summary of section

The aim of Section 2.3 was to present an argument for the continuing relevance to research into WTC of identifying which factors or variables facilitate or hinder communication for the language learner both inside and outside the classroom. The limitations of purely quantitative studies are that they make it possible to identify relationships between specific variables and WTC, but cannot answer the question as to *why* these factors are important. Therefore, the learner participants’ views on reasons for their levels of WTC in a variety of contexts need to be canvassed using a qualitative approach. The viewpoints of their teachers add a further dimension to this investigation, as recommended by Peng (2014).

This use of qualitative methods also allows the identification of important variables to emerge from the data rather than being prescribed beforehand. Such emergence is described by Larsen-Freeman as “the arising of something new, often unanticipated from the interaction of components which comprise it” (2016b, p. 378). Therefore, the discussion of the specific variables which arose from this study will take place in Chapter 7, after the findings are presented in Chapter 4.

Moreover, as can be seen from the limited number of empirical studies focussing on the WTC of Iranians in English language learning situations outside Iran, both as migrants and SA students, it is an area of research which deserves further exploration in order to provide pedagogical insights for the teachers of these students.

Therefore, the first research question of this study is posed as follows: *What are the factors which influence Iranian learners' WTC inside and outside the classroom, in Iran and in NZ, in their, and their teachers' opinions?*

2.4 Variations in levels of WTC (over time and context)

2.4.1 Dynamic vs trait WTC

As discussed in Section 2.3.3 above, a range of variables has been identified in various empirical studies as influencing language learners' L2 WTC, following the introduction of the heuristic 'pyramid' model of WTC by MacIntyre et al. in 1998 (see Section 2.3.2). Unlike previous researchers into **L1** WTC, MacIntyre et al. (1998) regarded **L2** WTC as largely "a situational variable with both transient and enduring influences" (p. 546). Whether these 'influences' are trait characteristics, or whether they fluctuate in intensity depending on the situation in which the learner finds her or himself, has remained a key area of investigation for WTC researchers.

Such research has only become possible as investigators have tracked their participants' levels of WTC over a period of time and in different contexts. Qualitative tools such as observations, journals, multiple interviews, and stimulated recalls have allowed researchers "to look into both stable behavioural tendencies and dynamic changes brought about by contextual variables" (Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2017, p. 21). However, self-report scales, as discussed above in Section 2.2.2, often continue to be used to quantitatively examine levels of WTC as a baseline or at selected intervals of time.

Following Yashima's (2002) proposal that WTC is one component of "a circular, self-sustaining model with dynamic interaction among variables, including attitudes, motivation, confidence, anxiety, WTC, communicative competence, and communicative behaviour" (p. 63), many researchers have explored the nature of WTC as influenced by such variables. S.-J. Kang (2005) was one of the first to emphasise the notion that WTC is "a dynamic situational concept that can change moment-to moment, rather than a trait-like disposition" (p. 277). Her small-scale study (n = 4 Korean students) based on interviews and observations, revealed that for her participants a variety of situational and psychological variables combined to influence their WTC.

Cao, in a series of articles based on her master's and PhD research, using mixed method procedures, continued to investigate the possibly dynamic nature of WTC, as opposed to its trait-like characteristics. As a result of her master's study, Cao concluded that the learners' communicative behaviour was influenced both by trait-level and state-level WTC (Cao & Philp, 2006). Factors that influenced situational WTC were classroom circumstances such as group size, interlocutor, and topic, as well as self-confidence and cultural background. Changes in WTC over time were also noted across the three interactional contexts during a period of one month. In addition, for her PhD study, Cao explored the WTC of three groups of SA (Study Abroad) participants in the same NZ school for a period of five months (Cao, 2009a). Overall, her suggestion from these studies is that "the situational WTC construct can fluctuate and dynamically change over time under the effect of learners' psychological conditions which are mediated by contextual factors in the classroom" (Cao, 2009b, p. 211).

However, MacIntyre and Doucette (2010), in response to Cao and Philp's (2006) and S.-J. Kang's (2005) studies stated that: "It is best to consider the state-dependent and dynamic fluctuations of WTC as a topic that is complementary to (rather than in opposition to) the stable trait-like tendencies" and "they are two sides of the same coin" (p. 169).

Nevertheless, this dichotomy of dynamic vs trait WTC continues to be a popular topic for researchers. The partnership of Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak have made this theme the subject of several investigations in recent years. They have used mixed methods in an endeavour to measure the fluctuations in their Polish university participants' WTC. Their (2015) findings revealed that:

[T]he participants' WTC was indeed in a state of flux, being influenced by such variables as the topic, planning time, cooperation and familiarity with the interlocutor, the opportunity to express one's ideas, the mastery of requisite lexis, the presence of the researcher, and a host of individual variables. (p. 1)

A longitudinal element was added in a 2016 study by Mystkowska-Wiertelak, reporting on a series of lessons over one semester. Her conclusion was that the students' mean WTC did indeed fluctuate within lessons and over the course of the semester. She felt that "the

intensity of communicative behaviour depends on an intricate interplay of personal and group-related factors” (p. 651).

Other researchers have also focussed on the dynamic nature of WTC. Zhong (2013) used mostly qualitative tools (observations, interviews, stimulated recall, and learning logs) to investigate five Chinese immigrant learners’ WTC in their NZ L2 classroom. She concluded that “the learners’ WTC and oral communication varied in different situations in L2 classrooms, supporting the argument that WTC is context-dependent and situational” (p. 749). Finally, Peng (2016), in a discussion of the findings from one of her PhD case studies, based on interviews, observations, and journal entries, over a period of seven months, linked L2 WTC with self-concept, and suggested that they are both closely tied to contextual factors, which she describes as components in “a dynamic interplay” (p. 100).

Thus, aspects of WTC have been considered ‘dynamic’ and situational since the creation of MacIntyre et al.’s (1998) original construct, but more recently WTC has been viewed as a ‘dynamic system’ in itself (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011). An explanation is necessary, therefore, as to the nature of a dynamic system.

2.4.2 Dynamic Systems Theory & WTC

Dörnyei (2009a) describes the process of language acquisition and use as ‘dynamic’, but he regards this as a technical term to describe its relevance to *complexity theory* and the two trends which belong to this broad approach – *dynamic systems theory* and *emergentism*:

These approaches share in common their central objective of describing development in complex, dynamic systems that consist of multiple interconnected parts and in which the multiple interferences between the components’ own trajectories result in nonlinear, emergent changes in the overall system behaviour. (p. 238)

He also suggested that the traditional approach to researching individual difference factors as “stable and monolithic learner characteristics” is outmoded, and “the study of such complex constellations of factors requires a dynamic systems approach” (p. 243). Therefore, WTC and the variables that influence this phenomenon could be considered one of “the

higher order combination of factors that act as integrated wholes” described by Dörnyei (2009a, p. 243).

In fact, as some of the first researchers to investigate WTC from a dynamic systems perspective, MacIntyre and Legatto (2011) have proposed that this approach is particularly appropriate, as WTC involves changes within a communication event. Four key properties have been identified by de Bot, Lowie, and Verspoor (2007) as belonging to these systems. First is the fact that dynamic systems change over time, so each state is a transformation of a previous one. Second, these systems are completely interconnected so they are able to influence each other. Third, they are self-organizing into preferred or *attractor states*, and states that will not be preferred (*repeller states*), so change is to be expected as variables which affect the system change over time. The fourth has been termed *the butterfly effect*, as small changes in one part of the system may have large effects overall, but equally, large disturbances may only produce small effects in the whole system.

Therefore, MacIntyre and Legatto’s (2011) conclusion is that WTC does indeed show the properties of a dynamic system as there are changes over time wherein each state is partially dependent on the previous. A learner’s WTC is likely to be affected by their WTC on a previous occasion in another context, whether immediately before or at some stage in the past. There is also an interconnectedness between the linguistic, social, cognitive, and emotional systems which produce WTC. Learners’ WTC can be influenced by their affective system, that is, when they feel discouraged, they may opt out of future communication situations. If they are unable to perform to their satisfaction cognitively (e.g., recall vocabulary items) or linguistically (e.g., use understandable pronunciation) their WTC may also decline. A classroom environment with supportive teachers and classmates should provide a more favourable situation for WTC to flourish. When these systems function well together, WTC can be seen as an *attractor state*, whereas interference, such as when there is a deficiency in language or the affective state of the speaker is compromised, can cause a *repeller state* and communication is abandoned. In MacIntyre and Legatto’s (2011) study, the threshold or *‘butterfly effect’* meant that an initial decline in WTC at the beginning of a task led to the learners’ abandoning it. However, at a later point anxiety and cognitive difficulties seemed to generate coping attempts.

MacIntyre and Legatto's new DST (dynamic systems theory) approach was then adopted by a variety of other WTC researchers, some using their *idiodynamic* methodology to measure moment-by-moment changes in WTC, and others adopting DST as a general theoretical background to their studies.

2.4.3 Empirical studies on WTC from a DST viewpoint

Following MacIntyre and Legatto's (2011) introduction of new and innovative methods of conducting WTC research, i.e., using specific *idiodynamic* software to chart their participants' WTC under experimental conditions, a number of other researchers followed their lead in an attempt to better represent fluctuations in WTC over short intervals of time. Mulvaney (2015), for example, felt that "a CDST (Complex Dynamic Systems Theory) approach with its attention to the interaction of elements involved in the emergence of a given state, may allow a researcher to study micro-scale dynamics of WTC *in-situ*" (p. 57). Therefore, in his case study of three Thai university students, he used *idiodynamic* software in a similar way to MacIntyre and Legatto (2011), so that, when his participants viewed themselves taking part in a previous speaking activity, they input either a negative or positive response as to how they felt about speaking English at the time. He supported these data with stimulated recall and semi-structured interviews, elements which were missing from the MacIntyre and Legatto (2011) study. From the *idiodynamic* response data, Mulvaney (2015) concluded that WTC did indeed fluctuate during the activities undertaken by the participants, but the interviews were able to provide context for these findings. From a complex systems perspective, the abundance of elements identified as context-specific factors "*interact* to form the conditions of the system at any given time" (Mulvaney, 2015, p. 69).

Other researchers have felt that the experimental type conditions required by the *idiodynamic* software developed by MacIntyre and Legatto (2011), are less authentic than classroom investigations. With similar acknowledgment of the principles of DST, Kamprasertwong (2010), King (2013b), Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2015), Yashima et al. (2016), and Yashima et al. (2018), all devised tools for their student participants to use to indicate their levels of WTC while in the classroom taking part in speaking tasks. These procedures were also backed up by observations, and in the case of Yashima et al. (2018), a

standard WTC scale (Yashima, 2009). In the Japanese context reported on by King (2013a & b), Yashima et al. (2016), and Yashima et al. (2018), silence has become an *attractor* state, while in Poland, Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2015) found that their participants' WTC during task performance was "affected by a multitude of influences, which, in line with the claims of dynamic systems theories, are intricately interwoven, interact in unpredictable ways and are often themselves in a state of flux" (p. 8). It has been acknowledged by some of these researchers that this idiodynamic method can be disruptive and distracting for the students (Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2017), so other investigators have attempted to apply the principles of DST, while employing less intrusive methods of data collection.

For example, Yue, in her 2016 PhD study, analysed her qualitative data obtained from interviews and observations of five postgraduate students in China, using a DST lens. She observed "complex dynamic interactions between, persons, contexts and L2 WTC across temporal and spatial scales" (p. 269). In my investigation (Cameron, D., 2015) of four Iranian migrant students in NZ, I had also observed the influence of past learning experiences on their WTC, as well as the change in geographical context from Iran to NZ, and finally their progression from one English class to another. Moreover, from a DST perspective, despite the fact that settlement in NZ had become a preferred or attractor state, "a focus on events" (MacIntyre & Legatto, p. 151) external to the classroom, idiodynamically affected them in a negative way. My study was longitudinal (eight months approx.), which is a recommended means of recording a greater number of fluctuations in WTC and the possible teasing out of "stable individual differences" (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011, p. 168). However, I felt that widening the scope of the inquiry to include *out-of-class* WTC and increasing the surveyed period of time would provide more opportunity to observe a dynamic system at work.

Such a longitudinal approach was also a key element of Syed's (2016) PhD study of the WTC of six Pakistani postgraduate business students, which took place over ten weeks. By means of observations, stimulated recall interviews, and questionnaires, he applied the DST framework to his findings and concluded that it was very suitable for an in-depth and holistic understanding of L2 WTC. Furthermore, he concluded that:

... the interpretation of data from the DST approach allowed the study to tap into the complex nature of L2 WTC, unravelling some of the key characteristics, such as moment-to-moment change, non-linearity, sensitive dependence on initial conditions, feedback sensitivity, self-organisation and emergence of attractor and repeller states. (p. 278)

Moreover, in his opinion, longitudinal studies have made it more feasible for researchers to observe how variations in time and context affect WTC.

2.4.4 Empirical studies on variations in WTC over time and context

A few of these longitudinal studies have also used DST as the background to their investigations of the fluctuations of WTC over a prolonged period of time, i.e., D. Cameron, 2015, (8 months), Syed, 2016 (10 weeks), and Yue, 2016 (15 weeks), as discussed in Section 2.4.3 above. However, other researchers have simply used this longitudinal design as a means to foreground the *dynamic* fluctuations in their participants' WTC. Some examples of these studies are discussed below.

In Canada, Derwing et al. (2008) initiated a 7-year study of migrants, who were Mandarin and Slavic language speakers ($n = 11$ & $n = 11$), with a focus on their degree of comprehensibility and fluency as it related to their WTC. In 2013, Derwing and Munro reported on their findings and suggested that factors within the WTC model of MacIntyre et al. (1998) contributed to the differential outcomes between the Mandarin and Slavic language speakers. The lack of improvement in the Mandarin speakers was attributed by Derwing and Munro (2013) as "the result of the complex interplay of first language, the extent of linguistics interactions in the L2, and overall WTC" (p. 177). Unlike other researchers, who have concluded that WTC is a largely 'dynamic' and individual construct (see Section 2.4.1 above), Derwing and Munro (2013) refer to MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) suggestion that "certain groups might be more homogenous than others with respect to certain traits or profiles" (p. 558). Overall, the Mandarin speakers in their study showed greater ties to their L1 community, lower self-confidence, and had fewer opportunities to interact in English or initiate conversations than the Slavic language group.

A parallel could be drawn with Zhong's (2013) 18-week study of Chinese migrants to NZ, whose membership of the local "high enclosure Chinese community" (p. 748) reduced their opportunities to display their WTC with the target language group. However, when collaborative learning situations were provided in their English classes, their WTC increased. Moreover, although the Mauritian migrant to Australia interviewed by Edwards and Roger (2015) initially felt greater WTC with his non-native speaker housemates than with native speakers of the L2 community, after two years of greater participation in this L2 context, they noted a cyclical interaction had taken place between his L2 self-confidence, proficiency, and WTC, which now resulted in higher levels of all three factors.

In regard to the effect of changes in geographical context on L2 learners' WTC, some researchers have investigated Study Abroad (SA) students and contrasted their at-home (AH) WTC with the levels of their WTC experienced overseas, i.e., the effect of SA on the learners' WTC after they return. The foci of most of these studies are China, Korea, and Japan, where SA is a more common experience for students.

For example, Yashima and Zenuk-Nishide (2008) conducted a comparative study of Japanese high school students ($n = 165$) over three years and concluded that the WTC of the 16 SA students was clearly higher than the AH groups. They suggested that this was the result of being able to fully participate in a community of practice. Leis (2015) reported a similar finding for his Japanese SA student participants in Australia, although theirs was only a short stay (10 days). Moreover, in Korea, D.-M. Kang (2014) found that the WTC of the sixty university students he surveyed was significantly developed as a result of their SA experiences.

As for Chinese SA students, Han and Wang (2018), Yang (2015), and Bamfield (2014), came to similar conclusions that SA candidates in Australia, USA, and UK (respectively) generally displayed higher levels of WTC than in China, where opportunities for speaking English in or out of class are severely limited, and therefore their WTC is not able to fully develop.

On the other hand, studies which contrast the WTC of migrants in their own country of origin with that in their new living environment seem to be restricted to my studies (Cameron, D., 2013, 2015). The circumstances of these immigrants are quite different from

a Study Abroad experience, where mostly young students are only living temporarily in the L2 speaking community. In fact, these new permanent residents need to survive economically and socially in this context, so it would seem important to not only investigate the variables which affect their WTC in and out of the classroom in more depth, but also explore the effect that their past L2 learning experiences may have had on their present WTC.

2.4.5 Summary of section

The aim of Section 2.4 was to present a discussion of the question as to whether the phenomenon of WTC is purely situational or the result of a stable personality trait which extends to multiple situations. In other words, is WTC a dynamic or trait human characteristic? This particular debate has been ongoing among WTC scholars from the beginnings of WTC research in the 1980s until the present day. It is possible that some aspects of the variables influencing WTC are, in fact, consistent over time and context and only in-depth longitudinal studies may be able to reveal such findings. Using Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) as a basis for such investigations adds another dimension. Larsen-Freeman and L. Cameron have advised SLA researchers that variability should be considered a central feature of dynamic/complex systems, and they should investigate “both stability and variability in order to understand the developing system” (2008b, p. 206). In reference to WTC, in particular, Larsen-Freeman (2016a) proposes:

Rather than see learner traits as stable phenomena that exist apart from the social context in which SLA takes place, we understand that the very traits are not impervious to the effect of context. To cite a very simple example, willingness to communicate may well fluctuate depending on the circumstances of the situation. This is not to say that there is no stability in learner traits, nor that one cannot generalize, but the level of generalization is abstract and stereotypic, one that often does not hold at the level of the individual. (p. xii)

Although there have been a considerable number of studies of WTC as a situational or dynamic variable, there are still limited examples of researchers using DST as a theoretical background to explore variations in time and physical context and the significance of these changes for their participants' WTC, particularly in a migration situation.

Therefore, the second and third research questions of this study are posed as follows: *How do the learners' levels of WTC vary from their classroom in Iran to their classroom in NZ, and how do they vary from one semester to another in NZ?*

2.5 Interaction of variables in a context – WTC within an ecosystems framework

2.5.1 Dynamic Systems Theory & ecosystems

In an introduction to the dynamic relationship between learner and context, Larsen-Freeman proposes that “complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) offers a different way of thinking. It is an ecological theory” (2016a, p. xi). She and her co-author had previously suggested that “it relates well and therefore embraces ecological approaches that adopt an analogy between complex ecological systems and human language using/learning systems” (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, L., 2008b, p. 201). Ushioda (2015) supports this assertion:

The metaphor of an ecosystem is certainly a strong feature of recent discussions of CDST in our field ... Ecological perspectives on language learning and use have been helpful in capturing holistically the complex processes that take place within learners and between learners and their sociocultural environments. (p. 48)

This connection between DST and ecosystems can provide a more concrete means of describing the interconnections between learner and context, and for the purpose of this study, the variables which affect learners' WTC and their physical and temporal circumstances. Van Lier (2004) has explained that ecological research takes into consideration such factors of space and time, while locating an individual within their own particular ecological or eco-system (see Chapter 3, Section 3.6 below for a discussion of ‘ecological validity’ in SLA research).

Moreover, the concept of *nested* systems, wherein individuals are pictured as members of a hierarchical set of levels of context, which stretch from *micro-*, *meso-*, *exo-*, to *macro-*, is attributed to Bronfenbrenner (1979). He described human development, in general, as “a product of interaction between the growing human organism and its environment” (p. 16) and introduced an “evolving scientific perspective as the *ecology of human development*” (p. 21). This “*ecological environment* is conceived topologically as a nested arrangement of

concentric structures, each contained within the next” (p.22). Such environments were later described and expanded upon by Bronfenbrenner (1993) as the following four layers [additions to his earlier propositions are in italics]:

A *microsystem* is a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical, social, and symbolic features that invite, permit, or inhibit, engagement in sustained, progressively more complex interaction with, and activity in, the immediate environment. (p. 15)

A *mesosystem* comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing person. *Special attention is focused on the synergistic effects created by the interaction of developmentally instigative or inhibitory features and processes present in each setting.* (p. 22)

The *exosystem* comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings, at least one of which does not contain the developing person, but in which events occur that indirectly influence processes within the immediate setting in which the developing person lives. (p. 24)

The *macrosystem* consists of the overarching pattern of micro- meso- and exosystems characteristic of a given culture, subculture, or other extended social structure, *with particular reference to the developmentally instigative belief systems, resources, hazards, lifestyles, opportunity structures, life course options and patterns of social interchange that are embedded in such overarching systems.* (p. 25)

Perhaps an appropriate visual metaphor for Bronfenbrenner’s (1993) nested ecosystems is the iconic set of Russian babushka dolls, in that each doll or ecosystem is nested inside the other with the outer *macrosystem* enclosing all the others. However, unlike the Russian dolls, the key qualities of these systems are the linkages between them and the influences that they have on each other. In addition, Bronfenbrenner (1989) added a *chronosystem* to

his original construct which runs across all these systems and relates to time, while encompassing all the experiences an individual has had over their lifetime.

Subsequently, SLA researchers and theorists have adopted Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and adapted it to language learning classrooms. Thus, they have proposed the view that SLA is "an emergent phenomenon, triggered by the availability of affordances in the environment, heavily dependent on an individual's perception of these affordances and his/her willingness to participate actively in their use" (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2008, p. 23).

More recently, Mercer (2016) has summarised this multi-level nested systems approach to the contexts of language learning: "[E]cological systems draw attention to the fact that we are situated within multiple layers of interconnected contexts as well as our own personal history, all of which are continually undergoing change across time at different paces" (p. 14). She emphasises the fact that "we cannot meaningfully understand one level of context without fully appreciating its relationship to the other levels of contexts and cultures within the overall ecological system as they are all interconnected with one another" (p. 14).

According to van Lier (2004, p. 210), Bronfenbrenner's model was most valuable for its emphasis on how "instigative and debilitating forces can be tracked between one ecosystem and another"; and Bronfenbrenner's view of ecology allows "an organic description of context, moving from the micro to the macro and definitely moving beyond the classroom walls" (van Lier, 1997, p. 785). However, he later criticised the nested systems diagram as an example of a "reductive tool", although still a "useful heuristic" (2011, p. 386).

In this study, I acknowledge that the use of this ecosystems diagram could be a type of theoretical or representational straitjacket, but all such visual interpretations of the "complex and messy" (van Lier, 2002, p. 144) relationships between language learners and their environment are clearly deficient to some extent. The value of Bronfenbrenner's model for the current research context is that it allows for a detailed presentation, interpretation, and discussion of the data relating to WTC at all levels of the ecosystem, from *micro-* to *macro-*, within which the participants find themselves, that is, in the language learning classrooms of Iran and NZ and the wider educational and cultural milieux of both countries.

Thus, at the *microsystemic* level, it is possible to highlight the factors which affect the levels of the WTC of the participants in their NZ classroom. Individual variables such as motivation and personality can be explored as well as their social relationships with teachers and classmates. Following Peng's (2014) suggestion, the participants' past learning experience and outside-the-class activities can be regarded as examples of a linkage between the classroom setting and other possible settings, thus creating a *mesosystem*. As a result, it is possible to explore the influences that their previous English language learning experience in Iran have had on their present classroom WTC in NZ. In addition, their use of English outside the classroom in Iran and in NZ may have a positive or negative influence on their in-class communication, so their levels of WTC in both these contexts should also be investigated. The *exosystem* which influences the WTC of these participants is interpreted in this study as the curricula of their schools or universities in both in Iran and NZ, as well as a range of external factors, which are beyond the immediate control of the learner, although having a direct effect on their lives. Finally, at the *macrosystemic* level, cultural aspects of life in Iran and NZ may have an influence on their WTC in English, in or out of class, although the notion of 'culture' as a static and bounded system was rejected by Bronfenbrenner (1989), when he describes the *macrosystem* as "any extended social structure" (p. 25). Therefore, any conclusions drawn at this level should relate more to the individuals in this study and avoid stereotypical generalisations (see Section 2.5.5 below for further discussion related to the notion of 'culture').

However, as Mercer (2016) explains:

One key implication of this [ecological] perspective is that we cannot meaningfully understand one level of context without fully appreciating its relationship to the other levels of contexts and cultures within the overall ecological system as they are all interconnected with one another. (p. 14)

This emphasis on interconnectedness between the various levels of the ecosystem as well as between the participants and their environment, in addition to the notion of a *chronosystem* of their past and present life experience, fits well with the aim of this project to create a fuller picture of the WTC of these migrant learners and the variables which are influential on this construct in a variety of different contexts.

(See Section 6.1 and Figure 6.1 of Chapter 6 below for a presentation of the ecosystems framework as it relates to the WTC of the participants in this study)

2.5.2 Empirical studies of WTC based on ecosystems theory

The suitability of this framework for the description of WTC as a contextual construct was initially proposed by Peng (2012, 2014) and Cao (2009b, 2011) as a result of their concurrent PhD studies. Although they did not make the connection with Dynamic Systems Theory, they did view an ecological perspective as a way to *dynamically* represent “the interrelationship between the variables interacting with situational WTC in class” (Cao, 2011, p. 469). Peng (2012) also found that her participants’ classroom WTC was “socioculturally constructed as a function of the interaction of individual and environmental factors, both inside and outside the classroom” (p. 211).

In terms of the ecosystems framework, the main focus for both researchers (Peng and Cao) was the *microsystem* of the classroom, although interviews with their participants provided some insights into the other layers or levels of the framework. Cao (2009a) discusses the positive and negative influences on the learners’ WTC of the *mesosystem*, such as opportunities for out-of-class social life; *exosystem* – family problems; and *chronosystem* – past life experiences. In addition, Peng (2012) identified the learners’ past learning experiences and participation in extracurricular activities as elements in the *mesosystemic* level, class curriculum at the *exosystemic* level, and cultural factors at the *macrosystemic* level, as influencing her participants’ classroom WTC.

In the context of Iran, two studies using the nested ecosystems model of Bronfenbrenner (1993) as an analytical framework were conducted and reported on in 2016. In a qualitative case study of six students at a private English language institute, Elahi-Shirvan and Taherian (2016) isolated six factors as affecting the WTC of their participants at the *microsystem* classroom level: students’ beliefs, motivations, affective, linguistic, and cognitive factors, and classroom context. At other levels of the ecosystems framework, they identified past learning experiences at the *mesosystemic* level, curriculum and assessment practices at the *exosystemic* level, and social and cultural factors at the *macrosystemic* level, to be of significance for their participants. However, the conductors of another Iranian study, Khajavy, Ghonsooly, Hosseini Fatemi, and Choi (2016), although discussing the full

ecosystems framework in their review of WTC literature, focussed only on results from the *microsystem* of the classroom in their quantitative survey of two hundred and forty-three Iranian university students.

Other researchers into WTC have combined a DST approach with that of nested ecosystems to a limited extent. For example, Mulvaney (2015) in his case study of three Thai university students sees their L2 WTC as situationally emergent as part of a dynamic system but also “situated in a larger context of interacting elements and systems which include micro-scale and macro-scale temporal, psychological, and socio-cultural components” (p. 71). On the other hand, Syed (2016), while suggesting that “DST offers a complex and holistic perspective of context covering micro- meso-, exo-, and macro-systems” (p. 53), also maintains that DST provides “a broader lens for reframing the search for and examining the underlying variables, on the one hand, and the patterns of behaviour of the variables, on the other” (p. 53).

As the number of studies combining DST and the ecosystems framework to investigate and present findings related to L2 WTC is so far quite limited, further investigation is warranted to test the usefulness of this approach. Whether examining WTC from a DST or ecosystems vantage point, the key concept is interconnectedness between the individual and the systems, and interrelationships between the components which make up the systems. Therefore, for this study, at the *meso-*, *exo-*, and *macrosystemic* levels, it is necessary to understand more clearly the educational and cultural context of Iran and NZ as they pertain to these migrant participants.

2.5.3 Background to the educational context in Iran

It is impossible to separate education, in this case language education, from the prevailing historical and social climate of a country, particularly Iran, which has experienced major upheavals in the lifetimes of the students and Iranian teachers in this study. According to Riazi (2005), English language teaching was popularised in the time of the Pahlavi Dynasty (1925-1979) and it became more common for foreign experts to work in Iran as well as for Iranian students to travel overseas. Universities were established, and the literacy rate gradually increased. “English was the major second language of the country and was included in the curriculum of both schools and universities” (Riazi, 2005, p. 106).

After the Islamic Revolution of 1979, curriculum changes took place which attempted to eradicate Western ideas and replace them with Islamic values (Tavakoli & Tavakol, 2018). English was maintained as a second compulsory language, but more status was attributed to Arabic as the language of Islamic thought (see also Borjian, 2013; Mokhtarnia, 2011; Zarrinabadi & Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, 2018). Nevertheless, English has remained compulsory (now for seven years) at junior and senior high school and is needed for entry into university, although the skills of reading and writing English are emphasised more than oral communication.

Since the 1970s, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been a widely accepted pedagogical approach which maintains that effective communication (primarily oral) is the ultimate aim of learning another language (Allwright, 1977). However, CLT has come under attack for being prejudiced in favour of native-speaker teachers (Harmer, 2007), and it is important not to assume that approaches originating in the West are also suited to other contexts (Littlewood, 2011).

At the time that the participants in this study were learning English at school or university in Iran (1970-2010), CLT methods were not commonly practised. Razmjoo (2007), in his comparative study of Iranian high school and private language institute textbooks, concluded that CLT principles were not utilised in Iranian high schools because of the inadequacy of the government produced textbooks. In fact, according to Moiiinvaziri (2008, p. 134), “many Iranian texts often contain material which fails to capture the interest of students due to the heavy emphasis on vocabulary and grammar”.

However, in the private language institutes, overseas English texts based on the principles of CLT *are* used (Razmjoo, 2007). Ahmadi Darani (2012) also refers to these institutes as having a higher level of success in English language teaching than their state equivalents. In fact, taking advantage of such classes is considered the only way for parents to help their children learn English.

Moreover, Z. Vaezi (2008) suggested that Iranian students and teachers of English are disadvantaged by “a lack of resources and little contact with the target language” (p. 54). Despite her opinion that “Iran has visibly been opening up to the world”, ... “few native

English speakers are permitted to teach in Iran, therefore, Iranian students don't have the opportunity to benefit from native speakers' teaching language" (p. 58).

In their investigation into EFL students' motivation in Iran, Papi and Abdollahzadeh (2012) describe the English teaching curriculum promoted by the Iranian Ministry of Education as having been developed in a top-down manner without sufficiently taking into account learners' and teachers' ideas about "teaching methods, materials, environment and teaching time" (p. 577). Teaching methodology in Iran remains a combination of the Grammar/Translation and Audiolingual methods, which have not been commonly used in Western countries since the 1970s (see Sadeghi, K., & Ghaderi, 2018).

Trends in recent decades toward communicative approaches to second language (L2) pedagogy have emphasized the significance of cultivating communicative competence in L2 learners (Green, 2000). These approaches to instruction are based on the premise that learners' L2 communicative competence is developed via performance and exchange of information (Ellis, 2008). Therefore, if the generally negative impression given by the studies discussed above is accurate, the present English teaching situation in many Iranian schools and universities may not be conducive to the fostering of students' WTC in English. It should be noted, however, that these views are being published in English medium journals and as such may be seen as 'safer' opportunities for Iranian authors to criticise the state education system.

2.5.4 Background to the educational context in NZ

The other learning context for this study is the NZ English language classroom. In NZ the teaching of ESL has its origins in the 1960s and 1970s in the assistance offered to migrants and refugees, and the teaching of English for educational purposes. In terms of the Auckland University of Technology (AUT), School of Language and Culture (SOLC) English classes, students are adult migrant learners from many parts of the world, but with significant groups from Asia (especially China) and the Middle East (Iran, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia) and smaller numbers from Africa (Sudan, Somalia, Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea). There is a significant number of refugees, as NZ has both a quota UNHCR (United Nations Refugee Agency) commitment and also accepts some asylum seekers who arrive without documentation.

In the past, from my own experience as an English teacher, and according to Ker, Adams, and Skyrme, (2013):

The prevailing model of language teaching in NZ could best be described as eclectic, albeit with a strong continuing influence from communicative language teaching, frequently combined with a content-based (thematic) course design. While published materials are used, the drive for authenticity and relevance to NZ leads many teachers and institutions to produce their own. (p. 232)

However, at this university (AUT), with a recent shift to the preparation of students for academic study, reading, writing, and listening are receiving a greater focus in SOLC English classes than speaking (personal communication). Therefore, the principles of CLT are being narrowed to serve the need for students to communicate more in an academic environment rather than in the outside NZ community.

As can be seen from the previous discussion of Iranian English language teaching practices (Section 2.5.3), Iranian students' learning experiences in their NZ classroom may differ markedly from their previous study environment. The medium of teaching is English, their fellow students are from many different countries and cannot speak Farsi, a strong emphasis still remains on spoken English as the primary means of communication, and materials for teaching are based less on standardised textbooks than on appropriate worksheets selected by their teachers. Another possible obstacle faced by these students are perceived differences in cultural norms inside and outside the classroom in NZ.

2.5.5 Culture of Iran and culture of NZ

In this section, I present contrasting views of the term 'culture' as represented by the theorists Mercer (2016) and Hofstede (Hofstede Insights, n.d.), and examples of other WTC researchers' approach to this aspect of their studies both in NZ and other countries. In addition to a brief introduction to the social situation in which my Iranian participants found themselves in NZ, I provide an explanation of the extent to which I anticipated shared aspects of participants' cultural backgrounds and Iranian cultural practices might or might not shape the findings of my study.

At the *macrosystem* level of an ecosystem, culture may be an overriding influence according to Bronfenbrenner (1993, see Section 2.5.1 above), but one should be cautious about ascribing stereotypical features to a particular national group, such as the Iranians in this study. Mercer (2016) suggests that:

Individuals are no longer understood as being straightforwardly embedded in specific cultures but are viewed as being connected to many cultures and subcultures creating a personally unique network of individual cultures, which may vary in their importance and significance for an individual and which is open to change and development across time. (p. 14)

In fact, it is important to note here that Iran is a country with a population of approximately 83 million and covers a total area of 1,635,000 square kilometres with widely differing ethnic groups and languages. The dominant groups are: “Persians, native speakers of the country’s official language, Farsi; Azaris, native speakers of Turkish and Turkic dialects; and speakers of numerous other indigenous Iranian languages such as Kurdish, Baluchi, Lori, Arabic, Turkmen, and Guilaki” (Zarrinabadi & Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, 2018, p. 81). It shares its borders in the Middle East with countries such as Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan, Armenia, and Afghanistan. Therefore, even at a national *macrosystemic* level, the participants in this study could not be assumed to have shared the same cultural experiences and influences.

However, on the other hand, a more traditional definition of culture is “shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations” (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003, p. 140). Using the categories popularised by Hofstede (Hofstede Insights, n.d.), Iranian cultural practices are described as intermediate in power distance (i.e., hierarchical), with strong in-group collectivism, a relatively feminine society (i.e., caring for others), high preference for avoiding uncertainty (i.e., need for rules), strongly normative in long term orientation (i.e., respect for tradition), and low in indulgence (i.e., a culture of restraint).

As for NZ culture, according to Hofstede (Hofstede Insights, n.d.), it is very low on power distance (i.e., lack of hierarchy), individualist, a masculine society (i.e., competitive), neutral

on uncertainty avoidance, normative in long term orientation (i.e., respect for tradition), and high on indulgence (i.e., enjoy life and have fun). In comparison with Iran, NZ has quite different scores on most of these dimensions. As mentioned above, such generalisations may not be helpful when dealing with individuals, but they give a sense that the learners in this study may be faced with more challenges than just a new language.

In fact, previous WTC researchers have commonly attributed variations in levels of WTC (mostly negative) to cultural differences. For example, Chinese culture has been examined by Peng (2007b, 2014), Lu and Hsu (2008), Zeng (2010), Yue (2014, 2016), and Bamfield (2014), and generally considered to have a role to play in their Chinese participants' unWTC (unwillingness to communicate). Other nationalities are represented by Pattapong (2010): Thai students; Piechurska-Kuciel (2011): Polish students; Al-Murtadha and Feryok (2017): Yemeni students; Syed and Kuzborska (in press): Pakistani students; and Al Amrani (2019): Omani students. In respect to Iran, Elahi Shirvan and Taherian (2016) identify three culturally related factors at the *macrosystemic* level which influenced their participants' WTC, i.e., face saving culture, hierarchical relationships in Iranian society, and learning by repetition culture. Perhaps, however, it is easier to determine negative rather than positive influences on WTC because participants are readier to share their unhappy experiences.

In one of very few WTC studies which have been conducted in NZ with permanent migrants, Zander (2016) found that most of her six participants of various nationalities (four from South America, one from Thailand, and one from Greece) felt they did not have much in common culturally with New Zealanders. They found New Zealanders to be "overly polite, too distant, superficially friendly and unapproachable" (p. 71). Zander suggested that these perceived differences hindered their integration into NZ society and lowered their WTC. Thus, even national groups who may have a reputation for extraversion and sociability are affected by the reception they receive from local interlocutors. In another NZ study by Zhong (2013), she concluded that her Chinese migrant participants were affected by cultural restraints such as fear of losing face and appearing to show off, and therefore made little effort even to try to communicate with other New Zealanders.

In terms of social and geographical background, it is important to note that NZ is a small country of nearly 5 million people and is made up of three main islands in the South Pacific

Ocean lying west of Australia. Although it has had a history of migration since the country was first settled by Polynesian peoples in the 13th century, and then by Europeans in the early 19th century, it has not otherwise experienced large waves of immigrants. In fact, the government has carefully controlled the numbers of migrants and refugees, and with its geographical isolation, NZ has been able to avoid the issue of amnesty seeking refugees arriving by boat, as is the situation which faces Australia at present. Since the 1970s, NZ has accepted refugees but in strictly limited numbers (only 750 per year) via the UNHCR scheme, plus a small number of visitors who apply for asylum on arrival in New Zealand (including some of the participants in this study). Most migrants to New Zealand prefer to settle in Auckland, the largest city by far (1.66 million at June 2017), as was the case for the participants in this study. However, Iranians make up only a small minority of Auckland's population (approximately 2500) and do not live in any one particular area as is sometimes the case in other large cities (e.g., Los Angeles, with the largest population of Iranians outside Iran).

As a result, although a shared cultural background could be a factor affecting these Iranian students' levels of WTC, it would be unwise to make assumptions about nationality groups, even if certain "groups may show different average or baseline levels of a given trait" (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 558). In the *microsystem* of their class, particularly in NZ, such migrants would be communicating with a wide range of classmates from countries all over the world, as well as the *mesosystem* of outside-the-class, where the multicultural nature of Auckland would bring them in contact with many different people. Therefore, the cultural influences experienced by my participants could be complex and unpredictable.

Certainly, for the Iranians in my study, I did not anticipate that these 10 representatives of a country of 83 million inhabitants with such widely differing ethnic groups and languages would share the same cultural attributes. Although they may have had certain values and aspects of cultural identity in common (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003), I also recognised the potential influence of "the many cultures and subcultures" on these individuals' cultural development (Mercer, 2016, p. 14). In fact, the participants in this study did share some past educational experiences in learning English in Iran and a common language, as well as their status as migrants in a new country, which were relevant factors in my investigation of

WTC (see also Chapter 1, Sections 1.1 and 1.4 above; Chapter 2, Sections 2.5.3, 2.5.4 above; Chapter 3, Section 3.4.3 below).

However, for the purposes of this study, I was more interested in how the individual participants felt their WTC in NZ and Iran was affected (or not) by some specific aspects of their cultural background and their exposure to a new culture in NZ. As a result, although they were initially invited to join this study because they belonged to a specific nationality group, my focus was on their individual perceptions of influences on their WTC, which may or may not have a cultural origin.

(See also Chapter 7, Section 7.4.4, Macrosystem)

2.5.6 Summary of section

The aim of Section 2.5 was to present an argument for the usefulness of the ecosystems framework in presenting the findings of WTC studies based on Dynamic Systems Theory. From a complexity perspective, Mercer (2011) has noted “the importance of understanding learners as holistic beings who are nested within the bigger systems of their personal histories, their lives and various contexts” (p. 435).

Although a number of researchers have carried out empirical studies using this framework over the last decade, there are only a few who have focussed on all the levels of the ecosystem, from *micro-* to *macro-*. If attention is to be paid to as many as possible of the different contexts L2 learners find themselves in, “the wider ecology of external social and environmental conditions” should become part of our focus as well as foregrounded elements such as WTC (Ushioda, 2015, pp. 51–52). Therefore, the educational and cultural context of the learner, both past and present, has significance for the researcher.

Consequently, the fourth research question of this study is posed as follows: *How can the factors affecting learners’ levels of WTC be interpreted within an ecosystems framework?*

2.6 Research aims and research questions

The review of literature in the previous sections has helped to identify some of the most significant theoretical, methodological, and contextual gaps in research on L2 WTC as they relate to my study. Identification of specific variables which influence learners’ WTC either

negatively or positively remains a valid empirical pursuit, particularly when qualitative methods allow the researcher to determine why such factors are important to the learner. Variation in the levels of a learner's WTC recognises the dynamic quality of this construct and, as MacIntyre et al. (2011) have proposed, an "individual differences approach and a dynamic dialogical approach would complement each other well, and WTC can and should be studied from both perspectives" (p. 93). In addition, Dynamic Systems Theory can provide a lens with which to view the multiple contexts within which a L2 learner operates (Ushioda, 2015). Finally, the nested ecosystems framework can furnish a theoretical and visual metaphor for the interconnected contextual factors revealed to the researcher by the participants. So far, few studies have explored the full range of the ecosystem in relation to a learner's WTC, specifically the *meso*-, *exo*-, and *macro*-levels, which cover such aspects as out-of-class WTC, past learning experience, and national educational and cultural systems.

Overall, my aim in carrying out this study was to explore the nature of the willingness to communicate in English of a group of Iranian migrants to NZ. Using Dynamic Systems Theory as a background, and an ecosystems framework to illustrate how the various factors interrelate which influence their WTC, I planned a qualitative study to investigate in more depth the various contexts in which these participants demonstrated their differing levels of WTC. I felt that the dynamic, situational phenomenon of WTC could only be examined adequately in a longitudinal investigation, where variations related to time and space could be mapped in detail. As a result, multiple case studies were my choice of methodological approach.

Finally, my study was designed and executed to provide answers to the following research questions (see Chapter 3, Section 3.2, below for further discussion):

- RQ1** *What are the factors which influence Iranian learners' WTC inside and outside the classroom, in Iran and in NZ, in their, and their teachers' opinions?*
- RQ2** *How do the learners' levels of WTC vary from their classroom in Iran to their classroom in NZ?*
- RQ3** *How do the learners' levels of WTC vary from one semester to another in NZ?*

RQ4 *How can the factors affecting learners' levels of WTC be interpreted within an ecosystems framework?*

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Following this introduction, Section 3.2 of this chapter elaborates in more detail on the research questions raised at the end of the Literature Review in Chapter 2, further explaining their intent and introducing the methods used to investigate them. Section 3.3 outlines the methodological approach used for this study and the philosophy behind it. Section 3.4 details the 3 phases of the research design, and the nature of the context from which the participants were drawn and their demographics, as well as the role of the researcher and related ethical issues. Section 3.4 identifies which instruments were used, and why, and the data collection procedures that were followed, using one participant as an example. Section 3.5 describes the theoretical basis for the choice of data analysis techniques and processes, and demonstrates how they were carried out. Finally, in Section 3.6, the notion of 'trustworthiness' is discussed both in regard to qualitative research theory and its practical application to the manner in which this study was carried out.

3.2 Research questions and how they were investigated

In this section, the Research Questions which were raised at the end of Chapter 2 are presented and explained, followed by a description of the methods used to investigate them. They have been divided into smaller component parts to reflect the different aspects of this investigation.

Research Question 1

- 1a. *Which particular individual and contextual factors do Iranian learners regard as influential on their willingness to communicate behaviour inside and outside the English language classroom in i) Iran and ii) NZ?*
- 1b. *What do they think are their reasons for this choice of factors?*
- 1c. *How do Iranian learners' perceptions of the influential WTC factors in their NZ classroom behaviour align with i) their teachers' and ii) the researcher/observer's views?*

The first part of this research question is designed to investigate whether Iranian learners of English in NZ consider any psychological or situational factors related to them as individuals, or as members of a context such as a classroom, to be influential on their *in-class* WTC behaviour. If so, which factors do they think are important? Are these factors different or the same in Iran and NZ? Do their teachers or the researcher share their views of factors which may be influencing their WTC behaviour in NZ?

In this study, *RQ1* in respect to *in-class* WTC is answered with data from questionnaires (Appendices A & B) completed by learners, interviews with the learners (Appendices F & G), and stimulated recalls of learners related to observed lessons (Appendix E). These data are triangulated with classroom observations of the learners' WTC by the researcher (Appendix D), and interviews with and questionnaires completed by their teachers (Appendices H & C).

In regard to *out-of-class* WTC, this research question is also designed to investigate whether Iranian learners of English in NZ consider any psychological or situational factors related to them as individuals, or as members of a national context such as Iran or NZ, to be influential on their out-of-class WTC behaviour. If so, are these factors different or the same in Iran and NZ?

Data to answer *RQ1* in relation to *out-of-class* WTC are obtained from questionnaires completed by learners, and interviews with the learners.

Research Question 2

2a. Which variations do Iranian learners identify in their WTC behaviour from their EFL classroom in Iran to their ESL classroom in NZ?

2b. What do they think are the reasons for any change in their WTC behaviour?

This research question is designed to investigate whether Iranian learners of English in NZ feel that their in-class WTC behaviour has changed since they migrated from Iran to NZ and began learning English in NZ classrooms? Has it increased or decreased or stayed the same? If so, what do they think is the reason for this?

Data to answer *RQ2* are obtained from questionnaires completed by the learners, and interviews with the learners.

Research Question 3

- 3a. *Which variations do Iranian learners identify in their WTC behaviour in their NZ ESL classrooms from one semester to another?*
- 3b. *What do they think are the reasons for any change in their WTC behaviour?*
- 3c. *How do Iranian learners' perceptions of any changes in their WTC behaviour align with their teachers' and the researcher/observer's views?*

This research question is designed to investigate whether Iranian learners of English in NZ feel that their WTC has increased, stayed the same, or decreased from one semester's NZ English class to the next semester's class. If so, what do they think is the reason for this? Do their teachers or the researcher share the learners' views of factors which may be influencing their WTC behaviour?

RQ3 is answered with data from questionnaires completed by learners, and interviews with the learners. These data are triangulated by classroom observations of the learners' WTC by the researcher, and interviews with and questionnaires completed by their teachers.

Research Question 4

4. *How can the individual and contextual factors which influence learners' WTC inside and outside the English language classroom in Iran and NZ be interpreted within an ecosystems framework?*

This research question is designed to investigate how the factors which the learners consider influential on their WTC both in Iran and NZ can be allocated to the different levels of an ecosystem, i.e., *micro-*, *meso-*, *exo-* and *macrosystem*. In this way the person-in-context relational aspect of the learners can be highlighted (Ushioda, 2009). Two of the ten participants are chosen as case study examples of high and low levels of WTC.

RQ4 is answered with data from questionnaires completed by learners, and interviews with the learners. These data are triangulated by classroom observations of the learners' WTC by the researcher, and interviews with and questionnaires completed by their teachers.

3.3 Methodological approach and philosophy

3.3.1 Research approach

The nature of the research questions posed in Section 2 (above) lends itself to the use of a methodological approach which answers “how” and “why” questions (Hood, 2009; Yin, 2009). Although the identification of particular factors affecting the learners’ WTC inside and outside the classroom in Iran and NZ, changes in their WTC behaviour over time and place, and classroom preferences for activities which promote their WTC could be quantified, the main focus of this study is *why* they have these views and *how* these views align with those of their teachers and the researcher/observer.

Case studies as empirical enquiries which can provide such descriptive and interpretive data are recommended as appropriate for investigations of this nature. According to Yin (2009), a case study would be used if you wanted to understand a real-life phenomenon in depth in a particular context and over a particular length of time. The construct of WTC as experienced by this group of Iranian learners in the contexts of NZ and Iran, inside and outside the classroom over a period of 12 months, could be regarded as such a phenomenon. This would satisfy van Lier’s (2005, p. 196) definition of a possible case as “a group of individuals with a common context, set of goals, or some kind of institutional boundedness”.

Although case studies can be supported by both quantitative and qualitative evidence, it is important to choose a method which is relevant to the particular study (van Lier, 2005; Yin, 2009). As most of the data in this study required to answer the research questions were collected using instruments such as semi-structured interviews, observations, and questionnaires with open-ended answers, and were analysed primarily by non-statistical methods, it satisfies Dörnyei’s (2007, p. 24) description of “qualitative research”. Moreover, the research design was emergent and responded with flexibility, the study took place in a natural setting (the classroom), it allowed the participants to reveal the meanings and interpretations of their actions, it focussed on a small sample size, and the research outcome was ultimately the product of my/the researcher’s subjective interpretation of the data (Dörnyei, 2007). Although such characteristics of qualitative investigations could be also regarded as weaknesses, Yin (2009, p. 15) states that case studies are “generalizable to theoretical propositions” although “not to populations or universes”.

Case studies can also contain multiple cases (Yin, 2009), as is the situation in this investigation, where a multiple case study approach was adopted and participants selected with some homogeneity (i.e., their original nationality was Iranian), which could serve to highlight their similarities and differences in the focal area of the study – their willingness to communicate in English. All these cases provided the means for cross-case analysis, while two individual cases are discussed in further depth in Chapter 6.

A common criticism or complaint about case study or qualitative research is the amount of time required to carry out the study (Dörnyei, 2007). However, “prolonged engagement” in the setting makes it possible for researchers to “have more than a snapshot view of the phenomenon” under scrutiny (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 69). In the SLA classroom research context, longitudinal case studies have also been commended for “their ability to document how changing contexts can change the nature of the learning experience” (Harklau, 2008, p. 27). Researchers and theorists disagree about the minimum length for a qualitative study to be considered longitudinal, but 9 months to a year has been suggested by Saldaña (2003) as a working average. In this study, I was able to track my participants for a period of 12-18 months with regular interviews and observations, which I felt contributed to the familiarity they felt in my presence, and the likelihood that they would be readier to share information with me (Harklau, 2008).

Yin (2009, p. 18) also suggests that case study inquiry “benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis”. An ecological approach to examining the situational construct of WTC would seem to be appropriate, as it emphasises the role of context and the dynamic interaction between the individual and the environment (van Lier, 2002). In this study, context refers to the dynamic interrelationship between the learners’ WTC and the *microsystem* of the classroom in which they interact with their teachers and classmates. It also refers to the wider *mesosystem* of the learners’ past English language learning experiences in Iran, the *exosystem* of curriculum requirements and the *macrosystem* of Iranian and NZ culture and society. This provided a framework in which to collect, analyse, and present data from the study. In fact, van Lier (2005, p. 195) has recommended Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) nested ecosystems as described above to provide a theory to connect context and case in the “complex and messy” case

study research field. A more detailed discussion of nested ecosystems and their place in dynamic systems theory can be found above in Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.1).

3.3.2 Research philosophy

As a researcher, it is also important to have an understanding of the philosophical background of the research practices which are being implemented in a particular study. Although Dörnyei (2007, p. 311) has suggested that researchers tend to use a research method with which they feel most comfortable based on their “personal training and research experience”, since reading more about the philosophy behind qualitative research, I can see how my intended study fits into Marshall and Rossman’s (2011, p. 2) description of qualitative research as being “pragmatic, interpretive and grounded in the lived experiences of people”. Qualitative researchers, moreover, view social phenomena holistically, reflect on their own biases and role in the inquiry, and use complex reasoning which is both deductive and inductive (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

The epistemological foundation of qualitative research is associated with the tradition of social enquiry that seeks to understand the meaning of human productions, that is, hermeneutics (the study of meaning). The philosopher Dilthey introduced the term ‘Verstehen’ (understanding), whereby humans express themselves through their productions, and an understanding is achieved by studying these observable productions, both current and past (Phillips, 1996). This is in contrast to ‘Erklären’ (explanation), which relates to the cause-effect type of knowledge produced by previous research in the social sciences (Phillips, 1996). In terms of philosophical perspectives, Dilthey’s ‘Erklären’ is associated with the paradigm of positivism, which stresses objective knowledge, while ‘Verstehen’ is reflected in interpretivism, a search for patterns of meaning via subjective understanding. Interpretivism is commonly associated with the qualitative approach.

Phenomenology, as developed by Husserl (1970), has been another important philosophical influence in qualitative research and relates to the consciousness of humans and their subjective experiences. It attempts to describe human phenomena but with a subjective understanding.

Therefore, my study, which attempts in a holistic way to investigate and describe the WTC behaviour of a small group of learner participants, fits into the paradigm of interpretivism and uses the typical research methods of interviews and observations, with analysis based on case studies and textual analysis. Historically it owes its philosophy to phenomenology and its epistemology to hermeneutics.

3.4 Study Design

3.4.1 Multiple case studies

As discussed in Section 3.1 above, a multiple case study approach was adopted for this investigation of the WTC of a group of Iranian English language students in a NZ classroom situation over an extended period of time, and with reference also to their past EFL educational experiences in Iran. The longitudinal, contextualised, and ecological nature of this study has been recommended by van Lier (2005) as appropriate for a case study approach.

3.4.2 Overview of the research design

The multiple case study consisted of three phases: Phase 1, the pilot study; Phase 2, the main study; Phase 3, the follow up study. The Phase 1 study was conducted in 2014 with 4 Iranian students and their 3 teachers in pre-university English language classes for a period of 2 semesters (8 months). 2 of those students were followed for a further semester in 2015, coinciding with the second semester of the Phase 2 study. Phase 2 included 6 new Iranian participants in the same type of class and their 9 teachers (2 of these teachers were also in the Phase 1 study) also for a period of 2 semesters (8 months). In this way, Phase 1 became integrated into Phase 2, when it became clear that the methods used were appropriate. The Phase 3 follow up study in 2016 tracked 2 Iranian students from the Phase 2 study into their undergraduate programme at the same university for a further semester.

Table 3.1 *Overview of research design*

| Phase | Length of study | Total of participants |
|---------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Phase 1 | Sem. 1 & 2, 2014 | 4 students* 3 teachers** |
| Phase 2 | Sem. 1 & 2, 2015 | 6 students 7 teachers |
| Phase 3 | Sem. 1, 2016 | 2 students *** |
| | In Total: 2 years 6 months | In Total: 10 individual students 10 individual teachers |

* 2 of these students were followed for 1 extra semester in Sem. 2, 2015

** 2 of these teachers also took part in Phase 2 in 2015

*** = 2 students from Phase 2 for 1 extra semester

The purpose of the Phase 1 pilot study was to test and, if necessary, refine the instruments and data collection plans to ensure that the sources of data for the purposes of the study would be rich enough to provide a ‘thick description’ of the WTC phenomenon (Rossman & Rallis, 2012; Yin, 2009). These data sources comprised questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations, followed by stimulated recalls with individual students. Their class teachers were also interviewed to determine their views of the students’ WTC as demonstrated in their classes (see Appendices A – H).

As the instruments and procedures used in the Phase 1 pilot study proved adequate for the task, no changes were made, so in the following sections of this chapter Phase 1 and 2 are treated as two equivalent parts of the main study.

3.4.3 Context & Participants (Phase 1, 2, & 3)

Context/Setting

The research site for the study was a NZ university (Auckland University of Technology, School of Language and Culture), although the seven consecutive classes (Intensive Literacy and Numeracy 6, Employment Skills English, Introduction to Academic English, Academic English 1, Academic English 2, Academic English 3, and English for Academic Study) which the adult participants in this study attended were pre-university, and were targeted at an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) level of approximately 4.5-5.5 (see Appendix W, Table W.12). The students’ levels were assessed before being enrolled in these

classes and by the time they had graduated from English for Academic Study, they were considered to have reached a level of 5.5 or 6 IELTS (Auckland University of Technology, n.d. b, p. 134). They were fulltime learners enrolled for semester periods of 4-5 months, but if they passed their final assessments, they could continue for further semesters until they reached a level at which they would be accepted into the university's undergraduate classes. The focus of their classes was to improve their English language skills in order to prepare them for future academic study in the university. Their classes covered the four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, but this study focussed on their willingness to communicate in the *speaking* aspect of their course. Their classes contained a variety of students from all parts of the world with each class including between 1-6 Iranian members.

Auckland University of Technology could be considered a typical instructional environment for migrants learning English in NZ and has a long history of pedagogy based on communicative language teaching methods (Ker, Adams, & Skyrme, 2013). As such, there is a strong emphasis in the classes on oral communication, which made it an ideal environment to observe students' WTC behaviour in spoken interactive events. Moreover, as I had taught there for 34 years by the time of the study, I had a familiarity with the site, the teachers and the participants, which made for easier access to the context, particularly for this longitudinal study (Duff, 2008).

On the other hand, in the Iranian English language learning and teaching context, particularly at the time described by most of the adult students in this study (1980-2010), state schools persisted with the grammar translation method and used government-produced texts with little content that encouraged spoken communication (Ahmadi Darani, 2012). Therefore, the participants in this study may have had little opportunity to display their WTC in English, even if they were motivated to do so. A key feature of English language provision in Iran in recent decades has been the growing proliferation of private English language institutes with a greater focus on communicative language teaching methods and use of Western-produced textbooks (Razmjoo & Riazi, 2006a & b; Riazi, 2005). Unless the students in this study were able to attend these institutions, they may not have had a chance to speak in English at all, even if they had had many years of learning English in school. It is debateable whether this is a serious disadvantage in a country where students may never use English in a conversation with a native English speaker or travel overseas to

an English-speaking country (see Akbari, 2015), but for the students in this study who immigrated to NZ, it could have had an influence on their WTC in English when they first arrived. (See also Chapter 2, Sections 2.5.3 & 2.5.4 above).

Participants

Who were they and why were they chosen?

Students

The reason that I chose to focus on Iranian students of English in NZ was that (as explained in Chapter 1, Section 1.1 above), in contrast to the reported ‘reluctance to speak’ of Iranians studying English in Iran (Ghonsooly, Khajavy, & Asadpour, 2012; Papi & Abdollahzadeh, 2012; Vaezi, S., 2007), in my English language classes, Iranian students, generally speaking, could be relied on for their willingness to communicate orally in classroom interaction activities. Therefore, I was interested in investigating the possible reasons for these differences in WTC from the Iranian to the NZ context. Moreover, Iranian students made up a sizeable group in AUT English classes, and unlike other nationalities, had mostly studied English in Iran before coming to NZ, so there was a means of comparing their past and present WTC. They were permanent migrants to NZ in contrast to the Asian EFL, Study Abroad, or Canadian learners of French as an L2, who had been the subjects of most WTC research to date. The fact that they were adult migrants could mean that their motivation and WTC were different from those of learners who were studying English in a non-English speaking environment, or who were only away from their country for a short period of time. In fact, no reports seem to have been published in the English medium so far specifically targeting the WTC of this Iranian nationality or cultural group in other countries. On the other hand, since the commencement of this study in 2014, a large volume of research has been published (in English) on the WTC of Iranian English language learners in Iran, which provides a means to compare the educational contexts of both countries (e.g., Baghaei, 2013; Elahi Shirvan & Taherian, 2016; Fallah, 2014; Ghanbarpour, 2014; Khatib & Nourzadeh, 2015; Mesgarshahr & Abdollahzadeh, 2014; Zarrinabadi & Khodarahmi, 2017).

Moreover, this choice of participants also allowed me to select multiple cases with some homogeneity (i.e., they may have a similar cultural, language, and educational background), which enabled me to focus more narrowly on the possible differences in their individual

levels and experience of WTC in their NZ classroom (see Dörnyei, 2007; Duff, 2008; Wang, 1999).

Teachers

In order to provide a wider range of viewpoints of the WTC of the Iranian student participants than just their own or my, the researcher/observer's, I decided to invite their class teachers to join the study. Although a few WTC researchers have canvassed the opinions of the teachers of their participants (see Cao, 2009a, 2016; Pawlak et al., 2016; Nikoietou, 2017), or teachers' general opinions on the value and nature of WTC (see Gkonou, Mercer, & Daubney 2018; Vongsila & Reinders, 2016), using teachers to provide a further triangulation of data in WTC studies is not yet widespread. As until recently the bulk of WTC research data has been quantitatively collected, and questionnaires only designed for and administered to students, the promotion of teachers to roles as participants in such studies is unique to this investigation so far. These teachers can also be regarded as multiple case studies, although they were only being investigated in regard to their views of the students' WTC in their classes.

How were they chosen?

Students

All the Iranian students in the relevant classes were invited to take part in the study through a posting on the online learning management system (Blackboard), which included a letter of invitation in Farsi and English (translated by an Iranian teaching colleague), the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix I) and the first Questionnaire (Appendix A). A teaching colleague also went into the classes at the end of a teaching session in the classes to answer any questions the students might have about the study, the Participant Information Sheet, or the Questionnaire. The students were assured that their participation was voluntary, and their confidentiality would be maintained. They were clearly informed that the study was not part of their classwork or assessment programme. Students who were willing to take part emailed me to arrange an interview time and hand in the completed Questionnaire and Consent Form (Appendix J). Further interviews, observations and stimulated recalls were subsequently arranged at mutually convenient times in the following two semesters.

Such criterion-based or purposive selection – an invitation to all Iranian students of English in the School of Language and Culture – ensured that the participants were keen volunteers but also meant that students who may have been less willing to communicate could have self-selected out of the study (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). As this is a qualitative case study, such a self-selection bias is perhaps less important than in a large quantitative study, but should still be considered when reporting the findings (see Dörnyei, 2007, pp. 100–101, 120).

Although, in total, 15 students took part in this 2½ year study, as some students did not continue studying after one semester, or did not complete all aspects of the study protocols, only the 10 student cases which are included in this thesis were able to be followed for two full semester periods over two consecutive class levels (one class per semester). In this way, all 10 students were able to be interviewed and observed on the same number of occasions, i.e., once per semester. 4 of these students, however, were interviewed and observed (2 of them) for an extra semester to add depth to the qualitative data collection.

Table 3.2 below gives details of the 10 students who participated in this study.

Table 3.2 *Student participants 2014-2016*

| Code name* | Gender | Age ** | Time studying English in Iran | Length of time in NZ ** | Time studying English in NZ ** | Time of participation in this study |
|------------|--------|--------|---|---|--|--|
| Abraham | Male | 35 | 5 years (high school) + 2 years (private school) + 3 years (university) | 2 years | 2 years | <i>Phase 1</i> S1 & 2 2014 |
| Azadeh | Female | 30 | 6 years (intermediate & high school) (+ 3 months private school) | 4 years | 2 years | <i>Phase 1 +</i> S1 & 2 2014 S2, 2015 |
| Ramin | Male | 44 | 3 years (intermediate) + 3 years (high school) | 4 years | 2 years | <i>Phase 1 +</i> S1 & 2 2014 S2, 2015 |
| Shirin | Female | 34 | 5 years (high school) | 4 years | 2 years | <i>Phase 1</i> S1 & 2 2014 |
| Golnaz | Female | 33 | 7 years | 3 years | 3 years | <i>Phase 2 & 3</i> S1 & 2, 2015 S1, 2016 |
| Tina | Female | 39 | 7 years (private & public) | 10 years | 3 years | <i>Phase 2 & 3</i> S1 & 2, 2015 S1, 2016 |
| Neda | Female | 31 | 7 years primary, high & university (+ 3-6 months private) | 2 years | 1 ½ years | <i>Phase 2</i> S1 & 2, 2015 |
| Sima | Female | 56 | 2 years/semesters (high school & university) 40 years ago (pre-1979 Revolution) | 8 months (but first in NZ 11 years ago) | 2 years (incl. 2 free semesters 2 years ago) | <i>Phase 2</i> S1 & 2, 2015 |
| Parinaz | Female | 23 | 7 years at high school & university | 3 years | 1 year | <i>Phase 2</i> S1 & 2, 2015 |
| Marjan | Female | 59 | 5 years private & public (pre-1979 Revolution) | 4 years | 1 semester | <i>Phase 2</i> S1 & 2, 2015 |

*Code name chosen by student or researcher

**At beginning of study participation.

For the Phase 1 study in S1 and 2, 2014, the Iranian students in three classes were invited to take part (18 possible participants in total), which resulted in 4 participants volunteering to join the study for the following two semesters. Their 3 class teachers were also interviewed and given questionnaires (Appendices H & C) to complete about their students.

For the Phase 2 Study in S1 and 2, 2015, the Iranian students in seven classes were invited to take part (18 possible participants in total), which resulted in 6 new participants volunteering to join the study for the following two semesters. 2 students (Azadeh and Ramin) from the Phase 1 study were also re-interviewed and observed in S2, 2015 as a follow up investigation to monitor any further changes in their WTC. The Phase 2 students' 9 class teachers were also interviewed and given questionnaires to complete about their students.

In S1, 2016, 2 students (Golnaz and Tina) from the main study (Phase 2) were interviewed again (although not observed) after attending the Diploma in English Language (DipEL) course (a first-year undergraduate course) to determine whether participation in a regular mainstream university course had an effect on their WTC. This is described as Phase 3 of the study.

Teachers

Over an 18-month period from S1 2014 to S1 2016, either by personal approach or email communication, I also invited all the class teachers of the Iranian student participants to be interviewed and their classes observed. They were given Participant Information Sheets (Appendix I) to read and encouraged to ask questions about the study. They were assured that their participation was voluntary, and their confidentiality would be maintained. If they agreed to take part, they were given Consent Forms to sign (Appendix J). They were asked to complete questionnaires about their students' WTC, and interviews and class observations were subsequently arranged at mutually convenient times. (For a summary of their demographics see Table 3.3 below).

Table 3.3 *Teacher participants 2014-2016*

| Code name* | Gender | Length of time teaching English** | Time teaching at AUT** |
|------------|--------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Joan | F | 14 years | 12 years |
| Angela | F | 33 years | 33 years |
| Fiona | F | 33 years | 12 years |
| Judith | F | 26 years | 20 years |
| Barbara | F | 31 years | 29 years |
| Kerry | F | 14 years | 14 years |
| Penny | F | 37 years | 29 years |
| Christine | F | 35 years | 28 years |
| Diana | F | 36 years | 35 years |
| Saman | M | 6 years | 2 years |

* Code name chosen by teacher or researcher

**At beginning of study

Discussion of Demographics

A case study (or studies) report is an opportunity for qualitative researchers to “tell the stories of the participants and portray them as real people” (Hood, 2009, p. 87). Moreover, a “clear connection between person and context” is necessary (van Lier, 2005, p. 205).

Therefore, the participants in this study need to be understood as more than just items in a demographic chart. Their willingness to communicate may have been affected by factors such as their age, educational background, and English language learning experience, migration situation in NZ, and arguably, gender (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3). A short description follows of the backgrounds of both student and teacher participants.

Students

The ten student participants in this study were all Iranian adults who were permanent migrants to NZ, ranging in age between 23 and 59, with an average age of 38 years. The fact that they had committed to living in an English-speaking country may have had an influence on their WTC, both inside and outside the classroom. The two older students (Marjan and

Sima) had studied English in Iran for a shorter period, when English was only taught at high school level, whereas the rest of the participants had at least 6 years' regular tuition at intermediate or middle school, and high school (later termed junior and senior high school). Therefore, the participants represented two different social and educational periods in Iranian society, pre- and post- the Revolution of 1979. Two of the younger group had continued with English at university in Iran while completing other degrees, and four had attended private English language institutions, which provided a more communicative focus in their curriculum, and greater emphasis on speaking English and opportunity to demonstrate their WTC (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5.3 above). Thus, all the participants' past experience in learning and communicating in English could be explored in this study.

The student participants had also been living in NZ from 8 months to 10 years, with an average of 3½ years. Their time spent studying English in NZ extended from one semester (6 months) to 3 years, mostly at this university (in total an average of approx. 2 years). As a result, they all had had some experience of NZ English language teaching practices, and in this way, their WTC in their more recent English language classrooms could be investigated (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5.4 above).

Although a gender balance among the participants would have been preferable to obtain a wider range of viewpoints (Marshall & Rossman, 2011), only two men volunteered to take part in the study, in contrast to eight women, but this mirrored the general composition of the English classes at the time, which were predominantly made up of female students, perhaps reflecting the need for adult migrant males to have jobs to support their families rather than to pursue further study. No issues were raised by the participants during the study as related to their gender roles and communication in English in Iran or NZ. Nor was religion, when discussed by two students, Tina and Abraham, a source of difficulty (at least in NZ), as they both regarded church attendance as a good opportunity to practise their English.

Teachers

Ten class teachers of the pre-university English classes in the AUT School of Language and Culture were interviewed and completed questionnaires about their Iranian students. Some classes had more than one teacher, in which case both were interviewed to expand the

number of viewpoints of a student's level and manifestation of WTC. They were almost all very experienced teachers of English (14-37 years), and longstanding members of staff (12-35 years). Therefore, it was likely that they had been trained in communicative language teaching methodology and they would be providing suitable opportunities for students to demonstrate their oral WTC in their classes. They were also all women, which is mostly the norm in this university's English language programme, with the one exception, Saman, who was a male short-term contract tutor in the process of completing a PhD. His viewpoint was valuable because he was also Iranian and had had a similar experience of English language learning and teaching in Iran to that of the student participants. Therefore, he might be able to provide further insight into the English language teaching practices of Iran and offer possible comparisons with the pedagogical practices he had observed in NZ.

3.4.4 Role of the researcher and ethical issues

My role in this study was as a distributor of questionnaires, interviewer, and an unobtrusive classroom observer. My intended stance was that of "empathic neutrality" as described by Patton (2002, p. 49). In this way, I attempted to be as objective as possible, but also to establish a rapport which allowed me to learn as much as possible from my interviewees. In the observations, I "maintain[ed] a passive presence, being as unobtrusive as possible and not interacting with the participants" (Hoepfl, 1997, p. 6). Full disclosure of my study's parameters and purposes, as recommended by Patton (2002), was also provided in the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix I). Although this may have affected the naturalness of my participants' WTC behaviour, the intensive and extensive nature of my role over a period of 8-18 months in the field was designed to build up "trusting relations", which would encourage more relaxed and normal behaviour (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 114). Furthermore, the semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for prepared as well as spontaneous questions so that "good use" was made of both my and the participants' time (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 114), while allowing flexibility to pursue areas the participants wished to elaborate on. It should be noted that with Norton (2013), I have "taken seriously the interpretations of events" presented by my participants and "sought to understand the world as they have understood it, and have not questioned whether their interpretation of events was the correct or true interpretation" (p.96).

Other issues which have been highlighted as concerns for qualitative researchers in relation to their roles are the negotiation of entry to and exit from the research site. Marshall and Rossman (2011, p. 114) recommend that researchers remain “true to their social identities” when initiating their study, so I did not attempt to conceal my position as a teacher in this institution. In fact, as I have been a lecturer at AUT for many years and have taught over a range of classes, it was likely that I had had some previous contact with the students in this study. Although I was not the class teacher of the participants, I was aware that as a researcher and a senior staff member, I could be viewed by the students as occupying a role of ‘power’. In that case, they may have felt under an obligation to take part in the study, particularly as Iranians are regarded as being part of a society where the “social roles of teachers and learners are ... rigidly drawn” (Eslami-Rasekh & Valizadeh, 2004, p. 2). By using a more indirect invitation process (an online institutional tool), I tried to avoid any possible feeling of compulsion or coercion on the part of the invitees. The actual number of participants was also 25-33% of those invited, which might be regarded as indicative of the voluntary nature of their participation.

I was also conscious of the fact that my gender may have influenced the behaviour of the interviewees, as the result of a difference in cultural attitudes towards women teachers in Iran by male and female students (see Babai Shishavan, 2010; Cortazzi, Jin, Kaivanpanah, & Nemati, 2015; Khosravizadeh & Pakzadian, 2013; Nemati & Kaivanpanah, 2013). However, as suggested in these studies, such attitudes differ from individual to individual and change over time, so it is difficult to draw clear conclusions.

Moreover, as a native English speaker, I had a superior role in terms of knowledge. In consideration of this situation, I chose to restrict my study to students with a fairly advanced level of English. Otherwise, it would have been more equitable for the interviews to be conducted in Farsi by a native speaker. I felt as an experienced English language teacher that I could conduct interviews with students that would be mutually comprehensible and that my questions were simple enough to be answered adequately (see Appendix F & G for examples). I was prepared to explain further if necessary but from the transcripts I can see that this was not often needed. Orally, as they were not recent arrivals in NZ, their spoken language was often better than their reading and writing skills.

As for exiting the study setting, it was possible that a relationship with some of the participants might continue in this university setting. Indeed, “being respectful of people and relationships is essential for being an ethical researcher” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 130). Giving information about and access to the final report (preferably in a simplified form) or published articles will be one way of showing respect for the time and energy volunteered by the participants, and this might benefit them in their future educational experiences. If some participants like to keep in touch, in keeping with principles of “reciprocity”, I may be able to assist them with other university related matters (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 121). Exiting the field can also be disturbing for the researcher after a period of prolonged social contact with the participants. Self-care strategies such as reflexive field notes, and peer debriefing with colleagues to deal with any possibly negative emotions, are recommended as tools to deal with such issues. In fact, Marshall and Rossman (2011, p. 130) suggest that the researcher’s own emotions are “valuable researcher tools”, increasing trustworthiness of data and warding off the danger of jumping to conclusions.

As with other writers on ethics in qualitative research, Kubanyiova (2008) draws a distinction between the macroethical principles required by bodies such as a university ethics committee, and the microethical considerations that a researcher faces in the process of conducting a study. The three core principles of macroethics are respect for persons, beneficence, and justice, which are covered in the New Zealand context by the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, a founding document signed in 1840 by representatives of the British Crown and various Māori chiefs from the indigenous population. These three key principles “apply to all research and particularly to research targeting specific cultures or social groups” (Auckland University of Technology, n.d. a, para. 2.5.1.1), and are renamed as Partnership, Participation, and Protection (see Appendix CC for a detailed description).

Microethics, on the other hand, relate to the “ethically important moments” (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004, p. 262) which may arise in the course of a project and require on the spot decisions and actions by the researcher, but are not covered by the macroethical principles as discussed above. Microethical issues in this type of qualitative study could be hard to predict beforehand as this is their nature, so I needed to be prepared to revisit the principles of ethically responsible research practice over the whole course of the project.

(See Appendix L for the AUT Ethics Committee approval letter)

3.4.5 Instruments

In the following sections I describe the instruments used in this study, give reasons why I chose those particular methods, and why and how they were implemented. Table 3.4 below sets out the scope of the instruments in relation to the research questions (see Section 3.2 above).

Table 3.4 *Research instruments and Research Questions*

| Instrument | Research Questions |
|--|---|
| Questionnaires for students | <i>RQ1a & 1b, RQ2a & 2b, RQ3a & 3b, RQ4</i> |
| Questionnaire for teachers | <i>RQ1c, RQ3c, RQ4</i> |
| Observation of students | <i>RQ1c, RQ3c, RQ4</i> |
| Stimulated recall interviews of students | <i>RQ1a & 1b, RQ2a & 2b, RQ3a & 3b, RQ4</i> |
| Interviews of students | <i>RQ1a & 1b, RQ2a & 2b, RQ3a & 3b, RQ4</i> |
| Interviews of teachers | <i>RQ1c, RQ3c, RQ4</i> |

Questionnaires – for students and teachers (See Appendices A, B, & C)

Description of instrument

The first instrument used in the study was a questionnaire for the learners. This was an instrument adapted from Cao and Philp's (2006) WTC scale, comprising 7 items answered using a 5 point Likert-type scale, which provided data to answer *RQ1* as to factors which may influence learners to show their WTC in class, both in the past in Iran and in their present NZ classroom. Although in Cao and Philp's (2006) study, they had used Hashimoto's (2002) scale measuring 20 *outside-the-class* WTC opportunities with 5 extra added in-class communication situations, they recommended that future researchers only use items related to *classroom* WTC so they could be matched against the observation of actual classroom behaviour. Therefore, the *microsystem* of the classroom was the focus of this instrument and, by choosing aspects of Cao and Philp's (2006) questionnaire, I was able to compare my results more closely with theirs.

Open ended questions were added to provide another source of information on the learners' perceived variation in WTC from Iran to NZ, and from one semester to another in

their NZ English classes (*RQ2, RQ3*). It also provided answers as to the different communication contexts in which the learners felt most WTC. These data also provided an overall WTC rating (by adding up the Never, Sometimes, Usually, and Always Willing scores) to provide a benchmark from which to chart changes in their level of WTC over the year. This questionnaire was administered twice to the same learners, at the beginning of the first semester and later in the second semester to track any changes in their WTC. Demographic information was also sought to establish age, gender, length of time in NZ, duration of English study in Iran and NZ etc. This provided a larger ecological context for their classroom behaviour, which then could be discussed in relation to how it affected their short-term or long-term WTC.

At the end of each semester I asked the classroom teachers of these students to assess their level of WTC using the same items as the learners' questionnaire. This provided comparative data for *RQ1, 2, 3, & 4*.

Why and how was this instrument used?

Self-report questionnaires have probably been the most common method employed by WTC researchers over the last three decades, particularly in quantitative studies, often as the sole source of data (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2). Such questionnaires could allow researchers to gather data in a cross-sectional way on a large number of students' attitudes and opinions as to whom and in what situations they would be willing to communicate (Mackey & Gass, 2012). These data were then analysed quantitatively, and conclusions drawn. Using the same scale each time in various parts of the world also made international WTC comparisons possible. In this study, however, only those sections of previous scales which were particularly relevant to the participants in this context were reproduced, with open-ended questions added to allow for more qualitative interpretation.

The administration of similar questionnaires to the class teachers of these students to gauge their opinion of the WTC of their learners provided an alternative source of data to compare with my observations of their classroom behaviour. Such triangulation or 'crystallisation' of data sources has been recommended by methodological theorists (e.g., Ellingson, 2009), and researchers in the WTC field (e.g., Cao & Philp, 2006).

Open-ended questions were also added to the questionnaires for both students and their teachers to answer in their own words, in order to incorporate another qualitative element, which then could be compared to responses in the interviews and observations in the classroom. They also provided a stimulus for framing questions in the interviews, where I was able to probe or clarify students' answers even further (Friedman, 2012). The questionnaires also provided an opportunity for the students themselves to start thinking about the topic (WTC) before the interviews took place, and in this way possibly enhancing their responses.

Observations – of students (see Appendix D)

Description of instrument

As a second source of data, I used an observation schedule in the participants' English classes to track the students' WTC behaviour in class by noting how often learners demonstrated WTC, for example, by answering the teacher's questions, taking part in pair or group discussions etc. In addition, I took field notes to describe classroom events such as whole class or individual activities as they occurred (e.g., answering questions about a reading text, or discussing possible meanings of unknown words) and to establish the context of the WTC displayed (Appendix D). Recordings of the students' spoken contributions on a small digital recorder (placed on the desk in front of them) were also made to provide a source of data for the stimulated recall interviews and to allow me later to check my on-the-spot impressions of their WTC. It was also able to record the spoken interactions between the study participants and other nearby members of the class. These observations took place twice over a period of 2 semesters. On each occasion, students were observed individually for a period of one hour of class time. These observations provided data for *RQ1*, *RQ3*, & *RQ4* and focussed on the *microsystem* of the participants' classroom.

Why and how was this instrument used?

As suggested by previous WTC researchers, MacIntyre et al. (2001) and MacIntyre et al. (2003a), the observation of students' actual situational WTC in the classroom context was a means to verify the data from the self-report questionnaire. It was also a way to confirm the

responses elicited in the interviews and stimulated recalls. In addition, any changes in their WTC behaviour from one semester to the next could be noted.

Other recent researchers into WTC have also found observations to be an appropriate method of establishing participants' WTC at the microsystem level of the classroom, comparing students' self-reported WTC in the questionnaires and interviews with actual classroom incidences, and monitoring their WTC behaviour with teachers or classmates (see Elahi Shirvan & Taherian 2016; Kang, D.-M., 2014; Mady & Arnott 2010; Osterman, 2014; Yashima et al., 2016; Zhong, 2013).

I decided not to video the classes, although that would have provided more definitive evidence of their classroom WTC behaviours, because it would have been even more intrusive and would have required the consent and cooperation of the entire class. I reviewed my field notes after each class and wrote a summary of how I felt the students had demonstrated their WTC (a 'reflective' component, see Merriam, 2009). I also listened to the recordings taken in order to isolate instances of WTC to discuss at the stimulated recall interviews. In this way, I hoped to be able to visualise the setting, the participants, and their activities even after the observation was completed.

I limited the observation period to one hour as such a concentrated focus is difficult for a researcher to sustain for longer periods (Merriam, 2009), and I did not want to interrupt the class activities or impose too much on the goodwill of the teacher, who might also feel they were being observed.

Stimulated recall interviews – of students (See Appendix E)

Description of the instrument

Stimulated recalls were the third method used. Immediately after each classroom observation, I interviewed the students in order to discuss their reactions to the written data collected I had collected, and to some sections of the recordings of their spoken contributions to class, which I chose as examples of either their willingness or unwillingness to communicate or some other notable feature. Then I asked them to comment on and give possible reasons for any varying levels of WTC. These stimulated recall interviews took place

twice over a period of 2 semesters. These interviews provided additional data for *RQ1, 2, 3, & 4* and focussed on the *microsystem* of the participants' classroom.

Why and how was the instrument used?

Typically, stimulated recall interviews permit researchers to select sections of a recording (in this case audio), which they replay for participants' comment, using questions such as "What is happening here?" (Friedman, 2012). In this study, students were asked why they were or were not willing to communicate at different stages in the recorded lesson. Before the interviews, which occurred as soon as possible after the observations, I pre-selected particular segments of the lesson where the students were displaying these types of behaviour, as playing the whole one-hour lesson again would have been unduly taxing for the participants, who were under considerable pressure as full time students and adult family members. Other comments on the lesson were also elicited so the interview could last up to 30 minutes. These interviews were also recorded and transcribed so that I could reflect on them in detail later.

The usefulness of stimulated recall interviews as a research tool to investigate WTC is supported by Aubrey (2010), who suggests that the goal of this process is to shed light on the students' "thought processes that led to observed WTC" (p. 16). Moreover, Yue (2016) points out that such interviews allow the researcher's interpretation of the classroom events to be modified or clarified by the students themselves, thus providing another means of triangulating the data.

Although it is preferable for these interviews to take place as soon as possible after the classroom event (Gass & Mackey, 2017), it was not always possible to do so, since I needed to accommodate the students, who had other demands on their time (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). However, I was able to do this with some students who were available within the 48-hour recommended period (Gass & Mackey, 2017). The time delay was noted as records were kept of the dates of the observations and the following stimulated recall interviews, in order to provide a more accurate context for this data collection.

Another issue which has been raised by Gass and Mackey (2017) is the language of the event and the recall. In this study, it was the students' L2, English. However, the participants

in this study were of relatively high proficiency and I took pains to further clarify and explain when they hesitated or asked for further information. As with the semi-structured interviews discussed below, I considered the use of an interpreter but decided against it, since I wanted to establish a closer relationship between myself and the participants without an intermediary, who I could not be sure was accurately conveying what I wanted to ask. I was also advised by an Iranian colleague that my participants may be suspicious of an interpreter of their own nationality (as the result of past political issues in Iran) and that as a teacher, they would expect me to address them in English, and this would give them a greater feeling of competence in English. I acknowledge, however, that as interviewers we may never entirely be able to predict or comprehend what our interviewees say and how they mean it (Miller, 2011), but I used a *member checking* process (see Section 3.6 below) to allow my participants to comment on my understanding of the data.

Semi-structured interviews – of students and teachers (see Appendices F, G, & H)

Description of instrument

Semi-structured interviews conducted by the researcher provided a fourth method of collecting data. Accordingly, I interviewed the learner participants individually at the beginning of each semester. The interview questions were prepared in advance, but additional topics such as those related to WTC and learners' past and present English language learning experiences arose during the interview and were explored further. The first interview particularly focussed on the learners' previous language learning experiences in Iran, while the subsequent interview also examined the learners' perceptions of their NZ English classes, and their use of English and WTC outside the class in the NZ community. This provided data for *RQ1* in regard to which factors, if any, the learners' regarded as influential on their WTC in the English language classroom. For four of the learners, a third follow up interview was conducted during the learners' next semester class, 18 months after the beginning of the study to track any changes in their WTC as they progressed to mainstream university classes. These interviews also provided data for *RQ2, 3, & 4*. Therefore, the data collected could provide information about the participants' WTC in all layers of the ecosystems framework – *micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-*.

At the end of each semester, I conducted semi-structured interviews with the participants' classroom teachers to enable them to comment more fully on their learners' WTC. I also asked some open-ended questions in which they could comment on the learners' WTC as observed by them in class. These interviews provided supporting data for *RQ1, 3, & 4*.

Why and how was the instrument used?

Semi-structured interviews are a commonly used tool in applied linguistics studies as they provide an opportunity for researchers to explore a particular phenomenon with which they are already familiar, while allowing the interview to turn and be further expanded in a direction they may not have anticipated in advance (Dörnyei, 2007). This type of interview has also been regarded as an effective research tool by recent qualitative researchers into WTC such as Reinders and Wattana (2015), who felt that open-ended questions posed in an informal atmosphere enabled their participants to share their experiences and thoughts about their WTC in a relaxed manner. Trust and a comfortable atmosphere between the interviewees and myself were established by having repeated personal contact related to the study over a period of 8-18 months (see Dörnyei, 2007).

The advantage of interviews, according to Mackey and Gass (2005), is that they support observed phenomena by revealing "learners' self-reported perceptions and attitudes" (p. 173), which would otherwise be hidden. This enables the researcher to find out what is "in and on someone else's mind" (Patton, 2015, p. 426). One-to-one interviews were chosen rather than focus groups, for example, as they allowed for different levels of reticence/willingness to communicate in the individual respondents to be accommodated by the interviewer. In groups, students could be inhibited by other participants or feel more concerned about the lack of confidentiality and anonymity (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

In the case of the teachers, I was a long-standing colleague so there was less concern on my part about my ability to create an atmosphere conducive to a semi-formal discussion. In fact, being teachers perhaps, they were very willing to talk, and this interview situation may have provided them with a welcome opportunity to discuss some of their students. I was conscious of their time constraints and interviewed them when it fitted into their schedule on a basis of once per semester (see Dörnyei, 2007).

3.4.6 Data collection procedures (Phases 1, 2, & 3)

The Phase 1 study in S1 and S2, 2014 was designed to trial the chosen research instruments on a smaller group of participants but over the same period of time as the later Phase 2 study – 2 semesters or 30 weeks of class. An initial questionnaire was given to the four students and their three class teachers to complete, followed by interviews, observations and stimulated recall interviews based on the classroom observations. The same procedure was followed for Phase 2 in S1 and S2, 2015 with six new students and their teachers. In the cases of two of the Phase 1 participants another follow-up interview took place in S2, 2015. As for Phase 3 of the study, in S1, 2016, two participants who had taken part in the Phase 2 study were re-interviewed (but not observed), in order to follow up on their progress through the academic pathway they taken to undergraduate study.

It is important to note that the instruments used in this study each contained elements which related to various research questions, rather than a single instrument being designed to answer a specific question. Therefore, data collection did not proceed systematically in the order of the research questions.

3.4.7 Example of a Data Collection Process

As explained above in Section 3.4.3, I had to adapt my data collection schedule to the times available for the students and their teachers, so the intervals between collection events varied to some extent from participant to participant. Therefore, in order to illustrate the chronological process of the data collection procedure one participant has been taken as an example.

Abraham was a participant in the Phase 1 study in Semester 1 and 2, 2014. As can be seen in the Data Collection Table 3.5 below, the first questionnaire was administered early in Semester 1 (see Appendix A). The focus of this questionnaire was to compare his past WTC behaviour in Iran with his present experience in a NZ English classroom. It also provided a baseline for his level of WTC at this time as determined by the Likert-type scale questions. Abraham's teacher, Joan, was given a similar questionnaire to complete, giving her opinion about his WTC behaviour in her class at the beginning of the semester (see Appendix C). The semi-structured interview came next a month later to further explore Abraham's past English language learning experiences in Iran (see Appendix F). In addition, it was an

opportunity to get to know him better before I observed him in his classroom, and reduce any feeling of anxiety which might be created by my presence in this environment. The observation, which took place two months later, was designed to record his WTC behaviour in class and provide a means of comparison with his self-reported WTC behaviour in the first questionnaire (see Appendix D). As soon as was convenient for Abraham, I interviewed him again in a stimulated recall session, with a particular focus on his WTC behaviour as I had observed it in his classroom, using sections of the classroom dialogue I had recorded and field notes I had taken (see Appendix E). At the end of the semester I interviewed his teacher to ascertain her viewpoint of Abraham's WTC classroom behaviour (see Appendix H). By that time, she had been teaching him for 4 months so she would have had an opportunity to observe his classroom behaviour in some depth.

In Semester 2 the focus shifted to Abraham's NZ classroom experiences and any changes in his WTC from Semester 1 to Semester 2. Therefore, the focus of the next interview (see Appendix G) was his NZ English classes and his WTC outside the classroom in the NZ community. The observation and stimulated recall session followed a similar pattern and purpose as in the first semester. However, as I wished to gauge Abraham's level of WTC as late in the year as possible, I administered the second questionnaire (see Appendix B) in October just before the end of semester. I also gave the questionnaire (see Appendix C) to Abraham's Semester 2 teacher, Fiona, after the teaching year had concluded, and interviewed her in December, when she had had Abraham in her class for the full 4 months of Semester 2, and had time to consider his WTC behaviour at length.

Thus, the order of this data collection process seemed to proceed in a logical manner, so it was also used for the other participants in the Phase 2 Study, with some flexibility as to timing to suit the demands of their personal and educational lives. It was also within my personal ability to implement such methods, as Marshall and Rossman (2011, p. 196) suggest, and to "fit them to the research question[s], site and sample".

Table 3.5 below details the data collection process related to one participant, Abraham, and his teachers, Joan and Fiona, over a period of nine months in 2014.

Table 3.5 Example of data collection process

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Semester 1 March – June 2014</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invite Abraham to participate (March 2014). 2. Administer 1st questionnaire to Abraham (March 2014) 3. Administer questionnaire to his teacher, Joan (March 2014). 4. Conduct 1st interview with Abraham (16 April 2014) 5. Observe Abraham in class (18 June 2014). 6. Conduct stimulated recall with Abraham after observation (24 June 2014). 7. Conduct interview with Abraham’s S1 teacher Joan (30 June 2014) |
| <p>Semester 2 July - December 2014</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Conduct 2nd interview with Abraham (8 October 2014). 9. Observe Abraham in class (29 October 2014) 10. Conduct stimulated recall with Abraham after observation (31 October 2014). 11. Administer 2nd questionnaire to Abraham (October 2014) 12. Administer questionnaire to Abraham’s S2 teacher (Fiona) (November 2014). 13. Conduct interview with Abraham’s S2 teacher Fiona (11 Dec 2014). |

3.5 Data analysis

In this section I describe the theory behind the analysis of the qualitative data and the process of analysis including the coding framework employed for all sections of the study.

3.5.1 Theory behind *qualitative* data analysis in relation to *multiple case* studies

According to Punch (2005, p. 194), “qualitative research concentrates on the study of social life in natural settings”, and as such requires “multiple perspectives and practices in the analysis of qualitative data”. The method of analysis chosen should match the purpose of the research and “there is no single right way” to do it. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005, p. 259), however, suggest that to deal with the language-based or textual nature of qualitative data, analysis can be organised in stages such as coding for themes, looking for patterns, making interpretations, and building theory. Dörnyei (2007) adds an initial phase of transcribing the data, and Creswell (2013), a final phase of representing and visualising the data.

It should be noted that although almost all the data collected in this study was qualitative, there was a small quantitative element incorporated in the questionnaires and observations. The responses to the Likert-type scale items in the questionnaire, relating to the learners' level of WTC in a variety of classroom interaction situations, could be counted in order to determine high and low levels of WTC, which then enabled comparison with both the teachers' and classroom observer's evaluation of the learners' WTC. In the classroom observations, the number of times a student showed WTC behaviour was also noted. However, the data in the form of written answers to the open-ended questions in the questionnaires, observational notes, the transcriptions of the stimulated recall and interview recordings were all analysed qualitatively.

As is common with multiple case studies (Duff, 2012), the findings of cross-case data analysis, with a discussion of similarities or differences across all the cases, are presented in Chapters 4 and 5, and the data from individual cases of two focal participants are examined in greater depth in Chapter 6. Qualitative data analysis enabled themes related to their WTC to be identified, which were then triangulated with their own views and those of their teachers and the researcher (see Duff, 2012).

3.5.2 Process of data analysis

Although some qualitative researchers choose to use computer programmes to assist in their studies, I elected for a manual coding/thematic system, which was developed to suit the particular methods of data collection and the ecological framework of this project. The unpredictable and emergent nature of qualitative and/or case study research also meant that I refined this process as the investigation progressed. Finally, the method of analysis used to deal with the qualitative data collected in this multiple case study evolved to follow the process below.

Transcription

As the stimulated recall and interviews took place over the course of the study, I periodically submitted the audio recordings to a professional transcriber/typist, who was an English native speaker and familiar with the requirements of university level transcription as she had been employed by my colleagues for similar tasks. In accordance with ethical principles, she was required to sign a confidentiality agreement and asked to delete any recordings and

stored Word documents after the period of data collection was completed. I carefully checked her transcriptions multiple times by listening to the audio recordings and comparing them with the written versions she supplied. When my transcription differed from the transcriber's, I replayed the recording as many times as was necessary to determine the word/s spoken by the participants. If a colleague was also unable to help, I left the section blank or added a possible suggestion in square brackets ([...]). As the participants were EAL (English as an Additional Language) students, it required extra attention to detail in order to accurately record what was said but, as a teacher of such students for over 30 years, I felt I had had the appropriate experience. Although the use of a professional transcriber could be regarded as a less rigorous shortcut, the result was that two professionals listened and interpreted all the audio data, rather than just a short section used for the purposes of 'interrater reliability'. In this way, I was still able to get to know the data thoroughly (Dörnyei, 2007).

As I was more interested in the *content* rather than the *form* of the data, not all conversational features such as hesitations and speech volume were noted in the transcriptions. However, counter to Dörnyei's (2007) suggestion, no corrections were made to the grammar in an effort to present a text which still conveyed some aspect of the oral nature of the communication, and to allow the participants to convey more of their 'voice' than mine (Duff, 2008; Kouritzin, 2000). In this spirit, they were also emailed copies of the transcriptions for feedback and amendment if they wished. Nevertheless, it has to be accepted that "all transcription is representation, and there is no natural or objective way in which talk can be written" (Roberts, 1997, p. 168).

Coding for themes

When all the raw data related to a participant had been collected (questionnaires, transcriptions of interviews, and observation field notes), a framework (Appendix M) was created with empty sections for the inclusion of themes related to the learner's WTC (RQ1 & RQ4, see Section 3.2 above). As an ecological approach had been taken in the design of this study, Bronfenbrenner's (1993) four ecosystems (*micro-*, *meso-*, *exo-*, and *macro-*) were also used as a descriptive framework for the data (see Appendix P). Other sections of the framework related to the changes in the learner's WTC from Iran to NZ and from class to class in NZ (RQ2 & RQ3, see Section 3.2 above). Some of the themes were identified from

answers to pre-set questions asked in the interviews (pre-existing themes), or derived from previous studies (theory-generated themes), but others arose spontaneously as the data analysis took place. Thus, both inductive and deductive processes were used (Duff, 2008). Through iterative analysis of the data as it related to the participants, further themes were added to the framework and each learner's database was revisited many times until no more relevant items could be identified and included ("saturation", see Dörnyei, 2007, p. 127).

Codes were used to locate the words or phrases related to the themes in the data sources (e.g., I1:20 = Interview 1, Turn 20), and inserted in the appropriate places in the framework for later retrieval and presentation in the Chapters 4, 5, and 6 Findings section of the study (see Appendix M for empty template). For example, in the right-hand cell of the top row of the chart labelled *Microsystem*, data codes related to factors affecting the student's in-class WTC were recorded. Such factors included motivation, anxiety, and relations with the teacher. Relevant data from the teachers' questionnaires and interviews and the observation data collected by the researcher/observer were also added to the individual student's framework in the appropriate cells (see Appendix N for an example of a completed framework for Abraham and an example of coding the theme 'relations with teacher').

However, as this kind of analysis is subjective and dependent on the researchers' judgement, other interpretations could be made, and often one section of data was filed under a range of different headings. At the beginning of the study, in order to cross check my methods of analysis, I asked another researcher to read the transcription of an interview with one of the participants and identify the key themes related to the topic of my study. We largely concurred with some differences of opinion, which I considered when reviewing my categorisation. Nevertheless, it would not have been practical or reasonable to ask her to examine all the data.

Such subjectivity is an inevitable part of qualitative research, as is arguably all research which is based on the researcher's decisions and conclusions (Duff, 2008). However, according to Stake (2010, p. 29): "Subjectivity [in qualitative research] is not seen as a failing, something to be eliminated, but as an essential element of understanding human

activity". Moreover, "[w]hether we are looking at the real world through quantitative or qualitative eyes, we reconceive the world in terms of the concepts and relationships of our experience" (p. 30). Thus, even quantitative researchers use subjective judgments at times to determine the focus and other aspects of their enquiry. (See Section 3.6 below for 'trustworthiness' in qualitative research).

Patterns and interpretations

When all the possible entries had been made in the participants' frameworks, it was possible to look for patterns in the data. Themes which were common to all or most of the learners could be identified and interpreted.

Two different approaches were made to the interpretation of the data, i.e., as individual and multiple case studies. Therefore, in this thesis I have chosen to present the findings first as answers to the individual research questions – a *cross-case* analysis, where "a qualitative, inductive, multicase study seeks to build abstractions across cases" (Merriam, 2009, p. 205), and then two individual in depth case studies, where *within-case* analysis takes place (Stake, 2006). Cross-case analyses are commonly used in what have been termed *instrumental* case studies by Stake (1995), where the focus may be to answer certain research questions. Even though the particular details of specific cases may vary, the researcher attempts to build a general explanation that fits individual cases (Yin, 2014, p. 148). Such *multiple* case studies have also been described by Stake (2005) as *collective*, where the researcher chooses to study more than one case to illustrate a particular issue in order to "lead to a better understanding, and perhaps better theorizing, about a still larger collection of cases" (p. 446). To this end, I collated all the references to particular themes in a chart which included all 10 student participants (see Appendix O for an example related to 2 of the participants). Then I created a file which collated all the coded sections of data from the questionnaires, interviews, and observations, which related to each participant under the heading of, for example, Relations with Teacher, Anxiety, Motivation etc. This enabled me to compare and contrast the views of the students and those of their teachers and the observer/researcher on these topics in the Findings Chapters 4-5, in relation to each of my research questions. Appendix R provides an example of the triangulation and comparison of data from multiple sources on Abraham's 'relationship to teacher'.

On the other hand, in *intrinsic* case studies, the case itself is the focus of attention and contextual factors are of key importance (see van Lier, 2005; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995). Therefore, the use of the ecosystems model as a framework for the individual case studies in this investigation can provide “a consistent and systematic view of context and a clear connection between person and context” (van Lier, 2005, p. 205). In this study, data related to two of the participants have been chosen for detailed presentation in Chapter 6, using the ecosystems framework as the overall background structure and organiser (see Appendix M template chart and Appendix P diagram of nested systems). Thus, the way that their WTC is affected by the *micro-*, *meso-*, *exo-*, and *macrosystems* of their past and present English language learning experience is explored and any similarities and differences between the two participants are examined in depth (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5.1).

Building theory

According to Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2005 (p. 271): “The ‘overall picture’ is the aim of any study: to answer the research questions and to reach conclusions”. Such ‘theory building’ requires the presentation of interrelated themes in order to explain the phenomenon under investigation, which in this study is willingness to communicate. Moreover, K. Richards (2003) suggests that:

Theory, then is not something that stands apart from the data or the process of analysis. It represents a level of explanation that allows us to make important connections among elements in the data and between our findings and others in the field. (p. 291)

As was discussed above in Chapter 2, Section 2.4, the overarching theoretical umbrella for this study is that of complex dynamic systems, which “asks us to consider interaction across interconnected levels”, and, “in the case of classroom-oriented research, a hierarchy from individual minds up to the socio-political context of language learning and teaching” (Larsen-Freeman, 2016b, p. 379). Moreover, “a complex system is temporally situated as well”, “from the moment-by-moment scale of classroom activity to teaching and learning lifetimes” (Cameron, L., & Larsen-Freeman, 2007, p. 236), so it suits this longitudinal investigation of WTC extending from the learners’ past experiences in Iran and over a period of 1 year or more in NZ.

Furthermore, complex systems are nested and interconnect with other systems at higher and lower levels (Larsen-Freeman, 2016b), so even though the separate levels of Bronfenbrenner's model have been used to represent data in this study, it should be remembered that the boundaries between layers are permeable and the relationships and "linkages" between them are very important (van Lier, 2004, p. 210). When viewed from an ecological perspective, Cao (2011) saw the relationship of the students, teachers and their micro classroom contexts and macro institutional environments in her WTC study as "intertwining", "interconnected and inseparable" (p. 469).

One aim of this study is to determine whether the conclusions reached from the data analysis are an appropriate fit for the ecosystems model and dynamic systems theory (see Chapter 2, Sections 2.4.2 & 2.5.2). However, it is unlikely that any one theory or model can explain all aspects of WTC, but, as suggested by MacIntyre and Blackie (2012, p. 541), it is important for researchers to use as many "conceptual tools" as possible in their quest to understand the complex nature of individual language learners' motivations and goals.

In order to fulfil this aim, the data from this study have been analysed in terms of the ecosystems model and the findings presented as part of an ecological framework (see Appendices O & N). How these conclusions fit into the 'metatheory' of dynamic systems (Larsen-Freeman, 2017) is further discussed below in Chapters 7 and 8.

Visualisation and representation

Although both Dörnyei (2009a) and Larsen-Freeman (2012) have suggested that finding an appropriate methodology for researching complex dynamic systems is not straightforward, the ecosystems model may be one means of *describing* a dynamic operating system such as WTC. Qualitative studies collect and comment on large amounts of narrative data so the use of conceptual frameworks [such as the ecosystems diagram] can visually represent theoretical conclusions (Duff, 2008). Written accounts, vignettes, and quotes are used to illustrate how the data collected provides answers to the research questions, particularly in the cross-case analysis in Chapters 4 and 5, but ecosystems charts are also created to accompany and elucidate the two in-depth case studies in Chapter 6 (see Appendix M for a template and Appendix N as a completed example). Finally, a nested systems framework diagram is created for each of the two individual case studies (see Appendix AA and BB).

Such a two-pronged approach to presenting thesis data is supported by Duff (2012), Miles and Huberman (1994), and Stake (2006).

3.5.3 How were data analysed in relation to RQs – which parts of which instruments were used?

Instruments in this study, as explained above in Section 3.4, were multi-purpose, each of them providing data to answer several research questions (see Table 3.6 below). For example, the first questionnaire completed by the learners provided their perceived levels of WTC past and present in Iran and NZ (*RQ2a - Which variations do Iranian learners identify in their WTC behaviour from their EFL classroom in Iran to their ESL classroom in NZ?*), and explored areas of classroom activity where they displayed the most or least WTC in both countries. The participants also provided background information, which could be used to establish their learning and life contexts, and therefore data for in-depth case studies. In addition, they were able to answer an open-ended question giving reasons for possible changes in their WTC, which provided data for *RQ2b (What do they think are their reasons for this choice of factors?)*.

Semi-structured interviews and stimulated recalls by their very nature were sometimes unpredictable in the data they provided, although some pre-set questions provided opportunities for the collection of similar data across cases. Although the observations were designed to make it possible to observe particular WTC behaviours, it could not be guaranteed that the lesson would follow a particular path, or that the students would all respond in the same way. However, flexibility is regarded as a strength of interpretive research (Duff, 2008; Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Table 3.6 below shows how particular instruments were employed to obtain data to answer each of the research questions.

Table 3.6 *Research questions and relevant research methods/instruments*

| Research Questions | Methods (Instruments) |
|---|---|
| RQ1 <i>What are the factors which influence Iranian learners' WTC inside and outside the classroom, in Iran and in NZ, in their, and their teachers' opinions?</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaires for learners • Interviews with learners • Stimulated recall for learners |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>RQ3 <i>How do the learners' levels of WTC vary from one semester to another in NZ?</i></p> <p>RQ4 <i>How can the factors affecting learners' levels of WTC be interpreted within an ecosystems framework?</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher's observations and field notes • Questionnaires for learners' class teachers • Interviews with learners' class teachers |
| <p>RQ2 <i>How do the learners' levels of WTC vary from their classroom in Iran to their classroom in NZ?</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaires for learners • Interviews with learners |

3.5.4 How were data analysed for the two follow-up case studies?

The data were collected and analysed in the same way for the ten cross-case studies but the *presentation* is as two individual cases, with a holistic, contextualized, and comparative discussion of their WTC in relation to the four ecosystems as described in Section 3.5.2 above (see also Appendices P & Q). While the data from the cross-case studies enabled me to make more generalised comments about the WTC phenomenon and answer the research questions, the analysis of the WTC behaviour of individual cases drew a more detailed picture using the ecosystems framework as a background model. These data are presented in Chapter 6 below.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has further explained the research questions raised in Chapter 2 and outlined the processes used to investigate them. The methodological approach and philosophy which provided the background to the study was described, and a justification given for the choice of multiple case studies as the most appropriate method for collecting and analysing qualitative data related to the nature of the participants' WTC behaviour in and out of class. This was followed by a detailed account of the study design, including the nature of the context and the participants. The role of the researcher and relevant ethical issues were raised, including the principles of Partnership, Participation, and Protection as set out in the Treaty of Waitangi (Appendix CC). Descriptions followed of the instruments used and the data collection procedures. An example of the data collection process was outlined in respect to one participant. Then the sequence of steps used to carry out the data analysis process was listed and explained in relation to specific research questions. Finally, the steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the study were presented.

The findings from this data analysis process of the questionnaires, observations, and interviews with the student participants and their teachers are presented in the next three chapters (Chapters 4, 5, and 6), and discussed further in Chapter 7.

3.7 Trustworthiness

In this section I discuss the criteria suggested by theorists and researchers to ensure the 'trustworthiness' of a qualitative study and the measures I took in this project to satisfy such requirements.

In 1985, Lincoln and Guba suggested an alternative set of criteria by which to judge the quality of naturalistic research methodology in opposition to traditional quantitative research requirements: Internal validity was replaced by *credibility* (truth value); external validity by *transferability* (applicability); reliability by *dependability* (consistency); and objectivity by *confirmability* (neutrality).

Moreover, Creswell and Miller (2000) have suggested using a range of checking procedures, which they feel will help ensure the rigour and usefulness of a qualitative study (i.e., *triangulation, searching for disconfirming evidence, engaging in reflexivity, member checking, prolonged engagement in the field, collaboration, developing an audit trail, and peer debriefing*). In fact, Creswell and Poth (2018, p. 259) have recommended that qualitative researchers "engage in *at least two* of these validation strategies". Such procedures were used at all phases of this study – design, data collection and analysis, and in the final report writing. These areas are discussed in Sections 3.4.2, 3.4.6, and 3.5 above.

In this study, I used *triangulation* (or "crystallisation", that is, a wide variety of sources, according to Richardson & St Pierre, 2005, p. 963) of methods, data sources, viewpoints, times, and locations to increase the credibility of the study (Patton, 1990) (see Table 3.7 below).

Table 3.7 *Triangulation of data collection methods, sources, viewpoints, times, and locations*

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Methods | Questionnaires; observations; stimulated recall interviews; interviews. |
| Data sources | Completed questionnaires; observation recordings and field notes; stimulated recall recordings and transcripts; interview recordings and transcripts. |
| Viewpoints | Students; teachers; researcher. |
| Times | Repeated collection of data over one year (18 months for four students); students' present and past English language learning experiences. |
| Locations | Students' in class and out of class WTC behaviour in NZ; students' in class and out of class WTC behaviour in Iran. |

Case study methodology can be criticised for enabling researchers to make subjective judgments about the data they are collecting and analysing (see Section 3.5.2 above). To avoid this pitfall, proponents and advisers on qualitative research, such as Stake (2005, 2009) and Patton (1990), maintain that at least three sources of data should be used to confirm that key findings are not being overlooked. Therefore, four different data collection methods were used in this study, which resulted in a wide variety of data sources being available for analysis (see Section 3.4.5 above). Such methods (i.e., interviews and observations) have been standard recommended instruments for qualitative case studies for several decades (see Duff, 2008; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2014), and have been used effectively by recent WTC researchers such as Cao (2011), Osterman (2014), Peng (2012), Yue (2016), and Zhong (2012).

Moreover, as it is considered appropriate for qualitative researchers to also have some quantifiable data included in their studies (Dörnyei, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 221), a section of responses to the questionnaires could be 'counted', and provided a means of comparison with the findings of researchers such as MacIntyre et al. (2001), Weaver (2005), Cao and Philp (2006), Peng (2007a & b), Ryan (2009), Yashima (2009), and Peng and Woodrow (2010). In this way, triangulation involving comparison (highlighting similarities and differences) with previous findings of WTC researchers serves to support the credibility of my study (see Chapter 2 above and Chapter 7 below). Moreover, Goetz and LeCompte (1984, p. 228) have proposed the concept of "*comparability*" to cover the process by which other researchers in related areas could also use the results of my study as a basis for comparison, if the components are sufficiently well described and defined.

In addition, Stake's (2006, p. 77) advice for case study researchers is to follow the process of *triangulation* by being "redundant and skeptical in seeing, hearing, coding, analyzing, and writing". He also suggests that "discussion with critical insiders and outsiders" is beneficial, which I achieved by canvassing the views of the participants and their teachers, as well as my own observations and interpretation (see Section 3.4.6 above). In this way, I tried to identify and mitigate any potential researcher bias, which, according to Dörnyei (2007), is an important issue at every stage of a qualitative study (see Section 3.4.4 above).

Another area which was explored was *a search for disconfirming or alternative evidence* – being open to other explanations or themes which were not predicted in the design stage and incorporating them in the study as it evolved (Duff, 2008). The use of semi-structured interviews allowed for the introduction of new topics for discussion initiated by the participants as this study progressed during the data collection process (see Section 3.4.5, iii & iv above), while at the analysis stage new themes were continually added to the ecological framework used to visualise the data (see Section 3.5.2 above and Appendices M & N).

Moreover, the *thick description* of the individual cases in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 of this report includes contextualised detail, which allows discussion of differences as well as similarities between the participants' perceptions of their WTC behaviour (Dörnyei, 2007; Geertz, 1973). Multiple excerpts from their recorded interviews are used to support or refute in a balanced way any conclusions reached, so that 'cherry picking' of evidence can be avoided (Riazi, 2016; Ushioda, 2014). On the other hand, it has to be recognised that the volume of data collected from a qualitative study with twenty participants using multiple instruments cannot all be presented in this thesis. Therefore, the most salient points which will answer the research questions have been selected. Justification for the choice of themes and illustrative examples from the data are also given in Chapter 2 above, and Chapters 4, 5, and 6 below (Duff, 2012). Other limitations of the study are discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

Furthermore, to ensure a thoroughness of data collection and analysis, Duff (2008, p. 177) recommends "*contextual completeness*", which requires a comprehensive description of the setting, participants and procedures. "Context" in ecolinguistics "refers to both personal-

situational and sociocultural phenomena” (Kramsch & Steffensen, 2008, p. 18). Therefore, Section 3.4.3 (above) explains in detail why and how the participants were chosen and their detailed demographics to determine their place in the ecology of this study. The posing of research questions related to the learners’ past and present language learning experiences in Iran and NZ establishes the multiple timescales which are also needed to examine data from an ecological point of view. This holistic approach to qualitative, longitudinal data, where the researcher clearly reveals their subject position, is what Kramsch and Steffensen (2008, p. 25) term “ecological validity”.

In addition, *prolonged engagement in the field* in the form of a longitudinal study has been recommended by many qualitative research theorists as a means to enhance the consistency of the evidence (Duff, 2008; Harklau, 2008; Hood, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ortega & Iberri-Shea, 2005; Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Moreover, van Lier (2004, pp. 207–208) emphasises that “ecological research is research over time, not brief, one-shot probes. Processes of action, perception and learning unfold gradually over time, and research must document relevant processes and changes longitudinally”. (See also Section 3.3.1 above.)

In this study, Phase 1 and Phase 2 each covered a period of one year and I spent 2½ years in total carrying out data collection in the same setting. This enabled me to exercise some flexibility in my approach, for example, changing the research question wording several times, altering the questions in the semi-structured interviews in response to the participants’ area of interest, and overall having more time to contemplate the progress of the project (*reflexivity* as outlined below).

In the spirit of *collaboration*, I also involved my research colleagues in this project by *peer debriefing* or the use of a *critical friend* (Rossman & Rallis, 2012), that is, initiating critical discussions with them about my project as it progressed. This took place both informally, and formally, as in asking for their reactions to coding of data. *Intercoder reliability* checks were used, employing a ‘blind review’ coder (i.e., a fellow SLA researcher) to apply descriptions to data to check for consistency in interpretation.

In addition, the participants in the study, both learners and teachers, were involved in this process as they were asked to read the transcriptions of their interviews (sent to them by

email) to confirm that these accounts reflected what they had intended to say, that is to say, *member checks* (Stake, 2010). Their feedback was invited, and it was stated that any amendments would be discussed with them. Both learners and teachers were also offered the opportunity to read a report (simplified) of the project when it was completed in order to increase their opportunity for involvement. This was to take place before the final submission of this report in order to allow the participants to make “reactions, corrections and provide further insights” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 221).

Furthermore, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend the development of an *audit trail* of the whole project from beginning to end, comprising documentation of the inquiry process. The purpose of this is to provide confirmability of the research, so that another researcher should be able follow a similar path and thus ‘confirm’ the rigour with which the study has been carried out. Therefore, I kept careful records in diaries and journals of the various stages and timing of interviews, observations and procedures, plus later data analysis decisions.

Finally, the interpretive nature of qualitative research requires the researcher to develop *reflexivity*, that is, “an acute sensitivity to who [they] are” (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 34). Therefore, as I constructed this study and carried out the data collection procedures, I needed to increase “[my] competence in the skills of seeing, listening, reading and making sense of [my] perceptions” (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 34). As a result, I had to identify my biases and assumptions and clarify my approach and the boundaries and limitations of the project (see also Section 3.4.4 above). However, to sum up, Delamont (1992) proposes that: “As long as qualitative researchers are reflexive, making all their purposes explicit, then issues of reliability and validity are served” (p. 8).

Chapter 4. Factors influencing WTC

4.1 Introduction

Following this introduction, Section 2 of this chapter presents the findings related to *RQ1* in order to identify the individual and contextual factors which influenced the WTC of the participants in this study, both inside and outside their English language classrooms in Iran and NZ. Finally, a summary of the chapter is outlined in Section 4.3.

To identify the most salient factors, data were collected using all the instruments in this study: questionnaires and interviews with both students and teachers, and observations by the researcher (see Chapter 3, Section 3.4.5 above, and Appendices A – H). Data are presented in the form of tables, quotations from interviews, and references to my fieldnotes created during classroom events.

In terms of the ecosystems framework (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5 above, and Appendix P), the factors relating to in-class and out-of-class WTC in NZ and the NZ teachers' and observer's views align with the *microsystem* layer, whereas the participants' past experience in their Iranian English language classroom would relate to the *mesosystem*.

4.2 Factors influencing WTC in and out of the classroom

In order to answer *RQ1*, which canvassed the participants' views on which aspects of their in-class and out-of-class experiences both in Iran, in the past, and NZ, in the present, they felt were influential on their WTC and why, I collected and analysed data from their responses to questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. The extent to which their class teachers and I, the researcher/observer, concurred with their views was also explored as a means of providing confirmation or a differing opinion.

Analysis was carried out by identifying references to particular themes in these data sources, then coding and tabulating them (see Appendix O as an example, and Chapter 3, Section 3.5.3 above). A range of themes emerged in the process of data collection and analysis, some related to the questions I posed, while others arose more spontaneously in the interview process, and as a result of open-ended written questions in the questionnaire. In response to *RQ1* as it related to the classroom situation, seven separate themes/factors

could be identified, which were common to both contexts (Iran and NZ) although some aspects of each were specific to either the NZ or Iranian environment. Two themes which were originally chosen as being factors that had been previously investigated, (i.e., *self-esteem*, or rather the lack of it, and *unWTC*, unwillingness to communicate), were conflated with *anxiety* as only a small amount of data related specifically to those areas was collected, possibly because students wanted to present a more positive overall view of their language learning experience, although some negative classroom experiences were related to the researcher.

A further distinction was made between *external* factors (out of the students' control) such as the teacher, texts and methods used, and scheduled class activities, as opposed to *internal* factors such as self-perceived English-speaking competence, confidence, anxiety, motivation, and personality. In Iran, additional factors such as educational background, family influence, length of study, and public vs. private school language learning experiences emerged as important aspects of the participants' past histories.

In the following four subsections (4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3, & 4.2.4), the findings are presented in relation to the factors influencing the WTC of the participants, firstly in Iran and then in NZ. However, the volume of data collected precludes the inclusion of every instance where the various factors are referred to, so some selection has been made according to the degree of relevance to the research questions. Moreover, where appropriate, additional participant quotes have been tabulated in Appendices V and X. Furthermore, the individual input of Abraham and Parinaz, which is later presented in detail in the two case studies of Chapter 6, has not been included, although in the summary sections they may be mentioned in order to provide a fuller picture of the ten participants' views.

As for the participants, a detailed discussion of their demographics can be found in Chapter 3 above (Section 3.4.3), but in summary, the ten students ranged in age from 23-59, two were male (Abraham and Ramin), while eight were female (Azadeh, Shirin, Neda, Golnaz, Sima, Tina, and Marjan). Almost all (except one – Sima) had 5-7 years of English education in Iran and the three students (Sima, Ramin, and Marjan) who studied before the 1979 Revolution had a different experience of language learning than their fellows, as is discussed below. Their time in NZ ranged from 8 months to 11 years, with most having emigrated

from Iran about 4 years ago. Most of them had taken the opportunity to study English in NZ for 2-3 years.

4.2.1 In the Iran classroom – Mesosystem

In this section of the Findings chapter, I report on those individual and contextual factors which the participants attributed to raising or lowering the levels of their WTC during their past English language learning experiences in Iran (*RQ1a*). Reasons why the participants thought these factors affected their WTC are also presented in order to answer *RQ1b*. (See Chapter 3, Section 3.2 for a discussion of these research questions).

Such factors can be regarded as belonging to the *mesosystem* level of the ecosystems framework as they relate to the participants' *past experience* learning English in Iran (see Peng, 2014, and Chapter 2, Section 2.5 above).

The factors that are examined in the following sections are tabulated below.

Table 4.1 *Factors influencing participants' WTC in Iran*

| External factors | Internal factors |
|---|---|
| Teacher experience, style and behaviour | Self-Perceived Communication Competence |
| Texts/methods/private & public schools | Confidence/personality/shyness |
| Class activities (pair and group work) | Anxiety/embarrassment/unWTC |
| | Motivation |

Teacher experience, style, and behaviour

In answer to Question 2 from Questionnaire 1 (see Appendix A) "How willing were you to talk to your teacher before or after class?", students had to respond to how they felt about approaching their Iranian teacher outside regular class time. As their exchange was most likely to be in Farsi, it was designed to measure teacher *immediacy* rather than WTC in English. Nine of the students were either 'Sometimes willing' or 'Usually willing' to talk to their teacher outside class time in Iran, but none had the level of WTC to 'Always' approach their teacher. It should also be noted that one student (Abraham) was 'Never willing' (see Table U.1, Appendix U).

In summary, as far as most of these students were concerned, their English teachers in Iran had a key role to play in fostering their WTC by providing a receptive and welcoming atmosphere, by speaking English themselves, and also creating opportunities for their students to speak English in class. However, six of the participants (Azadeh, Ramin, Neda, Sima, Parinaz, and Abraham) did not experience this in their Iranian classroom and, as a result of their teachers' style of classroom practice, they described their WTC as low or non-existent (see Table V.1, Appendix V).

Texts, methods, type of school (public and private)

Another factor which affected the level of their WTC in class was the methodology employed by their teachers and the textbooks supplied by the type of educational institution they worked for. For example, Marjan, who studied English before the Revolution of 1979, was also able to attend extra classes at the American Institute, where *most of the teachers were from America* (I1:42). Therefore, they were native speakers of English, unlike today *when you can't find any foreign teachers* (I1:42) and this encouraged her to participate orally in class.

However, Golnaz bemoaned the fact that in her day (post Revolution) her Iranian teachers' accents were not [quite] *good in English* (I1:122), and spoke mostly Farsi in class, whereas now in Iran *teachers are struggling [trying] to speak English in the class* (I1:66). This meant she and her classmates had little opportunity to hear English or demonstrate their own WTC in class. In terms of Post Revolution teaching methods, six out of the ten students (Golnaz, Tina, Neda, Sima, Parinaz, and Marjan) emphasised that the strong focus on reading and grammar in Iranian English classrooms made it very difficult for them to demonstrate any spoken WTC. Speaking was not tested or given little emphasis in exams, so they saw no reason even to attempt to speak (see Table V.2, Appendix V).

Another factor which affected the participants' ability to demonstrate their WTC was their attendance at private English language teaching institutions. Learning English in Iran, although available in some public state-funded schools since the 1930s, has also been a private option, first in American and British schools, and then after the Revolution in a variety of institutions, some government-run and some independent.

According to the participants in this study, private schools of English often provided a different curriculum and teaching methodology, textbooks originally written in the USA or UK, better trained teachers, and mixed gender classes. All these factors they felt contributed to an atmosphere which lent itself to a greater WTC on their part. In fact, five of the ten participants (Abraham, Marjan, Tina, Neda, and Azadeh) were able to attend these schools, which they did not rate as particularly expensive (see Table V.3, Appendix V).

Overall, most of the students in this study (i.e., Golnaz, Tina, Neda, Sima, Parinaz, and Marjan) felt that the text books used, and methods practised in the public-school English language classrooms of their day (1970-2010 approx.) focussed primarily on vocabulary and grammar and allowed them little opportunity to demonstrate their WTC. However, if they had the chance to attend private schools, they were able to speak more English and enjoyed their lessons with teachers who practised more communicative teaching methods and fostered their WTC.

Class activities (pair and group work)

In answer to three sections in Questionnaire 1 (see Appendix A), the students had to describe how willing they were to participate in pair discussions, group discussions, and help others answer a question (Q5, 6, & 7). These questions were designed to determine the level of participation and collaboration the students felt they had with their classmates in their English classroom in Iran. Only 2 students (Golnaz and Marjan) were wholeheartedly willing to communicate in all three cooperative classroom situations while the others gave mixed responses or were quite reluctant to take part (i.e., Abraham) (see Table U.2, Appendix U).

In their interviews, although Azadeh, Shirin, Golnaz, Parinaz, and Marjan had expressed their theoretically high level of willingness to communicate in group or pair work in their responses to Questionnaire 1 (see Table U.2, Appendix U), most of the students made it quite clear that this rarely, if ever, actually happened. Abraham, Ramin, Shirin, Golnaz, Tina, and Marjan all stated that group activities did not usually take place in public school classes (see Table V.4, Appendix V). Thus, it was also unlikely that they would have had the opportunity to help others answer a question even if they were willing.

Consequently, in the classroom environment experienced by most of the participants in Iran, their teachers did not see it as part of their role to provide class activities which allowed their students to cooperate with each other and demonstrate their WTC. Instead they used an approach which was teacher-centred and controlled but was standard practice at the time in public schools. The only place that group or pair work was likely to happen was a private English institute, according to Azadeh and Neda.

Self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC)

The participants in this study had a range of reactions to my question in the interview as to whether they felt competent to speak English in Iran. Unlike the NZ situation, where this perception could be compared with the views of their class teachers and the observer/researcher as well as their academic results, I had to rely on their opinions as to their ability. However, if indeed levels of perceived competence (or SPCC) and WTC are positively connected, as suggested by researchers such as MacIntyre et al. (2007), their scores on the WTC scale as it related to their overall WTC in Iran could be compared with their self-reported high or low levels of SPCC (see also Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3 above, and Chapter 7, Section 7.2 below).

In Table 4.2 below the participants have been ranked according to their WTC in Iran as recorded over all the questions in the first section of Questionnaire 1 (Appendix A). The key to the score was: Never willing = 0; Sometimes willing = 1; Usually willing = 2; Always willing = 3. Therefore, the total possible score was 21.

Table 4.2 Overall level of participants' WTC in Iran

| Participants | Overall WTC score /21 |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Marjan | 20 |
| 2. Shirin | 17 |
| 3. Golnaz | 17 |
| 4. Azadeh | 15 |
| 5. Neda | 14 |
| 6. Tina | 12 |
| 7. Ramin | 11 |
| 8. Sima | 10 |
| 9. Parinaz | 9 |
| 10. Abraham | 6 |

As can be seen in Table 4.2 above, one student, Marjan, rated her WTC as almost 100% while Abraham rated his as very low at approx. 29%. The rest of the participants ranged at multiple levels between these two.

In their interviews, in regard to their feelings of competence in English, only one student, Golnaz (who scored third on the WTC scale above in Table 4.2), was very confident about her English level in Iran, while Azadeh (fourth) thought that, although her English was inadequate for communication, she was no worse than her classmates. Parinaz (ninth) shared Azadeh's views about her abilities in English being the same low level as her fellow classmates, and as a result she was not able to score good grades. Ramin (seventh) also felt *our English time wasn't enough* (I1:56) and that was why he and his classmates did not speak English well and were reluctant to communicate in the language. Tina (sixth) described her position in class: *I was middle. I never was A* (I1:56); although later in the interview she suggested that in the private classes *most of them was better than me* (I1:110) at speaking. Because Neda (fifth) was working when she attended her private school, she used that as a reason as to why the other students were better. Sima (eighth) regarded other students as being *good but me no* (I1:54) because *she couldn't understand* (I1:56). Abraham (tenth) also judged other students' speaking abilities as better than his, while Shirin (second) expressed her despair about her ability to communicate when she first arrived in NZ.

It should be noted that Marjan, whose overall WTC level in Iran was the highest of all the participants (see Table 4.2), was the only student not to comment on her own ability. However, Parinaz declared that Marjan had a greater ability in English than all her NZ classmates because of her superior educational experience in Iran (S:16).

To sum up, most of the participants (with the exception of Golnaz) felt that their ability to speak English in Iran was not as proficient as they would have liked. However, a high level of SPCC has been considered to be, in partnership with a low level of anxiety, a defining component of the self-confident L2 speaker (MacIntyre et al., 2007).

Confidence/personality/shyness

In answer to three questions in Questionnaire 1 (see Appendix A), the students had to describe how willing they were to give an answer when the teacher asked a question, ask a question themselves, and present their opinions in class. These questions were designed to determine the level of confidence in communicating the students felt they had in a whole class situation in their English classroom in Iran. Only one student (Marjan) was totally confident in all three classroom situations. Two others, Shirin and Neda, were very confident in two out of three opportunities to demonstrate their WTC. The rest of the seven participants fluctuated from 'Sometimes' to 'Usually', with only one, Parinaz, showing complete reluctance in the Q4 'Present your own opinions' option see (Table U.3, Appendix U).

Marjan was the most confident student, according to her answers to Q1, 3, and 4, and according to her responses in the interview. She explained that owing to the teachers she had and the extra private classes she took, she felt *very confident when I'm speaking English and I feel happy* (I1:90). Azadeh, Ramin, and Golnaz stated that they were confident with mostly 'Usually' answers to the questionnaire and positive responses in their interviews. Shirin, however, despite her more confident answers to the questionnaire ('Always', 'Always', 'Usually'), in the interview suggested that her assuredness depended on how prepared she felt for the lesson (I1:46).

Overall, in the questionnaire, except for Marjan, Neda, and Shirin, who were very assured, the participants expressed mixed levels of confidence when contributing to whole class

activities and asking and answering questions from the teacher in their English classroom in Iran. However, in the interviews, Azadeh, Ramin, and Golnaz were more positive in their remarks about their WTC behaviour. On the other hand, Parinaz attributed her particular reluctance to her own feeling of inadequacy, which may have been a personality trait, while other students saw the teacher or teaching methods contributing to their lack of confidence and unWTC (see Section 4.2.1 above). As my questions related particularly to spoken communication, the sole aspect of personality which was covered in this study was shyness or lack of it in the classroom.

Anxiety/embarrassment/unWTC

Anxiety about communicating in English in their classrooms in Iran could be considered the obverse of the previous section (Confidence) so I focus first on those participants who lacked confidence or expressed negative feelings about communicating.

Most of the participants scored themselves as above the median level of WTC in their responses to answering and asking questions from the teacher and presenting their own opinions in class (see Table U.3, Appendix U, and the comments in Section 4.2.1 above).

Shirin, however, was concerned about losing face in front of others in the class, while Tina and Sima admitted to feeling nervous in English classes in Iran, particularly for Tina at exam times and when the teacher corrected her. The other six students (Azadeh, Ramin, Shirin, Golnaz, Neda, and Marjan) were very positive about their teachers correcting their spoken mistakes in English, which could sometimes be a reason for anxiety or other negative feelings. In fact, none of the six students, whose remarks were recorded on this topic of attitudes to teacher correction, felt embarrassed or concerned, and spontaneously used words such as “good” and “happy” to describe their feelings (see Table V.5, Appendix V).

In summary, the negative feelings and unWTC which were expressed by some of the participants (i.e., Abraham, Shirin, Tina, and Sima) related more to saving their personal ‘face’, or the teacher’s manner, but, overall, they were at pains to tell me that they welcomed teacher corrections and presented a very positive impression.

Motivation

In this study the participants fell into three groups in regard to their degree and type of motivation for learning English in Iran: Never motivated; unmotivated at first then motivated; always motivated. Their types of motivation could be regarded as possibly intrinsic, integrative, extrinsic, instrumental, or a combination of more than one category.

When questioned in the interviews, three students (Abraham, Parinaz, and Sima) clearly stated they lacked motivation in the Iranian public-school system. Neda began by not wanting to learn English as an adolescent, but when she started her university studies, she became more interested because it was useful (instrumental). Then, when Neda had made her plans to emigrate to NZ, she attended a private school with an even higher level of instrumental motivation in order to equip herself for her new life.

On the other hand, Azadeh showed a keen intrinsic interest in studying English from an early age even though it was unlikely at the time that she would ever travel so far from Iran, so at that stage it could not be termed integrative motivation. When Azadeh knew she was going to NZ, she enrolled in a short private English course (as had Neda), which increased her motivation even further.

Therefore, if a reasonable level of motivation is required to foster WTC in L2 students, the pattern for some of the participants in this study (e.g., Neda) is that they did not develop this required precursor until later in their student life or not until they had decided to emigrate to a country (NZ) where English was the principal language required for communication. For others (Azadeh, Golnaz, and Marjan), theirs was a long-term interest in learning the language.

4.2.2 In the NZ classroom – Microsystem

In this section, I report on those individual and contextual factors which the participants attributed to an increase or decrease in their WTC during their present (at the time of the study) English language learning experiences in NZ (*RQ1a*). It should be noted that although these factors were not predetermined, the same factors were revealed to be important to the participants' WTC in both the context of Iran and NZ.

Possible reasons why the participants thought these factors affected their WTC are also given in order to answer *RQ1b*. In addition, findings from my interviews with their classroom teachers as well as my observations of their WTC in class are presented in order to provide a comparison with the participants' perceptions, and therefore a response to *RQ1c* (see Chapter 3, Section 3.2 for a discussion of these research questions).

Findings in this section relate to two semesters (8 months) of English language class experience for six participants and three semesters (12 months) for four participants. Data were collected from questionnaires (see Appendices A, B, & C) and interviews (see Appendices E – H) with both students and their teachers, and my observations (see Appendix D). They are presented in the form of tables, quotations, and references to my fieldnotes created during classroom events.

Such factors can be regarded as belonging to the *microsystem* level of the ecosystems framework as they relate to the participants' present experience learning English in NZ (see Peng, 2014, and Chapter 3, Section 3.5 above).

The factors that are examined in the following sections are tabulated below in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 *Factors influencing participants' WTC in NZ*

| External factors | Internal factors |
|---|---|
| Teacher experience, style and behaviour | Self-Perceived Communication Competence |
| Texts/topics/methods | Confidence/personality/shyness |
| Class activities (pair and group work) | Anxiety/embarrassment/unWTC |
| | Motivation |

Teacher experience, style, and behaviour

The important role played by their teachers in the participants' English language learning experiences in NZ, and consequently their WTC, was reflected in the fact that all the students commented on how their teaching style and behaviour affected their oral participation in class.

In answer to Question 2 from Questionnaire 1 (see Appendix A) "How willing were you to talk to your teacher before or after class?", students had to respond to how they felt about

approaching their NZ teacher outside regular class time. This question was therefore also designed to determine their level of confidence in speaking to the teacher in English, as all but one of their NZ teachers was a native English speaker. Individual results for each participant were tabulated over two semesters and compared with their responses to their classroom experience in Iran (see Table U.4 in Appendix U).

As a result, eight out of ten students showed no change from Iran to NZ in their level of willingness to engage with their teachers in the first semester. Only Sima and Abraham showed an increase in their level of WTC, with Abraham changing from 'Never' to 'Always'. Most of the teachers' views of the students' willingness to approach them were more positive than the students' (see Column 5 of Table U.4, Appendix U). It is possible that being open to student approaches before or after class is seen by NZ trained teachers as appropriate teacher behaviour. However, the 'Never' comment by Parinaz and Marjan's Iranian teacher might have cultural implications, in that he did not see this as part of his teaching role.

In the migrant situation of all the participants, some of whom were also refugees, the role of teacher was extended to the provision of assistance in other areas of life. Therefore, in the interviews a key word in the responses of several students was "help", when asked to explain how their relationship with their teacher enhanced their desire to communicate (see Table V.7, Appendix V).

To sum up, my observations supported the students' overall positive attitudes to their NZ teachers and their willingness to approach them in class with questions and provide answers during class discussions. Abraham in his Semester 1 class appeared to have the most verbally interactive relationship with his teacher (O1: fieldnotes). However, all the other participants (Azadeh, Ramin, Shirin, Golnaz, Tina, Neda, Sima, Parinaz, and Marjan) also demonstrated their willingness to communicate with their teachers in the classes I observed. Their teachers' readiness on the most part to provide support for *out-of-class* situations, in turn seemed to foster *in-class* WTC. In contrast to methods practised in their English language classrooms in Iran (see Section 4.2.1 above), the communicative language teaching approach used by many NZ teachers may have contributed to a classroom atmosphere in which their WTC could thrive.

Texts, topics, methods

As the methods, topics, and type of texts varied for the participants depending on the level and nature of their classes, it is helpful to understand the pedagogical purpose of these classes and the order in which they were organised in this university. To this end, Table W.12 (in Appendix W) and the following discussion set out the classes attended by the participants and their approximate equivalent levels in relation to the International English Language Teaching System (IELTS) test.

Parinaz and Marjan, who were in the same ILN6 class (the lowest of all the participants' classes), expressed their enthusiasm for the frequent opportunities for oral interaction in which they could demonstrate their WTC. Marjan mentioned regular times in class when they spoke about their personal experiences or ideas. In this way, her teacher, Gillian encouraged her students' WTC by choosing familiar topics for groupwork which supported their confidence to speak. By the time Golnaz and Tina reached the Diploma in English Language, three out of their four papers were conducted as lectures with very little contact with their lecturers or classroom group activities, so they had limited opportunity to display their WTC in English. The majority of students were native English speakers. Therefore, the level of their WTC seemed to have dropped due to the unfavourable circumstances and methodological practices of their new course (see Table V.8, Appendix V).

In summary, the participants' levels of WTC fluctuated according to the teaching context of their different classes and the methods employed by teachers to foster their readiness to speak. As they progressed up the class levels the increasingly 'academic' focus saw more emphasis placed on the skills of reading and writing, and less on speaking and its complement, listening. Therefore, for at least half of the participants (i.e., Parinaz, Abraham, Tina, Sima, and Marjan), the methods employed by their teachers in the NZ classroom context may have provided a better environment for their WTC to increase than in their classroom in Iran (see Section 4.2.1 above).

Class activities (pair and group work)

As the levels of the participants' WTC were measured in each of the two semesters, the findings are presented in two parts, including additional data from interviews with four of the participants in a third semester.

Semester 1

In answer to three sections in Questionnaire 1 (see Appendix A), the students had to describe how willing they were to participate in pair discussions, group discussions, and help others answer a question (Q5, 6, & 7). These questions were designed to determine the level of participation and collaboration the students felt they had with their classmates in their NZ English classroom (see Table U.5, Appendix U).

Most of the students were generally willing to communicate and take part in classroom paired or group activities in their first semester classes. Only Neda and Parinaz showed less willingness to help another student, which could have been the result of modesty (i.e., low self-perceived competence or a shy personality) rather than a lack of goodwill. In comparison to Table U.2 (in Appendix U), which relates to the same questions in regard to Iran, there are only three responses that show a slightly stronger level of WTC in NZ than in Iran (i.e., Ramin, Shirin, and Sima in Q5), and one response (i.e., Neda in Q7) which describes a somewhat lower level of WTC in NZ than in Iran. Considering the lack of opportunity for group and pair work in Iran (see Section 4.2.1 above), it would seem that the students were expressing their *theoretical* WTC in pairs or groups in Iran, and perhaps their *actual* WTC in NZ (see also Table V.9, Appendix V).

In summary, in Semester 1 of their NZ English classes, all the participants recognised the value of pair or groupwork to the promotion of their WTC, but four out of the ten (Shirin, Golnaz, Tina, and Neda) felt pressured by cultural considerations to sit with other Iranian students in their classes (see Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003). This choice certainly reduced their opportunities to practise their English and actively demonstrate their WTC in the language. However, Shirin also pointed out the possible benefits of using the L1 (Farsi) for clarification purposes. Therefore, although now in NZ these students were provided with more chances to communicate with their classmates in English than they had had in Iran, there were still some constraints which inhibited their fully taking advantage of this situation.

Semester 2

In the second semester, of the four students who completed Questionnaire 2 (see Appendix B) in response to the same three questions (Q5, Q6, Q7), Abraham and Shirin showed a considerable reduction in WTC, and Ramin and Azadeh (who were in the same class in both semesters) showed a marked increase (see Table U.6, Appendix U). It is interesting to note that over all the results in the Questionnaires, when the teachers' evaluations are compared with the students', the teachers are more positive about the students' WTC than the students are about themselves.

To summarise, in regard to the participation in group and pair work in Semester 2, all the participants in this study continued to value this opportunity to practise their WTC. However, for Golnaz and Tina, their higher-level class with more native speaker students had an inhibiting effect on their WTC, so unless they were obliged to take part in group discussions or presentations for assessment purposes, they continued to sit together in class and often communicated in Farsi rather than English. This situation was reinforced in the next semester in their undergraduate course, where there was almost no chance to practise their WTC in English. Neda's WTC was also hampered to some extent by her perceived obligation to sit with a particular Iranian classmate, whereas Sima, Parinaz, and Marjan made every effort to take advantage of pair and group work at their differing levels of English language competence. Moreover, in comparison with the situation in English language classrooms in Iran, where collaborative classroom activities were rare (see Section 4.2.1 above), NZ teachers did organise such events but, in the end, it was up to the individual student as to whether to fully take advantage of them.

Self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC)

In this context, I was able to compare the participants' actual assessment results/grades in their courses and their teachers' impressions of their English-speaking abilities with the students' own estimations of their competence (SPCC). In regard to their experiences in their classrooms in Iran, however, I had only been able to determine the students' SPCC in English with no comparative measure of their achievement (see Section 4.2.1 above). Their results and/or grades from their NZ classes during the period of this study are recorded in Table U.7 (in Appendix U).

All the participants in this study were successful students academically in NZ. This may be a reflection on their education levels from Iran, as all had completed high school and six out of the ten had attended university. Therefore, these students could be considered competent learners of English at their various levels.

Another aspect of SPCC is the possible link to actual levels of WTC. In other words, if speakers of another language feel their ability is high, they may also demonstrate higher levels of WTC (see MacIntyre et al., 2007). Therefore, if indeed SPCC and WTC are connected, the participants' comparative scores on the WTC scale related to their overall WTC in NZ could be compared with their self-reported high or low levels of SPCC. The relationship between learners' actual proficiency, perceived proficiency and levels of WTC is discussed further in Chapter 7, Section 7.2.

In Table 4.4 below, the participants' WTC in NZ is recorded over all the questions in the first section of Questionnaire 1 (Appendix A). The key to the score was: Never willing = 0; Sometimes willing = 1; Usually willing = 2; Always willing = 3. Therefore, the total possible score was 21. For some students who did not complete Questionnaire 2 (Appendix B) in Semester 2, their class teachers' estimations of their WTC have been included in the Table 4.4 (marked with *). They have been ranked according to their Semester 1 score.

Table 4.4 Overall levels of participants' WTC in S1 & 2 in NZ

| Participants | Overall WTC NZ S1 score /21 | Overall WTC NZ S2 score /21 or /18 |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Shirin | 19 | 5 |
| 2. Marjan | 19 | 21* |
| 3. Golnaz | 18 | 11/18* |
| 4. Sima | 17 | 21* |
| 5. Abraham | 16 | 9 |
| 6. Azadeh | 14 | 19 |
| 7. Neda | 14 | 16* |
| 8. Tina | 13 | 15/18* |
| 9. Ramin | 12 | 21 |
| 10. Parinaz | 9 | 18* |

* Teachers' evaluations of participants' WTC

As can be seen in Table 4.4 above, nine of the ten participants scored themselves at a medium to high level of WTC (11-19/21) in Semester 1, with only Parinaz scoring her WTC at a low level (9/21). Abraham and Shirin, however, showed notable reductions in Semester 2, and Ramin and Azadeh marked increases.

In the interviews, I also asked the participants how they measured themselves against their other classmates as a further indication of where they placed themselves in the classroom ranking. As a means of comparison, in my interviews with their teachers, I also sought their views of these students' actual speaking ability in class and their academic achievement in this skill area.

Semester 1

Seven out of the ten participants (Azadeh, Ramin, Shirin, Golnaz, Tina, Neda, and Marjan) felt satisfied with their progress and made positive comments about their perceived level of English. Three students, however, felt less happy about their ability in English, i.e., Abraham, Sima and Parinaz. Only Parinaz of these three judged herself as having a low level of WTC, so theoretically Abraham and Sima still felt keen to communicate despite their lower estimation of their achievements. As for the comparison with their other classmates, all the students, except Marjan, placed themselves in a middle range, conceding that some students spoke better and some not so well as themselves (see Table V.10, Appendix V).

Overall, in Semester 1 in NZ, in contrast to the participants' much lower perceptions of their success in learning English in Iran (see Section 4.2.1 above), most felt they were making good progress and were neither at the top or bottom of their classes in terms of speaking abilities. Generally, their levels of WTC matched their sense of achievement, both theoretical and actual. In addition, their teachers had come to similar conclusions about their speaking skills in class.

Semester 2

Azadeh, Ramin, and Marjan felt satisfied with their progress in S2 and made positive comments about their perceived level of English. Abraham, Shirin, and Sima had a quite negative impression, while Golnaz, Tina, Neda, and Parinaz were ambivalent, with both positive and negative feelings about their abilities (see Table V.11, Appendix V).

In comparison with their self-rated WTC scores in Semester 2, Ramin and Azadeh also scored their abilities in English highly, so there may be a link here between levels of SPCC and WTC. The middle group (Golnaz, Tina, Neda, and Parinaz), who at times felt satisfied and at other times dissatisfied with their progress and achievements, corresponded with the students who were felt by their teachers to have a reasonable level of WTC. In the low SPCC group, Abraham and Shirin had also rated their WTC as quite low in Semester 2 (in contrast to S1), whereas Sima's teacher rated her at the maximum level of WTC. Therefore, of all the students, only Sima's high WTC score in S2 (if her teacher's impression was correct) and her own low evaluation of her SPCC were at variance with each other. This might be the result of false modesty as she received a Merit pass for speaking in this semester (see Table U.7, Appendix U).

As was the case in Semester 1, most students judged that they were more or less in the middle of the class in S2 in comparison to the other students, except for Marjan, who had an accurate impression of her own higher abilities.

To sum up the participants' views of their SPCC in Semester 2 of their English classes in NZ, fewer students than in Semester 1 were totally confident in their ability to speak English well (three in S2, i.e., Azadeh, Ramin, and Marjan, in contrast to seven in S1), while the rest were less confident from time to time (Golnaz, Tina, and Parinaz), or even quite negative

about their speaking competence (i.e., Abraham, Shirin, and Sima). This may have resulted from an increasingly academic focus as the classes became more difficult, or unexplained issues of personality and self-esteem.

Semester 3

In Semester 3 of their courses, I once again asked Azadeh and Ramin how they felt they were progressing with their English. Ramin continued to be very upbeat about his achievements, while Azadeh demonstrated a more mixed version of her SPCC. Tina and Golnaz were now in lecture-type classes with native speakers and were studying undergraduate papers, which focussed more on content than language. As a result, they found the experience challenging and had little opportunity to display their WTC. Consequently, their SPCC also decreased although Tina remained optimistic. Therefore, progression to a third semester of English classes did not necessarily mean an increase in their estimated ability to communicate well, with only Ramin continuing to have a positive outlook, and Azadeh, Tina, and Golnaz finding greater challenges as their classes became more demanding (see Table V.12, Appendix V).

To sum up this section, most of the participants felt that their ability to speak English in NZ (their SPCC) and their consequent WTC in their classroom was sufficient for them to achieve socially and academically during the period of this study (see also Appendix X for the participants' and their teachers' views of their communicative competence). This was in contrast to their lower perceptions of their communicative competence in Iran (see Section 4.2.1 above). However, only two students felt overwhelmingly negative about their capabilities (i.e., Abraham and Sima).

Confidence/personality/shyness

Three questions in Questionnaire 1 and Questionnaire 2, canvassed students' WTC in three situations: answering a teacher's question, asking a question, and presenting their opinions in class in Semester 1 and Semester 2 in their NZ classroom (see Appendices A & B). These questions were designed to determine the level of confidence in communicating the students felt they had in a *whole class* situation in their NZ English classroom.

Semester 1

None of the participants were completely confident about their WTC in all three classroom communication situations described above (see Table U.8, Appendix U). Although Abraham, Azadeh, Golnaz, and Tina showed a slightly higher level of WTC in NZ than in Iran in some contexts, Neda admitted to less confidence in all the three circumstances. Even Marjan, who stated that she had had a high level of WTC in Iran scored herself as slightly lower in Q1. Sima was the only student to suggest that she felt more confident in these three areas than she had in Iran. (see Section 4.2.1 above). It should be noted that WTC in group activities was higher than in the full class environment (cf. Tables U.5 and U.8 in Appendix U). It is likely that group activities, as discussed above in Section 4.2.2, do not expose the speaker to the judgment of *all* their fellow classmates or the teacher.

In Semester 1, both Marjan and Shirin expressed the highest level of WTC as it related to confidence to speak in class in a whole-class situation in front of their peers and their teacher, which could be considered quite daunting for a second language learner. When I observed Shirin, I noted that she too seemed eager to take part in whole class activities and ask and answer the teacher's questions (O1: fieldnotes). However, she regarded herself as having a mixture of confidence and shyness, which was confirmed by her teacher, Fiona, who described her as having *a shy side to her, but it doesn't really show because she has also got confidence as well* (TFI1:26).

The other participants, except for Parinaz, who gave herself consistently low WTC scores in both the questionnaires she completed, reported mixed levels of confidence in the NZ classroom situations covered in Q1, Q3, and Q4 of Questionnaire 1. For example, Sima's quite positive responses to Questionnaire 1 (see Table U.8 in Appendix U) were somewhat contradictory to her replies in the interview, where she described herself as still shy and quiet in class. Golnaz, on the other hand, was an example of a student who described her personality as talkative even in her first language, and showed an eagerness in class to provide answers to the teacher's questions (O1: fieldnotes), even if, according to her teacher, *she was not always correct* (TDI: Q7). Azadeh also felt her personality in class remained unchanged from Iran to NZ in respect to confidence in the classroom. However, Ramin perhaps was a less straightforward example of a student who had enough confidence to overcome a natural reserve, and as a result was able to demonstrate a reasonable level of

WTC. Such shyness to speak as a personality trait was described by Tina as part of her nature although she saw this characteristic as something that could change.

Finally, the two students who professed to have the lowest level of confidence in their Semester 1 NZ classroom were Neda and Parinaz. Interestingly, according to Neda, she had even less confidence than in her class in Iran (see Table U.8 in Appendix U). She described herself as usually being a shy person although she was more relaxed than she had been in a previous class (her first in NZ).

Overall in Semester 1 of this study, the participants displayed a range of levels of confidence in speaking English in class and hence, WTC. One possible reason could be their personality, for example, the level of shyness they felt as individuals, which may be subject to change in different circumstances, or on the other hand, an inherent trait both in Iran and NZ. Five out of the ten students (Abraham, Golnaz, Sima, Azadeh, and Tina) showed some increase in their levels of confidence when compared to their situation in their classes in Iran (see Table V.13, Appendix V). Generally, the opinions of their teachers and my perspective as an observer and interviewer concurred with their own self-judgment.

Semester 2

In Semester 2, most of the participants reported a continuing increase in confidence and WTC in their classes (Ramin, Azadeh, Abraham, Marjan, and Sima). Some students felt they were still affected by the personality trait of shyness (Parinaz, Neda, and Tina), although all professed to trying to overcome it as they realised that demonstrating their WTC would benefit their English language learning. Shirin, in particular, experienced a marked drop in confidence and WTC in this semester, which she attributed to her distressing experience with one of her teachers (see Table V.13, Appendix V).

As a final point in this section, it has been suggested that Iranians are naturally forthcoming and talkative and dislike silence (Djavadi, 2016), which could lead to a higher level of WTC and confidence in any language. From this cultural point of view, Marjan made a general remark about Iranian students' greater confidence in speaking than other nationalities:

*M: ...if you want to compare the Iranian student in my class with other nation, **Iranian student they are much more, you know, much more active in their class than the other nations...** (I1:102)*

It certainly was my impression as a teacher, as well as an interviewer of these students, that Iranian English language students in this school were, on the whole, more confident in speaking than some other nationalities. One of their teachers, Fiona, described the Iranians in her class as *pretty outgoing and reasonably confident* (TF12:22). Of course, there are exceptions, such as Parinaz, Neda, and Tina in this study, who described themselves as having shy personalities both in Iran and NZ.

Anxiety/embarrassment/unWTC

Unlike their responses to my questions about their negative experiences in classrooms in Iran (see Section 4.2.1 above), the participants were readier to discuss uncomfortable incidents in their NZ classes, possibly because they were more recent. Anxiety about communicating in English in their NZ classrooms could be considered the obverse of the previous section (Confidence) so I focus on those participants who lacked confidence or expressed negative feelings about communicating.

Most of the participants rated themselves above the median for WTC in their responses to Q1, 3, and 4 of Questionnaire 1 (Appendix A) concerning answering and asking questions from the teacher and presenting their own opinions (see Tables U.8 and U.9, Appendix U). Neda and Parinaz were the exceptions. From the four who completed Questionnaire 2 (Appendix B), only Shirin gave herself a very low score.

An issue which was mentioned by some of the participants, both about their classroom experience in Iran and NZ, was looking foolish in front of their classmates when speaking English in a whole class situation. Abraham, Azadeh, Sima, and Shirin expressed their concerns about speaking out in class and how it impacted negatively on their self-esteem. As a result, they became embarrassed, uncomfortable or even angry (Shirin). Such experiences also reduced Neda's WTC in her first semester of English classes in NZ, and she saw how they could make students reluctant to speak or ask questions in class. Both Neda and Parinaz felt there was an improvement in this uncomfortable situation as they progressed through their English classes and possibly became more proficient. For Tina, however, the situation became more stressful when she advanced to a larger lecture style class in her third semester (see Table V.14, Appendix V; cf. Section 4.2.1 in Iran).

As far as their teachers were concerned, six of the ten students were described as anxious or nervous. Since these teachers had had the experience of teaching them over a period of one or two semesters, they should have been able to make a reasoned judgment (see Tables V.15 and V.16, Appendix V).

Azadeh was described by one of her teachers as *a bit anxious* and *needy* (TAI1:32; TAI2:8), but it is interesting to note that she still rated herself quite highly in confidence and WTC levels in both the semesters of this study (cf. Table U.8 and Table U.9 in Appendix U). Golnaz also assessed herself as quite confident in Semester 1 (see Table U.8), although in Semester 2, at a time when her teacher Angela gave her a lower rating for confidence (see Table U.9), she admitted to being quite stressed when they had exams.

For Parinaz, Neda, and Shirin, however, their anxiety and nervousness seemed to be at a higher level than the other participants in this study and was perhaps related to more than just language learning anxiety. Surprisingly, Neda was given a high rating of confidence by her Semester 2 teacher, Penny, who did not consider her as a particularly nervous or anxious student (see Table U.9, Appendix U; and Table V.16, Appendix V). In Semester 1, Neda had rated herself as just below the median level for confidence (see Table U.8, Appendix U), but her teacher, Barbara, attributed any anxiety that Neda experienced then as related to her life outside the classroom, in addition to the normal level of stress experienced by a language learner (see Table V.16, Appendix V). In her interview, Neda described an incident with one of her Semester 1 teachers which may have had a negative and discouraging effect on her confidence, but now in Semester 2 she stated that she only felt nervous *sometimes* (I2:66).

Although most of the participants who completed the two questionnaires reported an increase in confidence from Semester 1 to Semester 2, Shirin's self-rated level of WTC in relation to classroom situations where she could demonstrate her confidence dropped markedly (see Table U.8 and Table U.9, Appendix U). However, both Shirin's teachers recognised that she had a very sensitive side to her character with the result that she became easily upset under pressure, for example, when making class presentations or sitting assessments. They both felt this vulnerability might be due to outside the class

experiences, but, in Semester 2, Shirin also had an experience with one of her teachers during an assessment which had an upsetting effect on her.

In contrast to the participants' limited responses in regard to negative experiences in their classrooms in Iran (cf. Section 4.2.1 above), although they elaborated more on some of their less positive feelings about their NZ classes and teachers, most had an optimistic view of how these would improve as their level of English increased.

Motivation

All the ten participants tied their levels of motivation to their goals and most were very positive about their progress towards achieving their immediate academic or employment ambitions. Azadeh, Tina, and Marjan, at this point in time, had an intrinsic interest in learning English for its own sake, while Neda and Sima also showed a desire to integrate with the people whose country they had chosen to migrate to. Ramin and Golnaz had further study goals and Parinaz was motivated by her job to improve her English, which could be regarded as extrinsic motives (see Table V.17, Appendix V). However, it is likely that all these participants had a mixture of motivational forces driving them to pursue their studies in English. Nevertheless, they all stated that they felt well motivated in their NZ classes, which should have enhanced their levels of WTC. Their teachers also had very positive comments to make about their motivational levels in class.

Abraham and Shirin were the exceptions, who described themselves as feeling quite unmotivated at times. Although Shirin had a good level of motivation in her Semester 1 class, as the level of difficulty increased in Semester 2, she became quite pessimistic about her achievements and her future study prospects. As a result, her Semester 1 teacher described her as *always motivated* (TFI1:44), while her Semester 2 teacher judged her motivation and level of WTC as not *very constant* and *up and down* (TAI1:54).

Therefore, the long-term goals of the participants in this study may also have increased their in-class motivation, which could manifest itself in higher levels of WTC. In the ecosystem hierarchy, Bronfenbrenner (1993, p. 25) assigns "life course options" to the *macrosystem* level of the framework, but it could be argued that the existence of such goals also had a strong effect on the *microsystem* of these participants' NZ classroom behaviour. Overall,

most of the participants in this study, with the possible exception of Abraham and Shirin, who were less consistent in their positive approach to learning English in NZ, exhibited strong motivational intent at a higher level than that which they experienced in Iran in the past (cf. Section 4.2.1. above).

As a postscript to this discussion of the participants' motivation and goals, it is interesting to note that except for Marjan, who felt herself to be at retirement age, all the other participants had long term aims to continue their study and gain NZ qualifications. Azadeh and Golnaz were interested in teaching, and Sima in a childcare certificate. Shirin was keen to pursue a sports education course, while Parinaz wished to complete her graphic design training she had begun in Iran. Neda had an accountancy degree from Iran, which she wanted to have recognised in NZ and then work in a bank. Tina, however, was less definite about her plans and was unsure whether she would undertake a mental health course, or give in to pressure from Golnaz to continue the Diploma in English they had begun together, and then go to Bible College. Because Abraham felt he had enough academic qualifications, he was looking for a more practical course, such as building, or even a job of some kind. Finally, Ramin wanted to pursue a career in psychology. When I asked him what the source of his motivation had been in undertaking, by this point, five years of English study in NZ, he explained:

*R: Okay firstly studying. **Firstly, I like studying** because when I was five or six years, **I was born in a village which doesn't, didn't have primary school.** If people wanted to send to their children to primary school there was just one choice, neighbour village school. **That's [why] I couldn't continuously to studying.** That's [why] I like, firstly I like studying because I enjoy by studying. **Secondly, I decided to live in New Zealand.** Firstly, I have to improve my English language. Then get communicate with people and get good job and you know. But firstly first factor is studying, I love studying. (13:156)*

Unlike the other participants, most of whom had attended university in Iran, Ramin may have come from a less privileged background but he still valued an academic education.

4.2.3 *Outside* the classroom in Iran – Mesosystem

In this section of the Findings chapter, I report the participants' views, and provide quotations from the participants where appropriate, on which aspects of their *out-of-class* experiences in Iran, in the past, they felt were influential on their WTC and why. These

findings provide a response to *RQ1a* and *RQ1b* (see Chapter 3, Section 3.2 for a discussion of these research questions).

Data were collected using interviews with the students (see Appendices F & G). Analysis was carried out by identifying references to the theme of ‘outside the class’ in these data sources, then coding and tabulating it (see Appendix O as an example, and Chapter 3, Section 3.5.3 above). They are presented in the form of tables and quotations extracted from these interviews.

In terms of the ecosystems framework (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5.2 above, and Appendix P), the factors relating to present out-of-class WTC in NZ and past levels of out-of-class WTC in Iran would fit appropriately in the *mesosystem* layer, which includes the student but has connections with and influences from other contexts outside the classroom (Peng, 2012).

The factors that are examined in this section are tabulated below in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 *Factors influencing participants' WTC outside the class in Iran*

| |
|---|
| Political situation pre- & post-Revolution (1979) |
| Satellite TV |
| Availability of the internet |
| Number of English-speaking tourists |

The outside environment in Iran in regard to English language use and opportunities changed markedly from the pre-Revolutionary period (before 1979), as experienced by the older members of this cohort such as Ramin, Sima, and Marjan, to the post-Revolutionary period which the other seven participants lived through. Before the Revolution, foreign owned companies were more common in the larger cities and wealthy Iranians often sent their children abroad, on holiday or for further study, to countries such as France, the United States and Great Britain (Farman Farmaian & Munker, 1992). Therefore, there were some opportunities for English language students in Iran to use English and demonstrate their WTC outside the classroom. However, in the period after the Revolution until quite recent times, English-speaking tourists became very rare and foreign companies were unwelcome (Pourakbari, Heidari Tabrizi, & Chalak, 2017; Tavakoli & Tavakol, 2018).

Therefore, for most of the participants in this study, access to English native speakers and even English books and movies became very restricted (see Dahmardeh, 2009; Nafisi, 2003; and Chapter 2, Section 2.5.3 above). Marjan explained to me her view of the situation before and after the 1979 Revolution:

*M: ... **before the revolution** in Iran **the people have more freedom** to do what they want, you know. **After the revolution there is so many restricted things** that the people, you know the new government just try to limited the things that people want, wants to do. (I1:17-18)*

A breakthrough in terms of the importance of English, and availability of English language news and movies, came with the adoption of satellite technology. These satellite dishes were illegal but widespread and popular and made English language movies available to would-be students of English. Tina was one of those subscribers:

*T: ... **I watch lots of movie because we had satellite** so I often, I watch movies and I didn't understand what they're saying but still I like it. (I1:132)*

She regarded this service as motivating and took the opportunity to practise her English and demonstrate her WTC by reading and listening, although not by her spoken language.

The next stage in the development of greater access to English in all forms for Iranians was the evolution of the internet in the 1990s. Azadeh suggested that although she had no *out-of-class* chance to speak English she was able to experience English in many forms through the use of her computer.

In brief, although these participants could have felt a willingness to communicate in Iran using the English they were taught in class, they were not living in an environment which was conducive to such practice. There were few, if any, English speakers to converse with, and only more recently had English again become a means to conduct business with international companies. Outside the class they felt it was unnatural to speak anything except Farsi. As Shirin explained: *When we are in Iran, just you learn English in class, when you go out, everything is finished, no one speak with you English* (I1:94). Although satellite broadcasts and the internet provided access to English medium news and entertainment, it was an opportunity only to practise their skills of reading and listening to English rather than speaking.

4.2.4 *Outside* the classroom in NZ – Mesosystem

In this section of the Findings chapter, I report the participants' views, and provide quotations from the participants where appropriate, on which aspects of their present *out-of-class* experiences in NZ they felt were influential on their WTC and why. These findings provide a response to *RQ1a* and *RQ1b* (see Chapter 3, Section 3.2 for a discussion of these research questions).

The factors that are examined in this section are tabulated below in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 *Factors influencing participants' WTC outside the class in NZ*

| |
|--|
| Size of Iranian community in Auckland |
| Family unit in NZ |
| Number of English-speaking friends |
| Success/failure in negotiating formal interactions |
| WTC in class vs outside class |

According to Stats NZ (n.d. a), Iranians form a small nationality group of approximately 2500 members in Auckland (the largest city in NZ, with a population of 1.6 million), so, except with their family and Farsi-speaking friendship groups, the members of my study had to communicate largely in English outside their language classrooms. Although there are some shops and restaurants specialising in Persian food and produce in Auckland, services such as banks, real estate agents, doctors, and lawyers are not available in their own language, unlike cities such as Melbourne in Australia where the longstanding and larger Iranian migrant group has established such facilities (a population of 16,700, according to the 2016 Australian census and the website .idcommunity, n.d.). Therefore, in both formal and informal situations in the community, this group of Iranian migrants to NZ had to demonstrate their willingness to communicate in English on a daily basis.

Key factors related to their levels of out-of-class WTC which emerged from the data were the percentage of time they spent speaking English, their ability to make English-speaking friends and to deal with the demands of formal English language situations, and the difference they perceived between their WTC inside and outside the classroom.

In fact, when I asked them in the interviews what percentage of time outside the class they spent speaking English (rather than Farsi), their answers ranged from almost 100% (Abraham, who lived alone and came to NZ by himself) to less than 30% (Tina when she was on holiday from her English classes, and Golnaz, who lived with her brothers and never socialised with English speakers). Although all except Abraham were living in family units, and their family circumstances could have reduced their need to use English in an informal way, the participants varied in their responses when asked about whether they had been able to make English-speaking Kiwi (NZ) friends.

Tina made friends through her church affiliation and they reinforced her WTC by their encouragement:

*T: Yeah, yeah, actually every Friday night, every fortnight we catch up all together so it is good, good **for communication skill it's good**. And one of them told me "**Oh [Tina], your language is good**". (I3:100)*

Ramin and Azadeh, who were husband and wife, mentioned their Canadian neighbours, and Kiwi (NZ English native-speaker) friends with whom Ramin went running, as well as church friends:

*Azadeh: ... I do keep **a few Kiwi friends**. Like we have **a neighbour**, they are from Canada yeah, we have a communicate. Last week they were [at] our house, we have just **communicate**, yeah we do. (I3:134)*

*Ramin: Kiwi, yes **native English speakers** and maybe sometimes **some people invite me to Church or some community and I go and talk with people with the English language**. (I2: 88)*

Some of the other participants, however, were able to communicate with non-native speaker friends in English outside class time, such as their AUT classmates (Parinaz and Neda), or a daughter-in-law from Russia and a Macedonian flatmate (Sima). Sima also had a very brave strategy for making contact with New Zealanders, which showed her high level of WTC:

*Si: ... my house location is, close to my house is station, bus station. **I look from windows if everybody stay for bus, waiting for bus, I'm going and talking to people**. (I2:172)*

Nevertheless, not all the participants' attempts to make informal contact with native speakers went well, as described to me by Neda. She said she wanted to *speak to all of people and make a friend for me and I want to learn their culture* (I1:162). Unfortunately, sometimes these encounters did not go well:

*N: ... I think **Kiwi people don't like friend to another country**, specially Asian country. (I1:209)*

N: Because one time I was in the bus stop and that day was my New Year Day and I bought some sweet cookie, and in my culture, in the New Year, give it to each other sweet cookie and when I give it to Kiwi people, she said, "No thank I don't want it". (I1:212)

Moreover, Marjan gave an extended account of an unhappy experience which had a negative effect on her WTC, despite her desire *to be some part of this community* (I1:114):

M: ... It's very hard for foreigner to interfere [mix with] the Kiwi people, to interfere [be part of] their life, their home. You know because in my previous place I had a neighbour and he was old and he was living with her daughter. And at first time I really feel pity about him because all the time he was lone, he was alone and when I cook something during the lunch I brought for her and I wanted to make, you know, some communication with him and he was very happy about what I have done for him, but you know I feel he always was welcome when he came to our place you know. We are saying, "Come in!", he just came in and spent the time with us and have a tea or coffee or something with each other but sometimes when I haven't seen him for a while, we have a very small yard in front of flat and I was worry actually about him and I wanted to get some news from him. And I went there and knocked at the door, on the door and I feel that he doesn't want me, he didn't want me to come in. Actually, I didn't want to go, I just wanted to see because he was old. You know after the while, after the past few months I feel that so if he doesn't want me to go knock the door so how come he feel that he is free to come to my place any time, you know what I mean? So I said, "Okay I leave him alone". (I1:32)

In more formal situations, the participants had to display a very confident level of WTC if they were to succeed in negotiating transactions such as renting or buying a house, communicating with the teachers in their children's schools, or dealing with doctors and hospitals. Most of these interactions were successful, according to the reports I received. For example, Azadeh explained, when asked in what situations she mostly needed to speak English outside the classroom:

Az: *Yeh yeh I think **shop that's ok, but the school is so important for me** because every day I take my little daughter to school, my oldest one she can go to school by bus, but the little girl she can't go by alone, **I have to take her every day and talk with her teacher** with other student, that's why it's important I have to learn English. (I2:74)*

Golnaz reported how she had progressed beyond needing the help of her brothers (who had been in NZ for several years before her arrival):

*G: **I can go outside and do something to buy** and everything I can do with myself because now it's easier than before when I came to New Zealand. **Because when I came I couldn't go out only alone**, it was very hard for me but now it's ... (I1:126)*

She also had an operation during the period of this study and was able to communicate effectively with the doctors and nurses, usually without the assistance of her family:

*G: No, they, **because my doctor always speak much you know, he speak slow and I understand everything** and explain why, um what has happened on my leg for example. Yeah and... (I2:194)*

*G: ... **but when I was in hospital because I was one day I was overnight and my doctor and other nurse says, came to me and I explain ... (I2:197-198)***

Tina had some health issues as well but was **confident** (I2:184) to deal with doctors and hospitals by herself with just a friend for moral support.

However, Neda described a demoralising incident she experienced in a department store, which reduced her WTC and confidence in approaching English-speaking New Zealanders for friendship:

*N: ... **I think if my language isn't good**. When I was in the Smith & Caughey for a one time, I want to buy something and **when I said, "I want this thing", he said, "What do you say? What do you say? Pardon?" I told to her, I told to him, "My accent is very bad". He was a Kiwi. He said, "Yes I couldn't understand your word". (I2:139-142)***

Shirin felt her WTC was affected negatively by being in the presence of other Iranians, whereas on her own she was quite confident about dealing with formal transactions:

*Sh: Yeh, if I go somewhere and the people, all the people except, **if I have some people from my country it's really hard**. For example, you are speaking English and another person is from my country, **I feel shy in front of that person, but if ten people they are English, they speaking English I'm confident in front of them, but if***

one person from my country and they know my language, it makes me hard, it's harder for me because they are thinking, "Oh, how she speak!" and if she can speak good, or you know, the judgement of that person. (I2:124)

Finally, I asked the participants whether they felt their WTC was higher in their English language classroom or in the outside community. Azadeh and Shirin felt to some extent a greater level of confidence and WTC outside the classroom because they were less concerned about making grammar errors and expected that concessions would be made for them as non-native speakers of English. The other six students who responded either felt their WTC was the same in both contexts (Golnaz), or felt more confident in class (Abraham), because of the teacher's presence (Ramin), or because they were with speakers with a similar level of English (Sima and Parinaz). Finally, in the case of Marjan, there was no opportunity for comparison as she stated that she was unable to practise her speaking skills outside the classroom environment (despite her very high levels of WTC in class) (see Table V.18, Appendix V).

In contrast with the situation in Iran before they arrived in NZ, where opportunities for demonstrating their spoken WTC in English outside the classroom were very restricted or non-existent, the participants in this study now had many more chances to practise their classroom-learnt language. From the findings, however, it seems that, although they were able to conduct their everyday lives in English as regards the necessities, they still did not feel they were sufficiently integrated into the community at large, and preferred the more sheltered environment of the classroom in which to display their WTC.

4.3 Summary

This chapter has presented the findings related to the individual and contextual factors influencing the participants' WTC, both *in-class* and *out-of-class* in Iran, in the past, and in NZ at the time of this study. The seven factors which affected their *in-class* WTC in both Iran and NZ were categorised as: teacher experience, style and behaviour; texts, methods (and private & public schools in Iran); class activities (pair and group work); self-perceived communication competence; confidence, personality, and shyness; anxiety, embarrassment, and unWTC; and motivation.

On the other hand, the four main factors that influenced their *out-of-class* WTC in Iran were identified as the pre- & post-Revolution (1979) political situations; access to satellite TV; the arrival of the internet; and their contact with English-speaking tourists. In NZ, their *out-of-class* WTC was affected by five factors: the small size of the Iranian community in Auckland; their family connections in NZ; the number of their English-speaking friends; their success or failure in negotiating formal interactions; and how comfortable they felt demonstrating their WTC outside the class as opposed to inside the security of their classroom.

Figure 4.1 below illustrates the principal influences on the WTC of my participants in the form of a pyramid diagram (cf. MacIntyre et al., 1998). Past and present factors combine to have an effect on the WTC behaviour of the members of this study. However, it should be noted that each individual would be more or less influenced by specific variables at different times and in different contexts, which highlights the weakness of such static models.

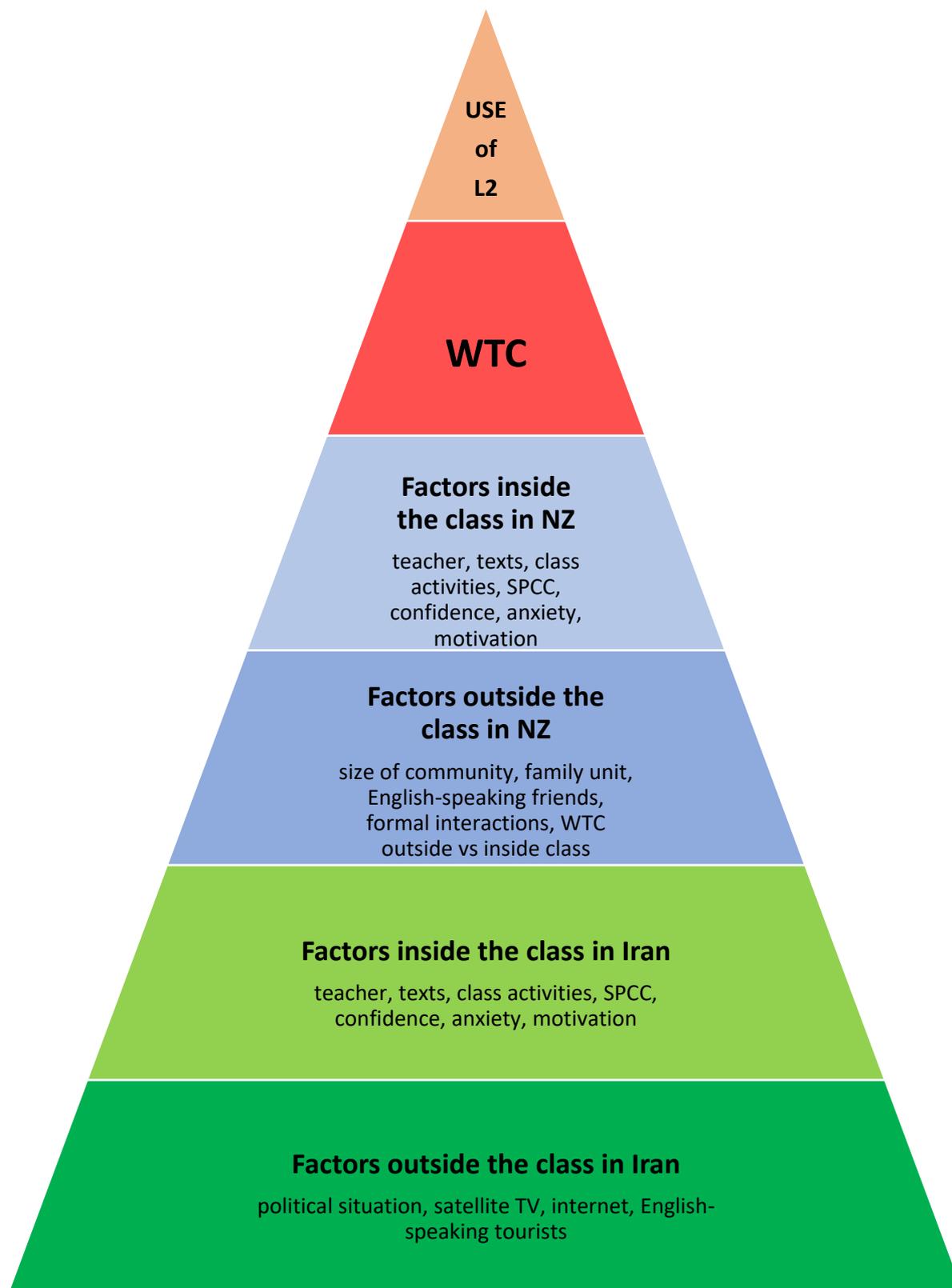


Figure 4.1 *Pyramid model of factors affecting WTC of participants*

Overall, from data revealed in the interviews and in the questionnaires, for at least six of the participants (Abraham, Ramin, Shirin, Golnaz, and Tina), their levels of WTC increased from Iran to NZ at least in the first semester (see also Table 5.2 in Chapter 5 below). In the next Chapter 5, the variations in their WTC from Iran to NZ, and from one semester to another in NZ are examined in more detail.

Chapter 5. Variations in WTC

5.1 Introduction

Following this introduction, Section 2 of this chapter presents the findings related to *RQ2* and *RQ3*, in order to explore the variations in the participants' levels of WTC from their classroom in Iran to that in NZ, and from one semester to another in NZ. Finally, a summary of the chapter is outlined in Section 5.3.

Findings in this chapter relate to the participants' past class experiences in Iran, two semesters (8 months) of English language class experience for six participants, and three semesters (12 months) for four participants. Data were collected from questionnaires (see Appendices A, B, & C) and interviews (see Appendices E – H) with both students and their teachers, and my observations (see Appendix D). For an explanation of the various NZ classes attended by the participants and their levels and aims see Appendix W, Table W.12. Data are presented in the form of tables, quotations, and references to fieldnotes created during classroom events.

As the questionnaires did not contain a section on levels of WTC experienced *outside* the classroom in either Iran or NZ, data are not presented on possible variations in these areas. Because it was not possible to observe or consult with other witnesses to the participants' WTC outside the classroom, I felt the data would be insufficiently supported. However, in hindsight, this could be regarded as an omission and it is mentioned in the Conclusion Chapter 8 as a limitation and a worthwhile future topic of research (see Sections 8.5.1 and 8.6).

5.2 Variations in participants' WTC from Iran to NZ and from class to class in NZ – Micro- and mesosystem

In this section, I report on the participants' views, and provide quotations where appropriate, to illustrate how their levels of WTC have changed (or not) from the time of their English language learning experiences in Iran to their classes in NZ (*RQ2a*). Variations in their WTC from one semester to another in their NZ English classes are also mapped (*RQ3a*). Reasons for their perceptions are also presented (*RQ2b & RQ3b*). These findings in the NZ

context are compared with the views of their teachers and my observations in their classrooms (RQ3c). (See Chapter 3, Section 3.2 for discussion of these research questions).

Most of the participants completed three questionnaire sections which comprised seven questions about the degree of WTC they felt in particular classroom situations in Iran and two semesters of their NZ English language teaching as listed below (see Appendices A & B and Table 5.1 below).

Table 5.1 *Questions from Questionnaires*

| |
|---|
| <p><i>How willing are you to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give an answer when the teacher asks a question in class? 2. Talk to your teacher before or after class? 3. Ask a question in class? 4. Present your own opinions in class? 5. Participate in pair discussions in class? 6. Participate in group discussions in class? 7. Help others answer a question? |
|---|

Their responses to these questions in Table 5.1 above were assigned numerical values so 'Never' = 0; 'Sometimes' = 1; 'Usually' = 2; 'Always' = 3. These figures were added to reach an overall total out of a possible maximum of 21. Their teachers were given the same set of questions to answer about their students' WTC levels. It is presumed by previous researchers that a higher score is evidence of a higher level of WTC. A summary of their scores is tabulated below in Table 5.2. A more detailed breakdown of how these individual scores were calculated is found in Appendix W.

Table 5.2 *Participants' overall WTC scores in Iran and NZ*

| Participants | Overall WTC Iran score /21 | Overall WTC NZ S1 score /21 | Overall WTC NZ S2 score /21 or /18 |
|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Abraham | 9 | 16 | 9 |
| 2. Azadeh | 15 | 14 | 19 |
| 3. Ramin | 11 | 12 | 21 |
| 4. Shirin | 17 | 19 | 5 |
| 5. Golnaz | 17 | 18 | 11/18* |
| 6. Tina | 12 | 13 | 15/18* |
| 7. Neda | 14 | 14 | 16* |
| 8. Sima | 10 | 17 | 21* |
| 9. Parinaz | 9 | 9 | 18* |
| 10. Marjan | 20 | 19 | 21* |

* *Teachers' estimates of participants' WTC*

In addition, in the interviews with the students and teachers, I was able to further investigate any changes in the participants' levels of WTC and the possible reasons for such variations. My observations during the two semesters of classroom teaching provided another viewpoint from which to assess their WTC and a means of triangulating the data. Therefore, the following presentation of the findings is based on the questionnaire results and the qualitative data from the interviews and observations.

Although the individual WTC trajectories over the period of time for each of the 10 participants are not exactly the same (see Table 5.2 above), the findings are presented according to general and unusual trends. Factors which influenced these variations in Iran included a lack of opportunity to speak English in or out of class, confidence in class to express their WTC, their personality (shy or extrovert), and their degree or type of motivation. In NZ, confidence and personality were also variables as well as their relationships with and the behaviour of their teachers, the tendency to sit with and converse with other Farsi-speakers, and the provision of group work opportunities.

In terms of the ecosystems framework (see Chapter 3, Section 3.5 above, and Appendix P), the findings relating to past levels of classroom WTC in Iran would fit appropriately in the *mesosystem* layer, which includes the student but has connections with and influences from other contexts outside the classroom. As for their more recent experience learning English

in NZ, it could be regarded as belonging to the *microsystem* level of the ecosystems framework (see Peng, 2014).

In the following sections, I present a comparison of the participants' levels of WTC, initially in Iran (Section 5.2.1), then in their first semester of class in NZ followed by their second semester (Sections 5.2.2). For four participants it was also possible to explore any variations in a third semester of class (Section 5.2.4). Possible reasons for these levels are provided according to the perceptions of the participants themselves, their class teachers, and my observations. Finally, I track the pattern of variation in their levels over time and reveal any suggested causes for these changes (Section 5.2.5). For purposes of analysis and comparison the participants were allocated to high, medium, or low bands of WTC, although such divisions were not necessarily so clear cut.

Table 5.3 below sets out the participants' levels of WTC using their self-rated WTC scores to assign them to a low, medium, or high range band of WTC (see also Appendix W for detailed tables of figures from the questionnaires). In the cases of Parinaz, Neda, Marjan, and Sima in Semester 2, the data from the student interviews and the ratings of their teachers combined with the perceptions of the observer/researcher were used to allocate them to a particular band, as the students did not complete WTC questionnaires (Appendix A) in this semester. Parinaz, however, was assigned to a lower band despite one of her teachers' more positive view of her WTC, as her own estimations of her WTC were still very unconfident. She was the only participant whose self-perceived WTC was at clear odds with the views of the teacher(s) or the observer/researcher.

Table 5.3 Comparison of participants' levels of WTC

| Place & Time | Levels of WTC | Participants |
|--------------|---------------|---|
| Iran | Low | Abraham, Parinaz, Sima |
| | Medium | Azadeh, Ramin, Shirin, Golnaz, Tina, Neda |
| | High | Marjan |
| NZ S1 | Low | Parinaz |
| | Medium | Abraham, Azadeh, Ramin, Tina, Neda, Sima |
| | High | Marjan, Shirin, Golnaz |
| NZ S2 | Low | Abraham, Shirin |
| | Medium | Golnaz, Tina, Neda, Parinaz |
| | High | Azadeh, Ramin, Marjan, Sima, |

*Teachers' estimates

| Key |
|-------------------|
| Low = < 10/21 |
| Medium = 11-17/21 |
| High = 18-21/21 |

According to Table 5.3 above, the participants are discussed in groups according to their level of WTC in each time frame (Iran in the past, Semester 1, and Semester 2 in NZ) in order to identify any similarities and differences in the reasons for their WTC levels. Finally, the levels of four of the participants who continued in classes for another semester are also compared.

5.2.1 Participants' levels of WTC in Iran

In the Iran context, data were collected and analysed from both questionnaires completed by the students and my interviews with them.

Participants with low levels of WTC in Iran – Abraham, Parinaz, Sima

Abraham's level of WTC was fairly low in his country of origin because *we, I never use my talk English in Iran* (I1:180). In other words, he lacked the opportunity for practice outside the classroom and this disincentivised him. (See Chapter 6, Section 6.2 for a detailed discussion of this participant).

Parinaz had the lowest rating for her WTC in Iran along with Abraham. She explained that she did not enjoy studying English in Iran:

*P: Yeah, before actually I doesn't, don't like it. **I didn't like it English but now I love it English.** When I came here **I love more English more than Iran.** (I1:152)*

Sima had the next lowest self-rated WTC scores in Iran (see Appendix W, Table W.8; only Abraham and Parinaz were lower) and revealed that she was **nervous** about speaking (I1:78) and that she felt her personality was and is still shy:

D: Okay so when you were in Iran, in class, were you shy, or did you like to talk?

*Si: Shy, yes, **now is shy as well.** (I1:73-74)*

In her opinion, she felt nervous in Iran because she was *young*, but now she is *old* and she is able to practise listening and reading at home, she has lost some of that nervousness (I1:82).

Therefore, these participants gave various reasons for their low levels of WTC, for example, lack of opportunity, personal learning preferences, or personal characteristics such as shyness.

Participants with medium levels of WTC in Iran – Ramin, Shirin, Tina, Neda, Azadeh, Golnaz
Ramin shared Abraham's view in regard to the lack of opportunity to show his (theoretically medium) level of WTC in Iran, particularly in the last decades of the 20th century and early 21st century:

*R: Unfortunately, we don't, unfortunately more than 95% of Iranians doesn't, don't speak with English language, **I think more than 90% of Iranian don't understand about English language, that's why you can't have communicate with English language with other peoples.** Sometimes you can find people who speak with English language, you can get communicate.*

D: But it's not easy?

*R: Not easy, **not easy, yes, unfortunately, especially our time.** (I1:46-48)*

As a result, he was unable to find any speaking partners to practise with outside his English classes.

Shirin explained that if her teacher in Iran gave her time to prepare beforehand she was ready and confident to answer questions and speak out in class. However, as expressed by Ramin above, she regretted that fact that at the time she was studying English in Iran, *just you learn English at the class, when you go out, everything is finished, no one speak with you English but now in Iran it's better* (I1:94). Therefore, any WTC she experienced theoretically was not able to be demonstrated in practice.

Tina's level of WTC in Iran was also at a mid-range level, but she viewed her English language learning experience in Iran as being largely focussed on grammar with little time to use or speak the language (I1:264). However, she was able to attend private summer school classes where *they teach us how to do conversation* (I1:112), which allowed her to more effectively demonstrate her WTC.

Neda also commented on the lack of opportunity to speak English in Iran and the focus on grammar above all else (I1:76). She explained that there was a lack of motivation among high school students of English in Iran:

N: I think because in high school most teenager like to do entertainment but after 20 year old they want to do something that it was good for future. (I1:216)

Despite the lack of peer support in her Iranian English classes, she felt the level of her WTC in Iran was as high as that later in NZ. She had taken to heart the advice given to her by her Iranian teacher: *"You must ask a question and you must speak English until you can learn English"* (Q1: remark). Azadeh had a similar attitude to class participation in Iran and readily responded to the teachers' questions.

Finally, in this group of medium level WTC participants in Iran, Golnaz, although registering a constant level of WTC throughout the period of the study, stated in an interview that she was *much more* willing to communicate in NZ than she had been in Iran (I1:181), implying at least a 'perceived' lower starting point.

Thus, in this medium range WTC group, similar issues of lack of speaking opportunities in Iran are mentioned, but persistence and preparation as well as rejecting the pressures of unmotivated peers seems to have had a mitigating effect.

Participants with high levels of WTC in Iran – Marjan

Marjan had the highest self-rated score for WTC in Iran out of all the participants. This could be explained by the fact that she was the oldest member of this study and had had a pre-Revolution experience of English language teaching in Iran influenced by American teachers who placed a greater emphasis on communicative skills (see Section 4.2.1 above). She had also attended extra classes after school and professed:

*M: ...you know **always I love to learn English** and this is my favourite language to learn and after I finish high school I never been very far away from English. (I1:8)*

Thus, her intrinsic motivation was very strong and she may have had greater opportunities to speak English outside the class as the political situation, at least until the 1979 Revolution, permitted a greater number of English-speaking workers and tourists to live in or visit Iran (Dahmardeh, 2009). Marjan also implied that her family was well off enough to send her to private English classes and university (I1:16 & 28) and upper-class families of the time were often strongly anglophile (see Farman Farmaian & Munker, 1992). However, for Marjan this level of theoretical WTC persisted, despite the change in political climate and reduction in opportunities for actual communication in English, until and after she arrived in NZ in 2011 (I1:8). It should be noted that Sima, who was the only other participant of a similar age, did not mention a similar experience in her interviews but rather emphasised her more negative feelings about learning English in Iran (I1:74).

Overall, therefore, Marjan was an example of an English language student in Iran who made the most of the communicative opportunities she experienced in pre-Revolution times, but also maintained her high levels of WTC which were boosted by an intrinsic affection for English throughout her life.

5.2.2 Participants' levels of WTC in NZ in S1

In the NZ context, data could be analysed and triangulated or 'crystallized' from 3 types of sources: the WTC questionnaires completed by the students and their teachers, my interviews with the students and their teachers, and my observations as a researcher in their classrooms.

Participants with low levels of WTC in NZ in S1 – Parinaz

The only participant to describe herself as having a similarly low level of WTC in Iran and in her first NZ class was Parinaz. She was in a class which ran for a whole year rather than the semester long classes attended by all the other participants (except Marjan who was Parinaz's classmate in ILN6). Therefore, she had the same teacher, Gillian, who was able to observe any changes in her level of WTC over the whole year. On the one hand, Parinaz felt that her confidence in speaking improved *a little* (I2:23) over the period of the first semester, whereas her teacher, Gillian, described *her contributions in the class as a whole as mainly responses when she asked her a question or asked for some feedback* (TJEI1:67).

In my observation of Parinaz's class in June 2015 (O1: fieldnotes), I was able to see how she showed her WTC in a group situation as this was the main activity for the hour I was in the class. After being given a topic to discuss based on a previous week's listening task (demolition of buildings in Christchurch), the group, which consisted of Parinaz and three other students – one being another male Iranian – proceeded to take turns to discuss various topics. Although the male Iranian appeared to take a leadership role at first, Parinaz took an active part in the discussion and when the teacher came around to monitor the groups, Parinaz relayed to her in a relaxed manner the gist of what they had been discussing (O1: fieldnotes).

To sum up, this participant, Parinaz, with the lowest level of WTC in S1 in NZ, seemed to be affected by her characteristically shy personality and general lack of confidence. (See Chapter 6, Section 6.3 for a detailed discussion of this participant).

Participants with medium levels of WTC in NZ in S1 – Abraham, Sima, Azadeh, Ramin, Tina, Neda

In his first NZ class, Abraham's WTC score almost doubled in comparison to Iran, and his teacher, Joan, described how initially Abraham was so willing to communicate, particularly with her, that he prevented other students from having the opportunity to contribute (TJAI1:36). In my first observation of Abraham in Joan's class (IAE), I was able to see his WTC in action. He interacted with one other student in a pair activity at the beginning of the lesson for a short period, then spent most of the rest of the hour interacting only with the teacher by frequently and spontaneously contributing to a full class discussion connected to

a reading on a 'supermoon' which had just occurred. His many responses included information about satellites, werewolves, and king tides (O1: fieldnotes).

Another student whose level of WTC increased markedly from Iran to her Semester 1 class was Sima. Although she did not think she had a lot of opportunity to speak (I1:166), her teacher, Katie, described her as *a very active participant* in all her classes and *she even volunteered when students were asked if they would like to practise a speaking exercise in front of the whole class* (TKMQ: remark). Katie considered Sima to be *extremely willing to communicate in class* (TKMI:6) and *didn't appear to be afraid of making a mistake* (TKMI:48). In fact, her estimation of Sima's WTC level was the maximum 21/21 (see Appendix U, Table U.8).

My observations in Semester 1 concurred with the views of Sima's teacher, in that I recorded that Sima was an active participant in the class, interacting well with other students from various language backgrounds, which necessitated the use of English, and asking and answering questions from the teacher (O1: fieldnotes). In a whole-class section of the lesson, Sima made 12 spontaneous contributions either in the form of questions or responses to the teacher in a period of 20 minutes (O1: fieldnotes).

The other students in this group who felt they exhibited a medium level of WTC in their first semester in NZ were Azadeh, Ramin, Tina, and Neda. According to the WTC questionnaires they completed (Appendix A), their level of WTC had changed very little from their classroom in Iran to that in NZ.

Azadeh and Ramin were in the same Semester 1 class (Academic English 1) and in terms of context for their WTC and classroom dynamics, it is necessary to point out that they were husband and wife. In my observation of their class, I had noted that Azadeh and Ramin were sitting separately (O1: fieldnotes) so I asked their teacher, Fiona:

*D: So, just looking at them together for a moment, I noticed **they were sitting separately** in the classroom, was that **something that they chose or you suggested?***

*F: No, no, **they definitely chose that**, they are husband and wife and their language levels are slightly different, one's weaker, one's stronger, they just chose that... (TF11:58)*

It is possible that this gave them more opportunity to display their WTC with their classmates and keep up the level of their spoken English.

Although Azadeh's assessment of her level of WTC did not change much from Iran to Semester 1 in NZ, when asked, she still felt her WTC in NZ in Semester 1 was *better than before* (I1:132), and *now I'm confident and not shy and I feel happy with myself... because everybody English* (I1:134). In fact, her teacher, Fiona, scored Azadeh's WTC at the maximum 21 (see Appendix U, Table U.2) and stated that *if it was willingness out of 10, she would be a 10 out of 10* (TFI1:84). She also noticed how Azadeh *became more outspoken* over the course of the first semester and *her confidence, which was pretty good right from day one, just grew* (TFI1:88). In the class I observed at the end of Semester 1, however, I noted that Azadeh demonstrated her WTC well in pair work with another non-Farsi speaking student, but was clearly less willing than Ramin and Shirin to make contributions to the whole-class discussion about skydiving or write up answers on the board (O1: fieldnotes). In the stimulated recall interview after this observation, Azadeh stated that she enjoyed talking *in pair or group* (S:14) but even though she knew the answer to the vocabulary exercise, *I told to my classmate two words and she wrote them on the board* (S:26).

Moreover, Ramin felt that his WTC had somewhat increased in NZ as the result of his increasing knowledge of English (*I feel my English is **strong than before*** (Q1: remark)), and his exposure to English in and out of class:

*R: ...because firstly **all people speaking with English language and teachers as well, student as well, where you go and shopping or everything you can speak English language.*** (I1:80)

Ramin's teacher, Fiona, however, saw his overall level of WTC as less than Azadeh's (his wife):

*F: ...because **he is naturally quieter and more reserved**, he also needs to feel sure of what he is doing so he needs to understand the task before he will let go and then once he has understood it, **then he's a great communicator.*** (TFI:68)

She also felt that his confidence level and participation in the class, and therefore WTC, did not change from the beginning to the end of the semester (TFI:74).

To sum up, in the cases of Azadeh and Ramin, there are differences in the levels of WTC as perceived by themselves, their teacher, and the observer, but this could be expected in a qualitative study which cannot provide an 'objective scientific' measurement of a phenomenon such as WTC.

Unlike Ramin and Azadeh, who chose not to sit together in class to avoid the temptation of speaking in Farsi rather than in English in order to have more opportunity to practise their WTC, Neda regularly sat next to two other Iranian students. Her teacher in Semester 1, Barbara, felt that *her contributions in English* in this class were therefore negatively impacted on and *they spoke a lot of Farsi together* (TBI:6). Barbara also described Neda as the kind of student who, *if she wanted to know something then she asked, but in a classroom situation she wasn't the first one with her hand up or offering an answer and giving opinions in a voice for everyone to hear is not really her style* (TBI:50). Neda's unfortunate experience with another of her Semester 1 teachers, affected the level of her WTC in class and her readiness to speak to this teacher (see Table V.7, in Appendix V). Although Neda scored her level of WTC as the same as that in Iran, she did suggest in the first interview that she spoke *very more than before* (I1:178) in her NZ class.

Tina showed a similar eagerness to display her WTC as being a means to learn (I1:192). In her S1, 2015 class (AE3), Tina began to relax more as the semester progressed (according to her teacher, Dianna, TDI: q5 & q6). Moreover, her teacher observed that *her personality remained constant, but she seemed less outgoing and confident than three of the other Iranians in the class (out of five in total)* (TDI: q6).

Overall, this group of participants, who classified themselves as having a medium level of WTC in their first semester in NZ, exhibited a range of confidence levels in class, according to their own, their teachers', and the observer's judgements, and were affected by such variables as their differing personalities and who they sat next to in class (i.e., Farsi or non-Farsi speakers), as well as their relationship with their teachers.

Participants with high levels of WTC in NZ in S1 – Marjan, Shirin, Golnaz

Marjan continued to exhibit high levels of self-perceived WTC in her Semester 1 NZ class. In fact, there was little change between her Iranian and NZ Semester 1 score and her teacher

in Semester 1 extolled her virtues as a student with a very high and consistent level of WTC (TJEQ1: remark). Her Iranian teacher in Semester 1, Saman, also nominated Marjan as the student most likely to answer his questions first (TSI:36,74) and found her to be more confident, fluent, and relaxed than any other student (TSI:38). Her classmate, Parinaz, also held Marjan in high regard and valued her role in the class because of her higher level of WTC:

P: Yeah most of the time [Marjan] is more talking, more than us more than other classmate because I think she's speaking very fast and she knows a lot of word and hard word. Yeah [Marjan] most of the time she's speaking more in class in group. (S:14)

In my observation fieldnotes, I also remarked on Marjan's leadership role in the group work taking place that day (O1). She was effectively managing a group of students from a variety of language backgrounds as they discussed a current affairs topic.

Although, like Marjan, Shirin described herself as having a very high level of WTC in her Semester 1 NZ class, a less consistent picture of her self-assurance in English emerged from the interviews with her and her teachers. In fact, Shirin described how she felt at turns shy and yet growing in confidence:

Sh: ...I feel really really good and day-by-day I feel better than before, now I have lots of mistake and when I speak, you know, I know more than, when I speak it's hard for me because first I think about what I want to speak and then speak its make me feel little bit, I don't know how to explain it, it's hard for me. When people speak I can understand what they say but when I want to start to speak, first of all I shy and I thinking about what I do, where I put the verb, where I put, am I speaking about the "now" or about the "past" it's little bit hard for me. (I1:4)

Her teacher, Fiona, also found her to her to be a mixture of WTC and hesitancy at times:

F: [Shirin] has a shy side but she does not allow this to affect her participation in the classroom. She works hard and contributes effectively in class and small group communication. (TFQ1: remark)

Moreover, I was able to observe her readiness to participate in class and demonstrate this high level of WTC when she was first in the class to respond to the teacher's questions orally and to write a vocabulary word on the board (O1: fieldnotes). In the stimulated recall interview after this observation Shirin summed up her proactive approach to WTC:

*Sh: I always interested to talk and I like to ask and speak because when we speak we can improve our English. **Silence is not good.** (S:12)*

Golnaz, the third high scoring participant in regard to levels of WTC in Semester 1, was an example of a student who had a high level of confidence about her spoken contributions in class (S1:14; I1:136) and was not concerned about making mistakes (I1:150). In my observation of this class, I noticed that she was the first of all the students to answer any questions the teacher directed to the class, although she frequently conferred with another Farsi-speaking classmate (Azadeh) who she was sitting next to (O1: fieldnotes). This was her normal choice of seating arrangement, according to her teacher, and appeared to give her extra confidence (TDQ: remark). Golnaz herself, when asked in an interview in which class situation she liked to communicate most, confirmed that she liked to *talk with my friends*, [i.e., Azadeh] (I1:156). However, she was also ready to display her WTC with other classmates as well (I1:158).

To sum up, of the three participants who scored themselves highly in their Semester 1 NZ classes, Marjan and Golnaz were consistently high in self-confidence, whereas Shirin at times experienced more shyness but had a very positive attitude towards overcoming this handicap in order to demonstrate a high level of WTC, which she felt was essential if she was to improve her command of English.

5.2.3 Participants' levels of WTC in NZ in S2

Participants with low levels of WTC in NZ in S2 – Abraham and Shirin.

There were two participants who estimated their level of WTC as being low in their Semester 2 NZ class, i.e., Abraham and Shirin.

Abraham attributed the drop in his WTC from a score of 16/21 to 9/21 (see Appendix W, Table W.1) in his second NZ class (AE1) to a change in focus to a more academic curriculum, which provided less opportunity for speaking. His second teacher, Fiona, however, still described him as having a *very high ... "willingness" rating... because he is a confident speaker* (TFQ: remark), and scored him 20 out of a possible 21 for his level of WTC in her class.

In my observation of this class I recorded in my fieldnotes that he spent most of the hour working in a pair with another classmate and displayed a high level of WTC in that situation (O2: fieldnotes). He also interacted on several occasions with the teacher, answering her questions and asking for clarification. He even argued with her when she rejected his suggestion as to word order (O2: fieldnotes). Therefore, his impression of a reduction in his WTC was not necessarily shared by his teacher or congruent with my impressions as an observer in the class.

In Shirin's case, there was an even more marked drop in her professed level of WTC in her second semester class than for Abraham (19/21 to 5/21, see Appendix W, Table W.4). She attributed this to the higher standard of achievement she felt was expected in this class:

*Sh: Because I think **this is more complicated than other class and I'm not confident like last semester.** (Q2: remark)*

As a result, her motivation dropped, and she even considered withdrawing from the programme (I2:4). She also felt that opportunities for displaying her WTC had reduced as *last semester we was talking too much together and discuss, but this semester, no* (I2:16). Therefore, her speaking ability had also decreased and she now found talking to her teacher in Semester 2 was less easy (I2:48). Her teacher, Angela, described Shirin in terms of her WTC as *very up and down* (TA11:54) and related a classroom incident related to a plagiarism accusation that may have contributed to Shirin's reluctance to speak to her.

In summary, the reasons for these two students' drop in their perceived levels of WTC were the changing emphasis in the class curriculum to skills that would enable them to take up undergraduate courses later on in the university, and in Shirin's case, a more personal issue with her new teacher as well.

Participants with medium levels of WTC in NZ in S2 – Parinaz, Golnaz, Tina, Neda

It should be noted that the participants in this group who have been allocated to a medium level of WTC in their Semester 2 classes did not complete questionnaires, so the estimation of their levels is based on their interviews, their teachers' assessment in the questionnaires and interviews, and my observations.

Parinaz was probably the most hesitant of this group and in her interview, she explained the reason for her low level of confidence:

P: Yeah, yeah I worried. When the learning English is going too hard I was so ... going to confused. (I2:109)

She did feel though that the job she got in Semester 2 increased her confidence (I2:133) and she was more able to respond to the teachers' questions (I2:116-117). During my observation in Semester 2, Parinaz appeared to be comfortable working in groups which comprised students of various nationalities as well as Marjan, another Farsi speaker. Although Marjan took the primary leadership role, Parinaz still made frequent contributions to the discussion (O2: fieldnotes).

Golnaz was also a mixture of confidence and hesitancy in Semester 2. In fact, one of her teachers, Angela, noted: [Golnaz] *gained in confidence over this semester – at first, she would converse with [Azadeh] or [Tina] or [Shirin] about what was going on. In the end she was more confident & outgoing. Not so confident in front of the class* (TAQ: remark). Her other teacher, Christine, described Golnaz as *quieter* than the other Iranian students in the class and stated that *she answered questions but she didn't really offer as much voluntarily* (THI:8). However, I observed in this class that, although initially she chose to sit with other Farsi-speakers when possible, she then took an active part in preparing for a group presentation with students of other nationalities (O2: fieldnotes; THI:29).

In addition, during my observation of this same second semester class, I noted that Tina, as she had done in her previous class, also sat next to her Iranian friends at the beginning of class, but then took a leadership role in her group of non-Iranian students preparing for a joint oral presentation (O2: fieldnotes; THI:29). Tina's teacher, Angela, remarked that *she wasn't as talkative as [Ramin] and [Azadeh], who were noticeably you know the stars* (TAI2:60). However, *she came on really well and was a very solid kind of a student* (TAI2:58). She was also *able to ask intelligently and answer intelligently* (TAI2:60). Tina, however, felt that although this class was a *friendly environment* (I2:4), only group work could give her an opportunity to show her WTC, *otherwise maybe we talking to our next one classmate, not everyone* (I2:6).

As with Golnaz and Tina, the issue of who she sat next to in class could have been an important factor for Neda in increasing or decreasing her opportunities to demonstrate WTC. Her teacher, Penny, commented that:

Pe: [Neda] seemed very willing to ask questions for clarification, and to venture opinions when asked. She may have been even more forthcoming had she not regularly sat next to another particularly vociferous student [the same Iranian student as in the S1 class]. (TKNQ: remark)

However, the teacher did not think this was necessarily a disadvantage and that sitting next to *a very confident outgoing and communicative student... might have encouraged her* (TKNI:8).

In my observation of her Semester 2 class, I recorded that Neda was not reluctant to provide answers to the teacher's questions or ask questions of her own, but she was still seated next to the other Farsi-speaking student who had also been her companion in their previous class. They were constantly in discussion with each other (possibly not in English) and Neda appeared to defer to her partner, who seemed to have a more dominant personality (O1: fieldnotes; TKNI:21).

In Neda's interview with me, she introduced another issue which may have influenced her perceived increase in WTC. She stated that she was *very confident than last semester and ... can speak better than last semester and I think it depended to my teacher* (I2:36). This may have been a reference to the difficult reaction she had had from one of her Semester 1 teachers (as described in Table V.7, Appendix V). Now she stated that her new Semester 2 teachers encouraged her to ask questions (I2:98).

Thus, for the four participants who had a medium level of WTC in Semester 2 of their NZ classes, there were times when they demonstrated confident levels of WTC, such as in group work, but for three out of the four, sitting next to Farsi-speaking friends and classmates may have reduced their opportunities to practise their English, but, on the other hand, could have boosted their confidence. Outside-the-class experience in a job situation and a new more encouraging teacher for Parinaz and Neda (respectively) also had a positive effect on their WTC.

Participants with high levels of WTC in NZ in S2 – Azadeh, Ramin, Sima, Marjan

There were four participants who scored themselves, or were scored by their teachers, as having high levels of WTC in their second semester NZ classes.

In fact, Azadeh and Ramin both recorded a noticeable increase in their WTC scores in comparison to Semester 1 (see Table 5.2 above, and Appendix W, Table W.2 and Table W.3) in their shared AE2 class.

Azadeh explained this change in her remark in the second questionnaire that she was really happy with her speaking, *because I can understand better than last semester* (Q2: remark) and *I'm more comfortable to communicate with people* (I2:48). She contrasted this level of WTC with the situation when she first came to English classes:

*Az: Yes, I remember **when I came to AUT** about two years and half [ago], **I couldn't speak really good** you know, just a little bit and now like day-by-day, months, you know every month or every year getting better, **now I'm really like comfortable, it's much better than last semester or even last year.** (I2:20)*

Although his teacher saw his WTC as *consistent* (TAI1:16), in his opinion, Ramin had gradually taken a greater role in classroom speaking activities in his second semester in NZ:

*R: I am so active, not quiet, **before I was quiet but now I would like to ask more question** about listen or about subject, grammar or whatever, but I am so active, not quiet, yeh. (I2:12)*

He put this down to having *a goal in the future* (I2:14), his adaptation to NZ's culture (I2:18) and his growing independence (I2:58). His second semester teacher, Angela, explained how his possibly lower level of ability in English was compensated for by his WTC:

*An: Pair, class, any situation, **he is a very confident person**, a very outgoing person, very sort of solid in his confidence. However, **his ability did not match his confidence**, I'd say he is grammatically quite weak **but because of his willingness to communicate it actually doesn't matter because he can get his message across quite successfully.** (TAI2:12)*

In Sima's case, however, her teacher's assessment of her WTC as being at a very high level (21/21, see Table 5.2 above) did not tally with her own judgement of her classroom confidence in Semester 2. Sima professed to be *not shy* but *very worried about my speaking*. She said: *I try to do my best but I am not successful* (I2:48). She attributed this lack of

achievement to the fact that she was unable to practise her English at home (I2:50). Her teacher in this class, Joan, contradicts Sima's negative assessment of herself:

*J: She is **quite communicative**, [Sima]. She has opinions and **she always has something to offer** and it's 99% of the time positive to what she contributes is **something positive**. (TJA12:9)*

My observation of Sima's class in Semester 2 supported the view of her teacher, in that I recorded that Sima was an active participant in the class, interacting well in pair work with other students for the first half hour, and taking a teacher-type role by correcting another student when he made a mistake. In the second half of the class in a whole-class teaching situation, Sima frequently asked and answered questions from the teacher and confidently volunteered her version of a sentence for correction (O2: field notes).

In Semester 2, Marjan also continued to demonstrate a high level of WTC, according to herself and her teacher, Gillian:

*Gi: [Marjan] has been at the top of the class in her English ability & is very confident & **always willing to communicate orally, both when asked & unasked & in pairs/groups as well as in a whole-class situation**. However, she is very aware of the fact that all the students need sufficient time to contribute & this means that **she often waits for others to answer and never dominates**. (TJEQ2: remark)*

Moreover, as her teacher suggested above, when I observed her class in Semester 2, I saw for myself that Marjan took a leadership but not dominating role in group work, making sure that all the members of her discussion group had an opportunity to speak (O2: fieldnotes). Marjan expressed her own philosophy about participating in groups and how it was an opportunity to demonstrate her WTC:

*M: I like to work in group because you can, **you can hear all of the idea**, all of the, how can I say, idea about all of the people and **somehow the people make you to speak**, ask you question, I ask them the question, so all the time, there is **all the time, there is something to talk about that. There isn't any silence**. There is so many people. (I2:94)*

Therefore, two of the high scoring WTC participants (Ramin and Azadeh) showed a sharp increase in their levels in Semester 2 in NZ, which they attributed to a greater level of self-assurance. Sima continued to have a modest opinion of her ability to communicate

effectively but this was belied by her teacher's and my observations of her classroom behaviour. Marjan, on the other hand, maintained her position as the most willing to communicate of all the members of this study, with a very mature approach to classroom participation.

5.2.4 Participants' levels of WTC in NZ in the third semester of the study – Azadeh, Ramin, Golnaz, Tina

Four of the ten participants in this study were also interviewed in a third semester of their English classes to further investigate any variations in their WTC and determine the reasons for any such changes. In addition, some of their teachers were asked for their views to provide a means of confirming the data.

EAS (English for Academic Study): Azadeh, Ramin

In the final interview I conducted with Azadeh in EAS, a pre-university skills-based programme, she described her speaking as having changed and improved (I3:78) because speaking was assessed as part of a group presentation in the Oral paper and there was *more opportunity to talk* (I3:42). Her teacher, Angela, observed that *she is actually quite willing to communicate as a general rule* (TAI2:10). However, she also stated:

An: [Azadeh] came across as being quite needy and asking a lot of questions for clarification that felt very sort of you know anxious and wanting clarification for kind of reassurance reasons. (TAI2:8)

On the other hand, Angela suggested that this also showed Azadeh's high level of WTC because she was confident enough to:

An: Express her lack of confidence, that's right and that is quite hard to do that. Many students might say nothing and they might come up to you at the end but to speak out during the class is quite an act of courage and bravery really. (TAI2:12)

Angela also taught Ramin in the same class (EAS), and she described his ability to communicate as compensating for his lower level of academic achievement:

An: Okay so [Ramin] didn't do so well I don't think. But that doesn't stop him being willing to communicate either because he's quite, he's got that you know very strong presence. (TAI2:30)

In this way, Azadeh and Ramin appear to have maintained the steady progression in their levels of WTC from Iran to their semesters in their NZ classrooms (see Table 5.2 above).

DipEL (Diploma in English): Golnaz, Tina

In her next semester at AUT, Golnaz moved up to a class which was part of an undergraduate diploma in English language (DipEL). It was a course with papers attended by both native and second language speakers of English and delivered largely as lectures. Thus, the opportunities for group work or even communication with other classmates was very limited. Golnaz felt this adversely affected her WTC and she reverted again to primarily speaking Farsi with her Iranian classmates (e.g., Tina):

*G: No. If we choose someone else specially New Zealanders it is better to communicate together but **when we are same language always we talk in like Iranian language** and... (I3:19-20)*

In her third semester, Tina attended the same course as Golnaz (DipEL, see above), and faced the same difficulties in finding opportunities to display her WTC. She complained that it was *a big class... so it is hard for me to ask question* (I3:48). The style of teaching and the numbers of native English speakers had a negative effect on her WTC:

*T: Actually I think **I am sort of less willing to communicate** because as I mentioned it's, I mean, **big class sort of conference style and lots of native students** over there. (I3:80)*

Therefore, for Golnaz and Tina, this final semester saw a decided reduction in their previous levels of WTC, as there were no longer structured sections of class time when students could discuss their learning with each other or even work on shared projects. The default choice for these two participants was to communicate primarily with each other in their own language. As a result, even though they were in classes with many native English speakers, they had almost as little inclination to show their WTC as they had had in their Iranian English classes.

5.2.5 Variations in participants' WTC trajectories over time and context (Iran → NZ class; NZ class → NZ class)

In response to *RQ3a*, the participants' WTC trajectories were mapped over 3 or 4 periods of time: in Iran; in NZ in Semester 1; in NZ in Semester 2; in NZ in a third semester (for 4

participants). Data were obtained from questionnaires and interviews with the students and their teachers.

Five of the participants' levels of WTC increased from Iran to their first semester in a NZ classroom, while five remained the same. Three continued to rise in Semester 2, while four remained the same and three dropped. In Semester 3, two of the participants' levels of WTC remained high, whereas two others reduced considerably (see Table 5.4 below and Figure 5.1 below).

Table 5.4 *Participants' trajectories in Iran and NZ*

| Participants | WTC Iran | WTC NZ S1 | WTC NZ S2 | WTC NZ S3 |
|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Abraham | Low | Medium | Low | |
| 2. Azadeh | Medium | Medium | High | High |
| 3. Ramin | Medium | Medium | High | High |
| 4. Shirin | Medium | High | Low | |
| 5. Golnaz | Medium | High | Medium | Low |
| 6. Tina | Medium | Medium | Medium | Low |
| 7. Neda | Medium | Medium | Medium | |
| 8. Sima | Low | Medium | High | |
| 9. Parinaz | Low | Medium | Medium | |
| 10. Marjan | High | High | High | |

Each participant's WTC trajectory is different and as individual learners they can be expected to have various reasons for these fluctuations. Therefore, I provide a short summary of each participants' pattern of WTC development below using data collected from the students, their teachers, and my classroom observations. More detailed examples of this evidence can be found above in Sections 5.2.1 – 5.2.4 above.

The students who were consistently high and low in their levels of WTC were respectively Marjan and Parinaz. Marjan's WTC trajectory began and ended at a very high point and she could be considered the strongest example among the participants in this study of how a student with a very confident level of WTC behaves in an English language classroom with a supportive teacher and many opportunities to display this inclination. Parinaz, on the other hand, although she appeared to be comfortable working in groups which even comprised

students of various nationalities, overall, she would seem to be the least confident of all the participants in terms of WTC, in the view of both herself and her teachers.

In contrast, Shirin and Abraham showed more fluctuations in their levels of WTC over the two semesters of the study than the other participants. Abraham showed a marked increase in his WTC from Iran to NZ, and although he felt his WTC declined in his more academic-focused second semester class, my observations and his teachers' comments indicated that he was a student with a strong intrinsic desire to communicate both with his teachers and his classmates. Unlike most of the other participants, Shirin's WTC did not steadily increase in NZ over two semesters despite her now being in an English-speaking environment. This could have been the result of personal issues with her teacher or a less confident personality. In my interviews with her, she certainly displayed a greater range of emotions than the other members of the study.

Another less assured student was Neda, who, although steady in her level of WTC, could be described as a student with the kind of personality which led to a less open demonstration of her WTC, both in Iran and NZ. Her professed confidence in English was mitigated by her natural hesitance to put herself forward, particularly when in the company of a more extrovert speaker. Her WTC could also have been negatively affected by her relationship with one particular teacher, who she felt did not encourage her to speak out and ask questions.

Sima, however, showed a marked increase in her WTC over the course of the study and according to her teacher and myself as an observer, she appeared to demonstrate a higher actual level of WTC than she herself felt was the case, which could be attributed to a modest opinion of her abilities as far as her English language achievements are concerned.

Unlike Sima, the married couple, Azadeh and Ramin, demonstrated a similarly high level of confidence in their steadily increasing WTC over the three semesters in a NZ classroom. Although Azadeh felt her WTC was consistently strong in both the Iranian and NZ classroom, she did describe an increasing level of confidence in her spoken performance. My observation and her first teacher's comments supported this appraisal, although her teacher in the EAS class a year later described her as more anxious but still willing to speak out to

gain clarification. On the other hand, Ramin's WTC could be described as having risen to a higher level of confidence in NZ, and, according to his third semester teacher, also having served as a compensatory factor in overcoming his lower level of academic English achievement.

Golnaz and Tina could also be regarded as a pair of students travelling a similar path through their English classes at this university and demonstrating a similar WTC trajectory from their Iranian classes through to their final mainstream NZ course together. Their level of WTC remained steadily strong until they reached their undergraduate level papers, where the type of delivery and content of the course, combined with a larger number of native speaker students, restricted the opportunities for them to display their WTC, even if they had still felt positive about doing so. Therefore, they both expressed regret at their reduced levels of confidence in speaking English as well as their increased use of Farsi as the main means to communicate with each other and another Iranian student in their class.

From the findings in this Section 5.2.5, therefore, it could be concluded that there are a range of variations in the participants' WTC behaviours from their Iranian to their NZ English language learning classrooms. However, two pairs of students had very similar trajectories, that is, Ramin and Azadeh, and Golnaz and Tina, possibly in part because they attended the same classes. Another common pattern for half the group was an increase in their WTC from Iran to NZ. Nevertheless, continuing to a third semester in NZ did not necessarily mean a continued upward WTC trajectory for two of the four students who took this path (i.e., Golnaz and Tina) (see Table 5.4 above).

Reasons for their variations in WTC in Iran were attributed by four of the participants to lack of any opportunity post-Revolution for practising their English language communication skills inside or outside the classroom (Abraham, Ramin, Shirin, and Tina). Two students, on the other hand, still took every chance in class to ask questions and speak (Neda and Azadeh), while one participant felt her shyness held her back (Sima). The one student who had consistently high levels of WTC in Iran and later in NZ stressed her intrinsic motivation and interest in English throughout her whole life (Marjan). (See also Section 4.2.1 above for other factors specific to Iran)

A constant theme in the participants' responses, their teachers' views, and the observations of the researcher in relation to their NZ classrooms, was the role of confidence, or the lack of it, as a factor in their levels of WTC. Whether a student was naturally shy or extrovert was also regarded as significant. Two students specifically mentioned their teacher's behaviour or attitude as having a negative influence (Shirin and Neda), while three were affected by their choice to sit next to other Farsi speakers, which reduced their opportunities to speak English in class (Golnaz, Tina, and Neda). Overall, out of the ten students who were surveyed, interviewed, and observed over two semesters in NZ, the provision for group work in these classes permitted all of them to exhibit their WTC, no matter the level of shyness some felt in whole-class communication situations.

It was the lack of this opportunity to have any kind of dialogue or shared activity with their classmates in their third semester classes that meant two of the participants (Tina and Golnaz), who previously demonstrated steady levels of WTC, felt that they had now dropped to a low level despite their acknowledgement of the negative affect this was having on their English-speaking abilities. Without such structured requirements for group work, they felt reluctant to approach their native speaker classmates. (See also Section 4.2.2 above for other factors related to WTC in NZ)

5.3 Summary

This chapter has presented the findings related to variations in the participants' *in-class* WTC from Iran to NZ, and from one semester to another in NZ, and identified some of the reasons given for these changes. Their WTC was classified as low, medium, or high based on their and their teachers' responses to the WTC questionnaires (see Appendices A, B, & C). In Iran, a negative influence on their WTC described by several participants was a lack of opportunity to speak English in and out of class, although six out of ten still rated their WTC at a medium level. Only one participant considered her WTC was high, but she had a pre-Revolution foundation for her English language learning experience.

In NZ in Semester 1, six out of ten participants also felt their WTC level was at a medium level and were affected by factors such as their degree of confidence in speaking English, their relationship with their teachers, and whether they sat next to speakers of their own language. One student classified herself as having a low level of WTC, which corresponded

to her description of herself as having a shy personality (see Chapter 6, Section 6.3, for a detailed discussion of her case). The three participants who assessed their WTC as high also rated their level of self-confidence as equally strong.

In Semester 2, two participants' self-rated spoken WTC reduced to a low level due to a greater focus in their classes on more 'academic' skills of reading and writing. For the medium range group, factors such as groupwork, their teachers, and *out-of-class* opportunities for practice, all had a positive effect on their WTC. Four participants now rated themselves, or were rated by their teachers, as having a high level of WTC, which they attributed to a greater feeling of self-confidence and a strong desire to take part in class activities related to speaking.

Finally, in Semester 3, two of the participants, whose WTC variations continued to be tracked, increased in confidence in a steady trajectory from Iran to NZ, while the other two lost any opportunity to speak English in class as the delivery of their classes changed to a lecture format. Despite the fact that they now shared these classes with many native English speakers their confidence had dropped, and they communicated exclusively with each other in Farsi.

As is described in detail in Section 5.2.5 above, each participant had an individual WTC trajectory over the period covered by the study. Only two participants showed a steady rise in WTC from their time in their Iranian classroom to their final class in NZ, and one a consistently high score throughout. Factors such as confidence as opposed to shyness, the role of the teacher, organised groupwork opportunities, and cultural obligations to sit next to and communicate with fellow Iranians, were common themes which arose when the participants explained why their WTC rose or fell. Figure 5.1 below (based on data from Table 5.2 above) illustrates these individual trajectories of the participants' WTC from Iran to NZ (over 2 semesters) and provides a visual summary of these trends as discussed in this Section 5.3 above.

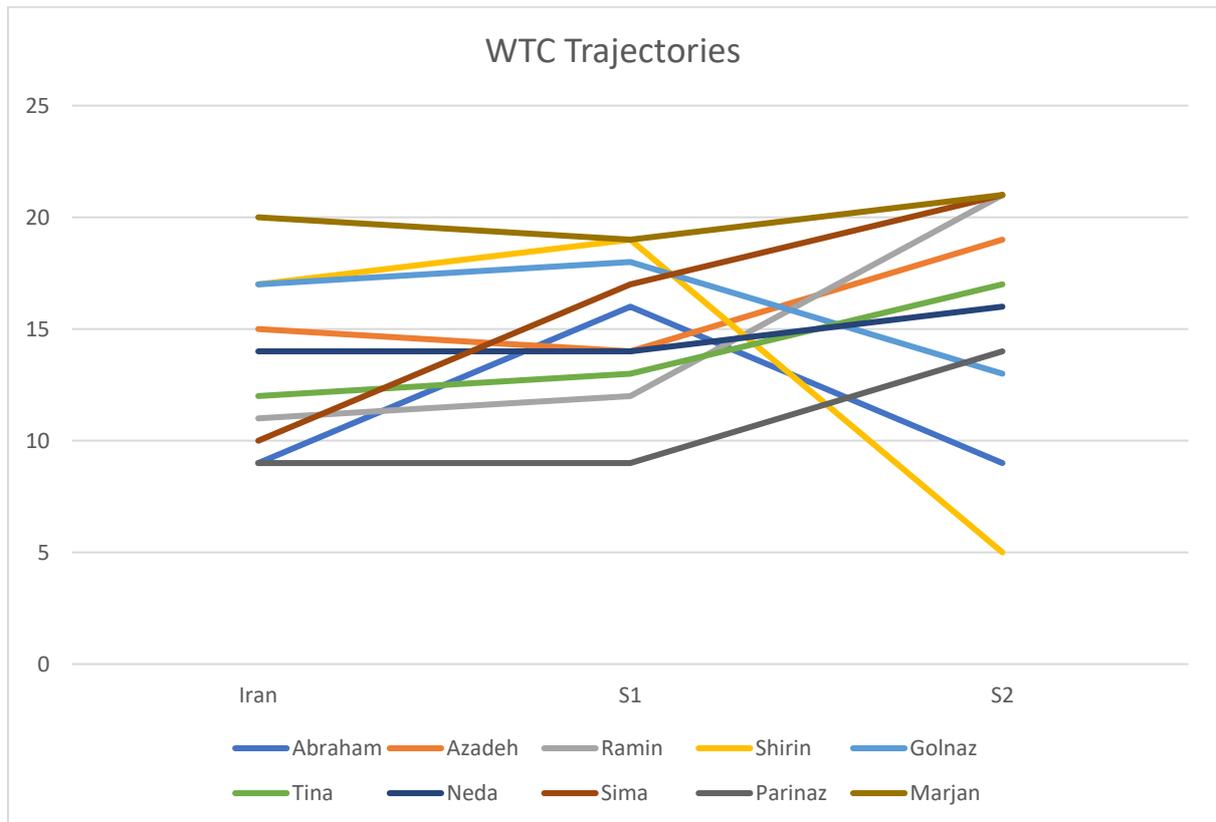


Figure 5.1 Individual WTC trajectories for participants in Iran and NZ

Chapter 6. WTC case studies in an ecosystems framework

6.1 Introduction

As was described above in Chapter 3, Section 3.5.2, in order to complement the cross-case analysis of individual factors which affected the WTC of all the ten participants in this study, a within-case analysis was also undertaken of two of these participants (Abraham and Parinaz) using the ecosystems framework in order to establish their connection to a wider context in response to *RQ4* (see Chapter 3, Section 3.2 for a detailed discussion of these research questions).

The findings as presented in Chapter 4 focussed primarily on the variables related to WTC which could be identified in the *mesosystem* of the past in the English language classrooms of Iran (Section 4.2.1), the *microsystem* of the present NZ classroom (Section 4.2.2), and the *mesosystem* outside the classroom in Iran and NZ (Sections 4.2.3 and 4.2.4). In the following presentation of the findings related to two of the participants the role of the *exosystem* and *macrosystem* in their WTC are also examined.

These two cases are presented in Sections 6.2 and 6.3 below, and influences of each of the layers of the ecosystems diagram (*micro-*, *meso-*, *exo-*, and *macro-*) are highlighted and any interface between levels discussed in order to create a more holistic picture of these participants as individuals (see Figure 6.1 below). Finally, any striking similarities or differences in their cases are outlined in regard to their WTC. In order to more faithfully reflect their 'voices' (see Duff, 2008), where appropriate, longer sections of the interviews I recorded with them and their teachers are included and commented on. Data are presented in the form of quotations, and references to my fieldnotes created during classroom events.

The original nested ecosystems theory of Bronfenbrenner (1979) in regard to education was adopted for the purposes of research into WTC by Cao (2009a, 2009b) and Peng (2012, 2014). Their studies primarily focussed on the *microsystemic* level of their student participants' English language classroom. This *microsystem* involves the individual in a particular setting, their activities and behaviour with others, and the factors that affect this interaction with others in the same environment. For the participants in this study, it was their level of WTC in their present NZ classroom situation which was being investigated in

relation to teachers and classmates, and the positive and negative factors which could cause this to fluctuate.

At the *mesosystemic* level, the focus is on the interface or connections between several settings, each containing the individual learner. In this study, influences from past experiences in their English language classrooms in Iran, and variables related to their use of English and WTC outside the classroom in Iran and NZ, all appeared to have an effect on their present behaviour at the *microsystemic* level.

A further less direct influence on the classroom setting for these participants was the *exosystem*, comprising the educational curriculum and systems imposed by the institutions and government in the past in Iran, and now in NZ. Although the individual has no say or input into in this area of the *ecosystem*, decisions made by such authorities do affect what takes place in the classroom. Consequently, opportunities to demonstrate WTC in English are increased or diminished. External factors beyond the individual's control, such as illness or family crises, or living situations with or without family backing, and even the support of organised religious groups, can also be considered part of this *exosystem* (c.f. Cao, 2009a).

At the most distant level from the individual, but, in fact, overarching and surrounding all the other ecosystems, is the *macrosystem*. According to van Lier (1988), this system provides an important aspect of the wider socio-cultural context within which the classroom and its constituent members should be viewed. In this study, the politics, religion, and class system of Iran, as well as cultural tendencies of the people, still seemed to have some impact on the present classroom behaviour of the members of this study. In addition, in their new country of migration, NZ, employment possibilities and the opportunities for involvement with native speakers of English continued to affect their need or desire to demonstrate a high level of WTC.

A diagrammatic representation of the nested ecosystems model can be seen below (Figure 6.1). Linkages and interconnection between the settings are discussed in the individual case histories, but boundaries between these systems should be regarded as porous rather than resistant to influences from any of the other systems.

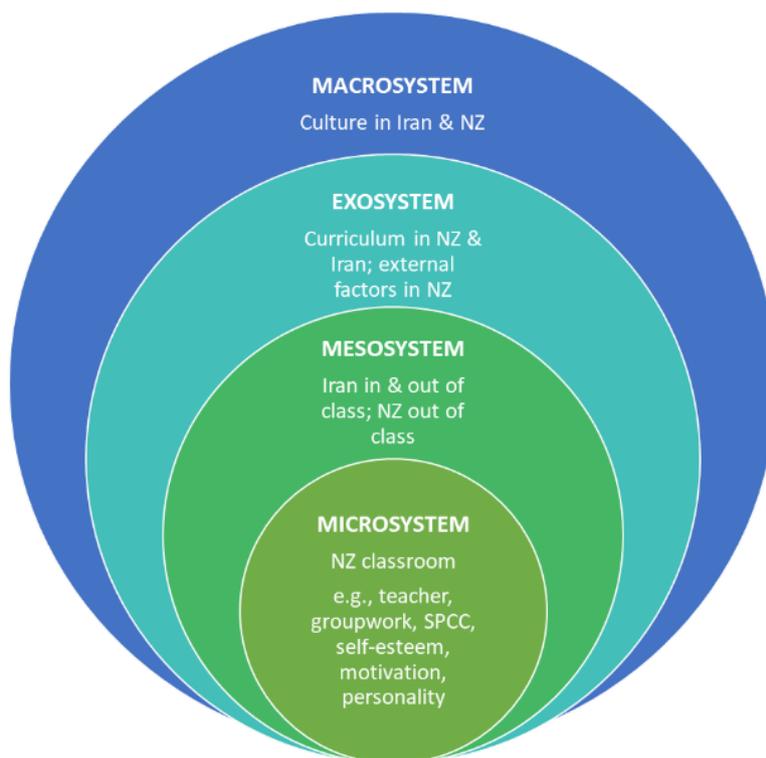


Figure 6.1 Factors affecting participants' WTC in an ecosystems diagram

(Adapted from Bronfenbrenner, 1979; van Lier, 2004; Peng, 2014)

As well as the four-level hierarchy of ecosystems, Bronfenbrenner (1989) also postulates the existence of a *chronosystem*, which allows for the identification of “the impact of prior life events and experiences ... on subsequent development” (p.41). This appears to overlay all the levels of the *micro-* to *macrosystem*, so it would seem logical to present the results of this study in relation to these two participants in *chronological* order, rather than exploring the *microsystem* of their present NZ experiences before the *mesosystem* of their past in Iran. Thus, it becomes a narrative of their in-class and out-of-class WTC histories in both geographical contexts.

Although all of the participants were interesting cases for a variety of reasons, I chose Abraham and Parinaz because they were examples of high and low WTC respectively, either as they reported it themselves, or as their teachers and I observed in their classrooms and interviews. Whereas Parinaz showed a consistently low level of WTC, which possibly could be related to her shy personality, Abraham was considered both by me, as an observer and interviewer, and his teachers, to have a very high level of WTC, although he felt there were

fluctuations from semester to semester and country to country. The difference in Abraham's case could be that between situational rather than trait WTC.

Demographic information about these participants can be found in Table 6.1 below, and further detailed discussion of their two cases follows in Sections 6.2 and 6.3.

Table 6.1 *Case study participants*

| Code name | Gender | Age | Time studying English in Iran | Length of time in NZ | Time studying English in NZ |
|-----------|--------|-----|---|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Abraham | Male | 35 | 5 years (high school) + 2 years (private school) + 3 years (university) | 2 years | 2 years |
| Parinaz | Female | 23 | 7 years at high school & university | 3 years | 1 year |

6.2 Abraham – Case Study 1

At the commencement of this study (2014), Abraham was a 35-year-old Iranian male, who had come to NZ two years previously with an intention to study a masters in IT (Information Technology) management. Subsequently, he had applied to stay in NZ, asking for refugee status. He had studied at two other English schools in NZ, before attending AUT (Auckland University of Technology) for three pre-university classes, i.e., Introduction to Academic English, Academic English 1, and Academic English 2, two of which levels were part of this study (equivalent to Levels 4-5 IELTS; see Appendix W, Table W.12).

In Iran he had completed a tertiary degree and attended English classes in both public and private schools during intermediate and secondary schools. He also had English classes in vocabulary and reading skills at university which were specifically targeted to his management degree. He had then worked for 12 years in this field in Iran before arriving in NZ. He responded very keenly and promptly when invited to take part in this study and showed a high level of WTC with me from the outset. He added a spontaneous note to the first questionnaire I had given him:

Dear Denise Cameron

I am read[y] to help you more than this papers. If you like so you can send email or call me to make appointment.

Thanks

[Abraham] (Q1 remark)

6.2.1 Mesosystemic influences

At the *mesosystemic* level, Abraham's past English language learning experiences in Iran and his out-of-class activities both in Iran and NZ are examined for possible influences on his WTC. Abraham began his exposure to English language teaching in Iran when he was eight years old in a private language institute (although under government auspices). His family encouraged him as *they like to study English* (I1:28) and he persisted for two years despite changing cities. However, he reported that he had a low level of WTC in these English classes as the result of the teacher's strict attitude, parental pressure, and his own lack of understanding and gave up attending:

D: Ok, and why did you stop?

*Ab: Because it's **that teacher is very tough** to me and very too hard I don't like study that time English, really **I didn't understand English** and **my parents they make pressure to me** for to study English, and I stop. (I1:57-58)*

At secondary school, where regular English classes were part of the curriculum, he criticised the teacher's accents, methods, and the texts they used and described himself as *not really* motivated to learn (I1:78). Lack of groupwork limited his and his classmates' opportunities for speaking English in class (I1:96) and his teachers attributed marks to any contributions they made to class such as answering questions:

*Ab: Usually in the school **when the teacher asked us the question, they marked it in their paper**, like what's the name, just for example, if that student don't know for answer, is it like minus or... (I1:103-104)*

He was also worried about making mistakes in front of his classmates in case they laughed at him:

*Ab: Yes, but sometimes in the class **it's very difficult if we had a mistake** because it's **another classmate laughing** or something. (I1:114)*

During Abraham's university studies, he was restricted to studying ESP (English for Special Purposes) related to his major:

*Ab: Yeh, **we had English like really special for the different bachelor major** has a different English like, I studied in manager and I study English for like some special for manager and if someone study for like computer, special for computer, it's not like I think **just academic words for this.** (I1: 76)*

Outside the class in Iran he had no chance to practise the English he had learned at school or university. This was only possible, according to Abraham, if Iranians worked in companies such as those which sold oil and needed to communicate with *overseas people* (I1:180). Foreign tourists were also rare at that time (1990s) (I1:190). However, he acknowledged the change that the arrival of satellite TV to Iran in about 1999 made to people's attitudes towards English and its importance for travel and overseas study (I1:196). His immediate and extended family then took the opportunity to move abroad:

*Ab: ... actually **many people like to change, to move the country and for study or for work** or something.*

D: And that's happening more nowadays?

*Ab: Yes, **many many in my family and my extended family.** Like in my family, my sister living Scotland now, my brother living Malaysia, I living New Zealand. (I1:196-198)*

Overall in Iran, Abraham's self-reported WTC was very low as result of his poor opinion of his teachers, a lack of confidence in his ability to learn, and perhaps an element of teenage rebellion against his parents' desire for him to learn English (see Appendix W, Table W.1 for the results of Questionnaire 1). His later observed behaviour in his NZ classrooms and the data from my interviews with him suggested that this lack of WTC was situational to Iran and his personality was, in fact, very outgoing and he was always very eager to communicate. He describes his NZ classroom behaviour as follows:

*Ab: I'm talkative, yes, when the teacher do something, **usually I'm first to stand up, and I'm writing something, I'm not quiet in class, no.** (I1:132)*

When Abraham moved to NZ in 2012, his level of motivation to learn and speak English greatly increased:

*Ab: Actually **because I live in New Zealand** and I must be working in New Zealand and it's like my country now, **I must be know perfect English.** (I1:2)*

However, he realised that his lack of speaking practice in Iran was a handicap which he needed to overcome. His solution was to make English-speaking friends and avoid his fellow countrymen:

*Ab: Actually, I'm very single, I'm very alone and **I don't have any Iranian friends, I'm just have Kiwi friends**, but it's not enough to me, and I must be do something in the library and my listening and my reading it's good, I think it's good but **when I start to talking, I lose some word**, just this problem. (I1:12)*

These out of class opportunities to demonstrate WTC in NZ can be considered another aspect of the *mesosystemic* layer of the ecosystems diagram. Perhaps due to his lack of family connections in NZ, Abraham was the most pro-active member of this study in finding people to speak English with, having *joined many club[s]* and *many people in church* (I1:220). He expressed his disappointment to me that the English school at AUT did not organise activities outside class time for students to meet native speakers:

*Ab: Yeh, and you know sometimes I'm thinking about if **the English school can make a group with the, any students in AUT university, the native people**, not for overseas, they can make some trips or I don't know, meeting or something like this, you know, **it's a big help for the English, the overseas student for learning English.** (I1:216)*

Thus, the negative influences in the past of his *mesosystemic* experiences in Iran, and now his mostly positive contact with English speakers in the NZ community, combine to have an effect on Abraham's behaviour in the classroom at the *microsystemic* level.

6.2.2 Microsystemic influences

In the *microsystem* represented by Abraham's classes in NZ, the importance of his relationship with his teachers in regard to his perceived willingness or unwillingness to communicate in English continued to be as dominant a theme as it had in Iran. In addition, their teaching methods and curriculum had at times positive and negative effects in his opinion.

In the two years before this study began, Abraham attended two other educational institutions to study English, plus a semester in lower level AUT class. He explained in both interviews how he felt he had wasted his time up till now:

Ab: Yes, I start from Massey University actually, around two years ago, it was my first school in New Zealand and after that I tried a very very cheap school near the Sky Tower, now it's AUT for two semesters, actually, to me the AUT one is the best now, not like before, the cheapest school help me for grammar actually but I don't remember about Massey University, it's not perfect just actually I lose my times just.

D: Can you explain why that was?

Ab: They do something in the class, they did something in the class very different to AUT and usually they make a game, it's not too bad but, it's not bad, but it's not perfect for someone just to start to English, to me it's not very perfect for start English. (I1:6-8)

Ab: ... so when I changed from Massey to the new school, new school so it's like they start again, the same as the Massey, so when I came here, the first term when we had with [B...], exactly again everything, everything again, it's like back one step and one step, something like this, now after three terms I think so, I'm in the right class now, but same as I lose two terms, I'm not sure, but sometimes I'm happy because if I don't, didn't come to AUT I didn't have anyone to talking or learning about the right, exactly right English you know, so, I'm not sad about this but, I know I lose two terms, I lose my time. (I2:42)

My impression of Abraham from the interviews and observations was of a person who knew what he wanted from his educational experience and this confidence led to some initial conflict with his teacher, Joan, who felt that he was *trying to run the class* (TJA11:36). She explained that *the problem with [Abraham] is, is knowing how to close him down so that other people get an opportunity as well, but that's him and that's fine* (TJA11:36). Once she and Abraham had come to a 'modus vivendi' in class they *got on famously* (TJA11:38). However, Joan told me that even by the end of the semester Abraham still felt his spoken and written English was still not at the level he wanted it to be. These were the two skill areas which had received little attention during his English language learning experiences in Iran. In this way, the negative influences of his previous lack of opportunity to display any WTC in Iran continued to have an effect on the present. Opportunity is a key factor in raising the levels of WTC according to past researchers such as MacIntyre and Charos (1996).

Moreover, it is possible that his deliberate efforts to avoid speaking Farsi in and out of class, although, from a social point of view it could be considered deleterious to his sense of identity, resulted in more in-class WTC. According to his teacher, Joan, Abraham's WTC was of a very high level:

D: So, I wanted to just to talk about [Abraham] briefly, so how willing to communicate generally do think he was in the class?

*J: **Very willing.***

D: So do you think this is the result of his personality, or is there anything you could pin it down to?

*J: Oh, he's been like that from day one so I would say **it was his personality**, he is also very interested in IT, so he's an avid reader on the web and very interested in what's happening in the world around him, he's quite engaged in the community, he's not an isolated person, so, he does communicate with people, **he's a very good communicator.***

D: Do you think, when you say engaged in the community, is it the Iranian community or just the community in general?

*J: No, **he's engaged in his Church community**, the majority of whom are Filipino actually, so he has to communicate through English, so, no he didn't sit with other Iranians in the class, he befriended a Russian student, so **he didn't really mix with the Iranians, I never heard him speaking in Farsi.** (TJA11:1-6)*

In the second semester of Abraham's NZ classes, he felt that his level of WTC had dropped to the same low level he had reported in Iran (see Appendix W, Table W.1). He attributed this to the change in emphasis to more academic skills such as reading and writing:

*Ab: ... **this semester is really different** to the last semester, **last semester usually we were about, something like social talk.** (I2:2)*

*Ab: Now, **we focus about exactly academic writing, academic everything**, everything about academic, like I don't know, write a report, academic report, or note-taking, **sometimes it's very useful, sometimes no.** (I2:4)*

Interestingly, his teacher, Fiona, rated him as having the maximum level of WTC (see Appendix W, Table W.1) and in my observations of his behaviour in this class, he was as involved in communication as he had been the previous semester, although there were fewer opportunities for direct interaction with the teacher (O2: fieldnotes). Fiona

recognised Abraham's preference for contributing to full class discussions rather than groupwork:

F: ... in the whole class probably it was more obvious that he liked to contribute, you know he had good ideas and he liked to answer questions. When students were sort of put in groups, sometimes he was quick to organise himself into a group or organise others into his group but sometimes he was slow because he was very meticulous over written work, so he was sometimes maybe writing something down from the board, or you know that sort of careful attitude that he had and he wasn't ready to move because he was finishing something. (TFI2:9-10)

To sum up Abraham's WTC in the *microsystem* of his NZ classrooms, it could be evaluated as being both dependent on circumstances and influenced by his own interpretation of the value of the type of teaching he was receiving. However, both of his teachers recognised his tendency to take on a leadership role in the classroom (TJAI1: 26; TFI2:6), which suggests he had a high trait level of confidence and WTC.

The examination of the next two levels of the ecosystems diagram, i.e., the *exosystem* and *macrosystem*, allows for a presentation of possible factors affecting Abraham's WTC in the immediate environment of the classroom, but in a less direct way and to some extent beyond his control (see Bronfenbrenner, 1993; van Lier, 2004).

6.2.3 Exosystemic influences

As can be identified from the findings presented in the previous two sections in regard to the *meso-* and *microsystems*, Abraham's WTC in class was particularly influenced by the content and format of the classes he attended. It has been suggested by previous researchers of WTC, such as Cao (2009a) and Peng (2014), that curriculum design and the provision of language learning opportunities at an institutional level have a significant role at this *exosystemic* level of the ecosystems framework.

In Iran, Abraham was able to study English when he was younger (8 years old, in 1987) at one of only a few private schools:

Ab: I remember, at that time in Iran we don't have many many English schools, just the very famous one, I think it's from part of government and it's very hard to entry to this school, for people to enter, enter this school, we must be do the exams, something like this. (I1:38)

English textbooks at these schools were at that time imported from Western countries, but later stricter government censorship was imposed, and the books altered or withdrawn. Abraham suggested that he preferred the texts that contained information about Western culture as well as the language:

Ab: ... but in Iran we studied just English, ... but not in Iran now, but actually they [the government] don't like this one in Iran.

D: No?

*Ab: **They don't like [us] to study English and Western culture.***

D: Ok.

*Ab: I know that **many private school had a problem with this and the government changed the books.***

D: Oh, so because they were using the books from Western countries?

*Ab: Yeh, and when I remember when like, 5 or 6 years ago I went to some private school for English for very short time and I remember that some books from Cambridge, or something like this, and I was learning about like "night life" in New York, you know it's make it like, just study life in New York. **The Iranian government don't like this one, ok, you can change this page or something.***

D: So even though it was a private school they could interfere and try and control it?

*Ab: Yes, because **they import[ed] the book from overseas but they change the book** actually. (I1:164-172)*

At secondary school, when he began to have regular English classes, Abraham was still dissatisfied with the quality of the teachers, their methods, their accents as NNSs (non-native speakers), and the books supplied by the education ministry:

D: Ok, so what about secondary school, did you learn any English at secondary school?

*Ab: Yes **a little bit in the own books in secondary school**, a little writing, we had after secondary school every term we had an English book but it's, and usually **the teacher they don't have a good experience for English**, just teaching English from the book and I remember funny sometimes they spell it, **pronounce some words in a very funny way** haha.*

D: *Even you knew it was funny?*

Ab: *Like I remember, like “teacher and toucher” something like this, it’s very funny, because **they don’t have good experience for English.** (11:59-62)*

Another issue at the curriculum level was the status of English as a school subject. After the Revolution of 1979, Arabic was more strongly emphasised for its religious significance and became equally, if not more, important than English (see Pishghadam & Naji Meidani, 2011). Abraham commented on this and suggested how he and his teachers coped with a second compulsory foreign language:

Ab: *I don’t know. **You know in Iran they learn two different language, English and Arabic** and is I never study in Arabic, **I hate Arabic** and usually I pass, **I pass my exam with cheating** or something [hahaha] and for English, no, it’s better than for me but yeh **sometimes the teacher help to passed, just passed the papers.** (11:80)*

This obvious pressure on teachers to maintain a good pass rate without sufficient training or experience is unlikely to have fostered a classroom environment in either language which lent itself to WTC.

On the other hand, in NZ, in Abraham’s pre-university classes, the influence of communicative language teaching (CLT) principles at the curriculum level is still significant, but, as the focus has moved to preparing students for undergraduate courses, there is greater emphasis on academic skills and less on everyday communication. Abraham remarked with regret on the change in content from one class to another, as he felt the first class provided him with necessary information and skills to survive in his adopted country *because it’s very useful to me because I stay in New Zealand and my life is in in New Zealand* (S:29). In contrast, in his second semester class he felt his WTC had decreased:

Ab: *I don’t know **this semester really I’m very quiet**, I think depend the teacher, because last semester when I had a class with [Joan], she’s very like reactive, usually we talk together when the students do something in the class so **this semester, usually, we receive the information, just receive, receive, we don’t have time to have any feedback, you know, it’s just just working** the class. (12:62)*

Certainly, when I observed in these two classes, I noted that there was more information-sharing on topics of mutual interest between students in the first semester, while in the second class, students were conferring primarily on vocabulary exercises (O1 & O2: fieldnotes). In other words, opportunity for spoken communication was still present but for

a different, more formal purpose. In order to discover how Abraham's Semester 2 teacher felt about the importance of a student's demonstration of WTC in her class, I asked her how she valued this attribute:

*F: Well I think it's one of many [factors], but it's an important gauge of their **ability** because with it is that confidence and it can, it doesn't really matter which skills area it's in, they rub off on. positively in other areas, so, yes, very important, but also if they can, **the more they speak, the more they hear and get back.** (TF11:96)*

In fact, nine of the ten teachers I interviewed made it very clear that they valued WTC very highly, so, in theory, this philosophy was pervasive throughout the English classes, even if, in practice, the opportunity to implement this belief was moderated in the higher classes by the requirement to equip students for mainstream university courses.

Another area of influence at the *exosystemic* level could be the events or experiences outside the class in the NZ community that are perceived as affecting Abraham's situational WTC in class (c.f. Cao, 2009a). These were also often outside Abraham's sphere of control and meant that at times he felt less or more like contributing fully, despite his normal inclinations to communicate. He described his feelings as a refugee without any family and not living long in NZ:

*Ab: I think yes, I think yes but **sometimes my feel is very tired**, it's my and, I start my study in the home or library, like last week my feelings very very tired, and just like my feel is very sick and I couldn't come to class but I'm not sure if it's from my age or from because I have another pressure in my life. **It's very difficult to me now in New Zealand because you know my life was changed and I lose many things in Iran.** I must be make a new life for myself in New Zealand so **now I don't have any family in New Zealand**, I stay with myself, **something make pressure for me but I like my classes**, I like my class and I don't have any problem with AUT English class. (I1:120)*

His application for refugee status, which involved considerable time and anxiety, naturally also affected his ability to study and lowered his self-esteem as he always had high expectations of himself as a student of English:

*Ab: ... so it's like just because **I was very busy about my refugee apply and I had many meeting with the lawyer, I didn't have time to really study and my mind really busy about, because like, very bad situation for me...** (I2: 42)*

On the other hand, Abraham found his religion, Christianity, and his friendship with Kiwis to be external supports that fostered his WTC:

*Ab: ... I go to the Church and I meet with the English people... but I have three, four, like Kiwi friend and **one of them, I'm very close with him, so talking most English with him.** (I2:70)*

His teacher, Joan, who shared his religious beliefs, reinforced this perception:

*J: ... I think he sees his religion also as a form of networking but the majority of people in his parish are Filipino ... but I think that it is a real plus that they want to **communicate** and can communicate and they are risk takers and willing to learn ... (TJA1:66)*

Overall, therefore, at the *exosystemic* level the effects of curriculum, texts, and teacher training in Iran were largely negative forces on Abraham's WTC, while in NZ, in spite of a general acceptance by teachers of the value of spoken communication skills, they were also constrained by the expediencies of future university requirements. In addition, external factors in Abraham's life outside the classroom had both positive and negative effects on his desire to communicate in class.

6.2.4 Macrosystemic influences

Surrounding the complete ecosystems framework for Abraham is the *macrosystem* of culture, politics, class, religion, family life, and life course options both in Iran and NZ (c.f. Bronfenbrenner, 1993). Abraham's attitude to the target language community and the general importance of English to his future goals and long-term motivation are also influences at this level (c.f. Cao, 2009a).

As Abraham arrived in NZ as an adult migrant, he brought with him experiences and attitudes acquired as a result of living his life in post-Revolution Iran. A political environment which did not encourage foreign business investment or promote tourism, in Abraham's view, did not provide opportunities for him to practise his English or demonstrate any WTC outside the classroom context. He compared Iran with Malaysia, which he felt was an example of a non-English speaking country more open to international relations:

*Ab: Because we, I never use my, talk in English in Iran, I never use my English, some people used, but little bit, in the job. **Like my cousin he work in the petrol company***

and he must be talking with overseas people or is it like, different job, not like Malaysian country because Iran is very (what's the name?) (I1:180)

Ab: ... they don't connecting with overseas people or they don't connecting with overseas country.

D: Ok, you could use that word like "isolated", isolated sort of means like an island, like separate from everything around.

Ab: Yes, yes, isolated. (I1:186-188)

Abraham also attributed Iranian students' WTC, or rather unWTC, behaviour in NZ to their political experiences in their homeland. When I discussed with him the reason why I had had only a few responses to my invitation to participate in my pilot study, despite the number of Iranians in the School of Language and Culture's English classes, Abraham shared his theory with me that *Iranians [even in NZ] do not like to answer questions because [of their past experiences with the Iranian] government* (personal communication).

In terms of social class in Iran, Abraham's family were well off enough for him to attend private schools and encouraged him to learn and speak English (I1:36). They were also able to support him through a university degree where some English instruction was included in the curriculum. Moreover, he used the example of his extended family as people who had been able to leave for overseas because they were of a particular level of wealth, *like if they are rich, usually they leave the country* (I1:209). Therefore, he would have seen that being able to communicate in English was a necessity as a *lingua franca* for those emigrants.

In addition, Abraham saw himself as being of a different class from other refugees, who, after escaping from Iran, had applied for asylum in NZ immediately on arrival. He explained that some Iranian refugees in NZ were from poorer families than his, whereas he and his middle-income family had not left Iran in the same way:

Ab: I saw someone [from Iran] in New Zealand, I know they lived in country or poor area, poor family or poor area but they come from refugee. (I1:202)

Ab: ... if they [Iranians] in middle income they never try to come to some country with refugees because it's big risk for them and I'm refugee, I'm refugee but I'm coming to New Zealand for master of management and after that the government make problem for me, I never think about, I take a boat come to Christmas Island or somewhere, I never think about this and we don't have any

family for leave Iran this way, it's you know usually less than middle [income families] ... (I1:208)

This may have had some influence on his reluctance to talk with other Iranians inside and outside the class (I1:12, 124; IJA1:6). His class teacher, Joan, was familiar with his circumstances and remarked on his socio-economic status and initial arrival as a postgraduate student as setting him apart from some of his fellow Iranian classmates:

J: ... he came here not as a refugee, he came here as an international student to do a Masters in Management I think, IT Management. (TJA1:22)

J: And then things blew up in Iran so he applied for asylum, so he's come from an educated background, a business background, he's quite a middleclass, white collar worker... (TJA1: 24)

Joan noted that Abraham associated more with the migrants in the class (non-Iranian), even though she remarked on his possibly higher anxiety levels:

J: ... the majority of the people that he was with were migrants. (TJA1:60)

J: ... they haven't had the interruption to education, they are in a different frame of mind for finding out information, you know they don't have the anxiety levels. And there is that with [Abraham] with his asylum seeker background, refugee background, the anxiety levels can be higher. (TJA1:64)

Another area of his life, which had a bearing on Abraham's communication with Iranians in NZ, and therefore limited his outside-the-class opportunities to speak Farsi, was his religion. He did not reveal whether this was a recent conversion or a family practice in Iran, but it affected his social behaviour in NZ:

Ab: ... but my personality in New Zealand, I never join with the Iranian group. (I1:124)

Ab: Actually because I'm Christian, usually Iranian is Muslim and we, I'm not just talking, I'm not separated with myself, we like to know about another Iranian and I don't like this one, I'm just a little bit like far from them but yeh, if usually I join with the foreigner people, I like working with them. (I1:128)

Culturally, Abraham realised that his avoidance of other Iranians was not typical, as people from his country, in his opinion, like to sit and work together with each other in situations such as English classes:

*Ab: Yeh, but if you come to class you can see **the Iranian people like to make group with them, usually, I don't know why...** (I1:130)*

This was the case with some of the other participants in this study, which possibly resulted in a reduction in their opportunities to demonstrate their WTC (e.g., Neda, Tina, and Golnaz) as discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2 and Section 4.3 above.

Nevertheless, Abraham remained loyal to some aspects of his own culture and on his own initiative had put up a noticeboard display related to *Noruz* (the traditional Iranian New Year celebration) in the corridor of the School (TJA1:7). He identified himself as the author and thus clearly wanted to communicate information (in English) with other students of all backgrounds.

In regard to New Zealanders and Kiwi culture, Abraham had little to say in my interviews with him. His *Kiwi friends* (I1:12) were largely other migrants he met through the church, rather than native English-speakers (TJA1:66), although he did have one particular friend who he was talking *most English with* (I2:70). Unfortunately, like many migrants to a new country Abraham found it difficult to make contact with other New Zealanders and demonstrate his WTC in English, even though the university offered many clubs and social events for students:

*Ab: I joined many, sometimes I joined, **but it's very difficult to connect with them and I never seen the people in my class join with native group.** (I1:218)*

The final aspect of the *macrosystemic* layer of the ecosystems diagram which seemed to have an influence on Abraham's WTC was his future goals for life in NZ. He had given up his ambitions to complete a postgraduate course in IT and expressed a desire for a job:

*Ab: Actually, I came to New Zealand for master of management and **I think now [only] 80% I want to go to take master, because I like to start working, it's too difficult to me now just because I was working very hard in Iran around 12 years, and when I come to NZ it's just hard to me just study English.** (I1:72)*

His teacher in Semester 1 also recognised his interest in getting a job rather than further study (TJA1:46) and suggested that *if he got a job he'd go* (TJA1:54).

This intention certainly had a negative effect on his attitude to the more 'academic' curriculum in Semester 2, because he felt it was not useful for the students in the class like him who did not have such ambitions:

Ab: Depend the people, depend the people, sometimes I'm thinking about ok, my English, I don't want to study about academic English because I don't want study after graduate in English class, to study about I don't know, bachelor or something, I got my bachelor, yeh, it's not just about me, some of my classmates, exactly they don't want to study next term about academic English, you know, because most of us, we are refugees, here, so they want to find a job, not exactly go to the university. (I2:6)

However, in both his Semester 1 and Semester 2 classes, his teachers still felt that Abraham was displaying a high level of WTC, although he himself was less satisfied with his progress and felt *not very happy about my English* because he *couldn't explain his mind* when dealing with interactions outside the classroom (S:53).

Ultimately, although Abraham was reluctant to give up his English classes before completing all levels of the Certificate in English Language (I2:98), he did leave after the end of Semester 2 of this study. He had successfully completed three semesters of English at AUT and received a Merit pass in Reading and Speaking in his final papers. This reflects his actual high level of communication ability, even if his own perceived level of competence was not so great. An internet search revealed that four years later he had established his own small business in Auckland, which suggests that he has been able to make good use of his communication skills to establish himself in the NZ community.

Thus, at the *macrosystem* level Abraham's WTC appears to have been directly or indirectly enhanced or depleted by elements of his own culture, experiences, and family background in Iran, as well as religion and life goals in NZ.

6.2.5 Conclusion

To conclude Abraham's case history in the light of the various levels or layers of the ecosystem in which his WTC has been discussed, he could be seen as an example of a student of English whose self-rated WTC fluctuates from low to medium (see Appendix W, Table W.1), in response to variables such as his relationship with his teachers, perceived value of the curriculum, external factors in the community outside the classroom, and

general cultural, religious, and family influences. Although these factors have been discussed above in separate sections of the ecosystem, they clearly interact with each other through the layers and finally combine to make the whole that is Abraham as an individual. However, it should be noted that, whereas Abraham regarded his WTC as situational and subject to variation, both his teachers and I, in my role as an observer and interviewer, rated his WTC at a consistently high level. We viewed it as a personality trait, constant over different situations, rather than a temporary response to certain circumstances, which may have been the way Abraham judged his own desire to communicate in English. This reflects the dynamic complexity of the WTC phenomenon within a specific person – it is not simply the result of particular trait or situational factors but a combination of several variables at different points in the *chronosystem* of an individual's life experience.

6.3 Parinaz – Case Study 2

When this phase of the study took place in 2015, Parinaz was a 23-year-old Iranian female, who had been in NZ for 3 years. She had come to join her husband (who had been in NZ for 12 years) after completing a Diploma in Graphic Design and working as a retail assistant in a women's clothing shop in Iran. She had studied English in high school as well as university for approximately two hours per week.

She began her English classes at AUT (Auckland University of Technology) in ILN5 (Intensive Literacy and Numeracy) then progressed to ILN6 for the next two semesters. These classes were a level below those attended by Abraham, and were comparable to Level 4-5 IELTS (see Appendix W, Table W.12). They were provided by the NZ government for permanent residents at no cost to the students. She responded to my invitation to take part in this study by completing the first questionnaire and then agreeing to an interview. I had taken the precaution of getting this invitation translated into Farsi for the students in this ILN class (Parinaz and Marjan), but, in fact, their oral command of English proved to be as competent as that of Sima and Abraham in the next level of classes. However, when analysing the lengths of turns in the interviews I conducted with Parinaz, it is clear that they are shorter than those in Abraham's interviews, but this may reflect her shyer personality and less ready WTC, rather than just a lack of ability in English. Abraham, as was remarked on by his

teacher, had an interest in expanding his English vocabulary, which was more extensive than some of his other classmates (TJA11:56).

Therefore, in comparison to Abraham, Parinaz was twelve years younger and was living in NZ with a partner (though no other family). She had had a similar educational experience in Iran to him, but would have been exposed to more sources of English during her years of study through the prevalence of satellite TV and the internet, and an increasing number of foreign tourists visiting her city, the capital, Tehran.

6.3.1 Mesosystemic influences

Parinaz's past English language learning experiences in Iran and her activities outside the classroom, both in Iran and NZ, constitute the *mesosystemic* level of the ecosystems framework. Although Parinaz was aware of the existence of private schools teaching English in Iran and suggested they were popular, not particularly expensive, *normal, so-so* (I1:6) and had *good* and *kind teachers* (I1:70), she did not attend them herself. Her first learning experiences with English were at high school, which at that time in Iran would also have included two years of middle school (at approximately 11-16 years of age). In total, because of her university experience, she would have had seven years of English. Nevertheless, she rated her level of WTC in Iran as quite low in Questionnaire 1 (see Appendix W, Table W.9). Factors which negatively influenced her WTC were the teachers who were non-native speakers of English, their teaching methods, which included a lot of grammar, and a lack of opportunity to speak:

*P: ... all of my, **our teachers is Iranian** and they teach me, **they teach our grammars** and **we haven't speak a lot**, a little but we have a lot of grammars. (I1:38)*

Although she found the focus on grammar difficult, she saw its usefulness in improving her speaking ability:

*P: I think **grammar is a little hard** but **is good in speaking**. (I1:40)*

In Iran, Parinaz was also affected by a low level of motivation as she thought *English is not important* (I1:46), and stated that *I don't like it actually honestly, I don't like it* (I1:48). She also had a much lower opinion of her abilities in English both in speaking and grammar than now in NZ:

*P: ... sometimes teachers enter to class, started speaking with English and **we have speaking test sometimes and exam but we have grammar test more.***

*D: And how did you do? **Did you get good marks?***

*P: **No, that times no but now is good for me.** (I1:58-60)*

For these reasons, she lacked self-confidence particularly in her English classes, although she suggested that this was not the case in all her subjects. She also had a keen sense of how her fellow classmates and teacher might regard her attempts to speak English in class or ask questions. Thus, her self-esteem was under threat and she felt vulnerable, with the result that she became totally unwilling to communicate:

*D: And so in your class in Iran do you remember **did you feel shy, did you like to talk**, do you remember when you were at high school and university learning English?*

*P: Learning English actually no, same now me, I think **if I have a question, I think that my question is stupid question**, yeh because sometimes, **most of the times I am silent in class, in English class. Other class no.** (I1:81-82)*

Outside her classroom in Iran, Parinaz had more opportunity than Abraham, for example, to practise her English because of the now more open acceptance of some foreign influences by the Iranian government, and the fact she lived in Tehran, the capital city, but her low SPCC (self-perceived communicative competence) and related self-confidence, as well as her shy personality, negatively affected her WTC:

*D: **In Iran could you read English books or watch English TV or watch English movies?***

*P: Yeah, I could but **I can't understand, understand completely.** (I1:103-104)*

*P: Yeah **satellite, we have had a lot of channels from English language and when I use the computer, I use language English**, search with English language. (I1:108)*

*D: **Did you ever meet any English-speaking people?***

*P: **In Iran no, actually no.** (I1:112)*

*P: No. Yeah, **Iran have a lot of English language people, English tourist** yes from other countries but I think, **yes I thought that my English is not a lot good for speaking with other people.** (I1: 116)*

Therefore, despite the change in political circumstances in Iran since the time of Abraham's English language learning experiences, which allowed for satellite access to multiple channels (although unofficial), and the introduction of the internet, Parinaz was reluctant to take advantage of all these new possibilities to demonstrate her WTC. She summed up her feelings about speaking English when I asked her to contrast her situation in the past in Iran with that now in NZ:

P: ... when I in Iran, you go to English language you can only speak in class and outside is not. You can't, couldn't, and in here if you speak English or learn English in class you can continue other after class. I think that's a big different and that's better than Iran. (I1:148)

P: Yeah, before actually I doesn't, don't like it. I didn't like it English but now I love it English. When I came here, I love more English more than Iran. (I1:152)

Thus, in Iran, Parinaz's personal characteristics such as shyness, a lack of self-confidence in her ability to learn English, and low motivation, combined with the type of teaching she received, all conspired to reduce her level of WTC.

Such opportunities, or rather the lack of them, to use English outside the classroom in Iran were significant in Parinaz's opinion, so the fact that she was able to get a job when she arrived in NZ in 2012 had a positive effect, even if it was only for a short period:

*P: I worked a short time in Kebab City and **that is very good for my English.** (I1:26)*

During the second semester of this study in 2015, Parinaz found herself another job, which in itself demonstrates her newfound readiness to speak and confidence to put herself forward in an English-speaking environment:

D: ... And it's still important for you to learn more English?

*P: Yeah because I need it and **I found a job and I feel better.** I go to other place and talk to other people with other accent, different accent and I feel better and when I speak, I little bit...*

D: So what kind of job is it?

*P: **It's at, my job in kindergarten short, part time.** (I2:10-13)*

D: So you get more chance to practise English with the children and the adults?

*P: Yeah, **speak with children is easy because children use easy words and simple sentences. Is good and I can understand easily.** Yeah.*

D: So it makes you want to talk more?

*P: Yeah, yeah and **talk more with mothers, children, yes.** (I2:18-21)*

As a result, she felt more **confident** (I2:135) about speaking English and it added another 10 hours per week to her already 12 hours of class-time opportunity to talk to others.

Otherwise, she told me that she spent 90% of her outside-the-class time speaking Farsi, although she was trying to speak some English with her husband at home:

*D: ... **Do you feel your speaking has got better than last semester?***

*P: Yeah, **I think a little bit better**, yeah, I think so.*

D: Is that because of your practice outside the class or because your work inside the class?

*P: **I work inside the class and then I watch movies in English and now I can try to speak English in house, in my house with my husband and use sentences English, English sentences, yeah I try it.***

D: Is it a bit strange speaking English to your husband or is it okay?

*P: **It's funny. My husband start to laughing and I think oh I say wrong words and what then my husband tells me and after laughing.** (I2:22-27)*

However, she seemed unconcerned by her husband's reaction and explained to me how she had succeeded in renting a house without his help with either the written application or the face-to-face interview with the land agent:

*P: ... For example, **for find a new house I going alone**, I went alone for apply for that house yeah and **I send email with English and I fill out, fill out form for house** yeah. (I:165)*

This demonstrates her increasing level of confidence in conducting formal negotiations in English, which could not be carried out without a high level of WTC. In contrast, Abraham had a less positive experience when buying a house, despite his generally high level of self-assurance and WTC (I1:84-94). On the other hand, unlike Abraham, Parinaz had made no Kiwi or other English-speaking friends yet (I2:199), but she did use English to communicate with her friends by email or other phone apps (I2:205).

Therefore, in terms of the *mesosystemic* influences of Parinaz's past English language learning in Iran, and her attempts to practise her WTC outside the class in NZ, she seems to have overcome any negative effects from her previous classroom experiences and some of the constraints of her naturally shy personality. Now she was able to take very positive steps in the NZ community to provide herself with employment and future opportunities to become fluent in English.

6.3.2 Microsystemic influences

Parinaz's English classes in NZ in Semester 1 and 2 of 2015 constituted the *microsystem* level of the ecosystems framework. Some aspects of her behaviour in her previous classes in Iran persisted in the new environment and she again scored herself as low in WTC in the questionnaire she completed in S1 (Q1, see Appendix W, Table W.9). Key factors which could have negatively affected her WTC in her NZ class were her lack of confidence or shyness, and low self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC). On the positive side, she felt much better about her NZ teachers and class activities (particularly group work) and an increased sense of motivation. She also described a growing level of self-assurance in English as the two semesters progressed.

For both these semesters, Parinaz had the same main teacher, Gillian. For a student who said she felt *nervous* (I2:75) in the presence of some of her teachers in Iran, having a teacher she described as *so lovely* and *so very help us* (I2:45) could have boosted her confidence to speak. In fact, she praised all the teachers she had had so far in NZ.

*P: And I am lucky person because **my teachers are all the best.** (I2:67)*

However, it is interesting to note that in S1, Parinaz also had an Iranian English language teacher, Saman. Unlike Gillian, who answered Question 2 of the questionnaire (How willing is Parinaz to talk to her teacher before or after class?) with 'Always', Saman recorded that Parinaz 'Never' spoke to him in those circumstances. This may have been part of her apparent policy not to speak Farsi in class (TSI:52), and was supported by Saman's observation that *she didn't like to join more Iranian students* (TSI:60) or *sit with them in class as well* (SI:54). This reluctance to put herself forward and answer questions without being named or called on first was noted by Saman (*you need to ask her* (TSI:48)), although by the end of the semester she had gained somewhat in confidence:

*S: ... you know just during the last or during the, **it was end of semester** when I class, I asked a student, **she was more comfortable to answer, but at the beginning I think she was not happy to answer question although I know that she knew the answer.** (TSI:52)*

Parinaz's other teacher for the whole year, Gillian, also described her as *the least confident* of the three Iranian students in her class in S2, and *always willing to communicate when asked but she's far less likely to volunteer answers or contribute voluntarily compared to the other two* (TJE12:38). She wrote a remark on the first questionnaire about Parinaz, attributing her lower level of WTC to the personality trait of shyness:

*Gi: [Parinaz's] slight perceived lack of willingness was only due to her lack of self-confidence and shyness. **She worked well in groups but lacked complete self-confidence** (TJEQ1: remark).*

Saman also rated Parinaz's WTC level at very low (see Appendix W, Table W.9) and suggested that she was an *able and strong* student but *shy* (TSI:48).

Parinaz herself was aware that she was not always forthcoming in class but attributed this reluctance to speak to her lack of ability and understanding in English. This sometimes made her feel embarrassed and foolish:

*P: ... **when I want to make a sentences, I have problem** and I think well if I say this word, **maybe is not good, is a stupid sentence.** But and after other students say that my word oh think I, why I say that word yeah. (I2:43)*

*P: ... sometimes not, **sometimes I think I forgot to speak, I feel a little, a little feel ashamed,** but I try to speak more because I needed speak English. (I2:77)*

Group work, on the other hand, was Parinaz's new opportunity in her NZ classroom to practise her oral English in a situation which was less daunting to a naturally shy person than a full class discussion. She felt this was a distinct improvement on the classes she attended in Iran and would be her preference for classroom activities:

*P: Here no I am better more than Iran. Here because have a lot of speaking, **make group, make game and you can speak more.** I think it's better. (I1:84)*

*P: ... I think in group is better and is not boring. With classmates sometimes is boring, in group not. **In group topic is too friend[ly] and you can enjoy.** (I2: 127)*

Her teacher, Gillian, recognised Parinaz's contribution to group work in class, even though it was not as easy for her as the other Iranians in the class:

*Gi: Of the four **she is the least confident and consequently the least willing to communicate, but only through lack of confidence and shyness, not for any other reason. She is a hard-working student and she would always contribute in the groups** but I noticed that **it was obviously quite an effort for her to contribute and she, at times you could tell that she felt embarrassed, unconfident, a bit shy.***
(TJE1:61)

In my two observations of this class in Semester 1 and Semester 2, I watched Parinaz participating in groups. She seemed quite relaxed and made almost the same contribution to the discussion as the other members, although Marjan was clearly the leader of the group (O1 & O2: field notes). As in both situations the students were talking about topics of current interest which they had already written about at home, I shared Gillian's impression that Parinaz *would have had the confidence of the content she was talking [about] or something she'd written about* (TJE12:44).

To sum up the *microsystemic* influences on Parinaz's WTC, the dominant factor appears to be her naturally hesitant and nervous personality. However, the positive effects of good relationships with her teachers and the possibility of communicating in groups, which would have formed a less threatening environment in which to display her WTC, had a flow-on effect into the *mesosystemic* level of her activities outside the class, which she appeared to manage quite successfully (see Section 6.3.1 above).

In the two next sections, I examine the more indirect part played by the *exosystem* and *macrosystem* on Parinaz's WTC. These spheres of influence are mostly beyond the individual language learners' direct control but nevertheless may affect their behaviour in the classroom (van Lier, 2004). At these two levels, Abraham and Parinaz would share some common variables as they had come from the same educational background in Iran, and shared the same language and possibly similar cultural influences. They were also in the same institution in NZ with teachers of similar experience and approaches. However, the twelve-year difference in age, their status as a regular migrant or refugee, and even religion may have been points of difference.

6.3.3 Exosystemic influences

Curriculum design and classroom practices have been attributed to this *exosystemic* level of the ecosystems framework. As was discussed above in Section 6.3.1, Parinaz was unimpressed with the teaching content and methods in Iran (I1:38), but did not have the opportunity to experience the possibly superior methods of private schools. It should be noted that both Abraham and Parinaz would have had to pass the *konkooor*, which is the entry exam for university in Iran and includes a test of reading and vocabulary skills in English. Therefore, they must have benefitted sufficiently from the English teaching in their classrooms in Iran to pass this test, which has a reputation for difficulty (Mirhosseini & Khodakarami, 2015; Papi & Hiver, in press). However, speaking skills, which might have tested or encouraged their WTC, were not given much emphasis at high school, and ignored at university for all but students who took an English teaching degree. Parinaz and Abraham would just have had English vocabulary and reading lessons related to their majors, i.e., graphic design and management.

Parinaz, like Abraham, also had to study Arabic as a compulsory part of the school curriculum in Iran, but had a preference for English, possibly shared by her classmates:

*P: We had Arabic **but we can't, couldn't speak Arabic** and we speak more tha[t] time, **we speak more English.** (I1:154)*

Therefore, it may have been the case that in more recent years in Iran, Parinaz had some opportunities in class to speak English that, twelve years earlier, Abraham would not have experienced.

In regard to their NZ classroom experience, Parinaz and Abraham were in classes with rather different aims. Abraham's increasingly 'academic' focussed classes, which emphasised reading and writing skills more than speaking and listening, in his view reduced his WTC (I2:62). However, Parinaz's class, as a course funded for migrants who could progress to university courses, but were more likely to seek employment, was able to focus on speaking skills and cover current topics of particular interest to its members (I2:99; S:6). This would have created an environment more conducive to the demonstration of Parinaz's WTC.

As for Parinaz's teacher's view of the importance of WTC, which would have influenced her teaching methods and application of the curriculum, Gillian was quite clear:

D: ... you suggested that [Parinaz] was less willing than the others. Do you think that's going to hamper her progress?

Gi: I think it's an essential part of learning a language and learning English and yes I think if she, if her willingness doesn't increase then yes it will hamper her in that she won't learn, won't progress as quickly as for example the other three [Iranian] students... (TJE11:100-101)

External factors which directly or indirectly affect a students' WTC in class can also be attributed to the *exosystemic* layer. Such an event in Parinaz's life was a move to a new house, which required a lot of physical and emotional energy, even after she had succeeded in arranging the rental agreement (I2:1-7). She described how such outside-the-class experiences affected her in-class WTC behaviour:

P: Yeah, sometimes I feel tired and feeling bad and I don't like it to speak. I don't know why. But sometimes is I don't like speak, sometimes.

D: Is that because you said maybe you are tired or upset about something.

P: Yeah upset about something yeah, upset about something or maybe, not about the class or teachers, about myself.

D: Something outside the classroom?

P: Yeah, something outside the classroom yeah.

D: And then after a few days you feel better again.

P: Yeah, yeah maybe after one hours, maybe after two hours I am going to better. (I2:137-143)

On the other hand, unlike Abraham who was alone in NZ, her husband provided a supportive family situation for her and assisted her with her spoken English:

D: And does he help you?

P: Yeah all the time, all time he make accent me, he make when I say words wrong he make my words.

D: He corrects you.

P: Yeah he corrects, sorry my English is so hard for you. (I1:133-136)

Culturally, for most Iranians, family is very important and living away from extended family members has been unusual until recent times (Goldin, 2015). Therefore, Parinaz living as a couple with her husband, and Abraham as a single person, are both in situations which might create more stress for them both psychologically and financially. These kinds of pressures are very likely to have an effect on their classroom behaviour from time to time.

As a result, at the *exosystemic* level, various influences played a part in Parinaz's classroom experiences, whether the curriculum and teaching methods in both Iran in NZ, or the influences from outside the classroom in NZ, both positive and negative, which affected her frame of mind as she attended school each day.

6.3.4 Macrosystemic influences

At the outermost layer of the ecosystems diagram is the *macrosystem*, which relates, in the case of Parinaz, to cultural aspects of Iran and NZ, and her long-term goals and job opportunities for the future. Although she might have shared some of Abraham's views of her homeland, she spoke very little with me on this area in the interviews. It may have been because she was less fluent in English, or her experiences in Iran were less traumatic than Abraham's, allowing for the 12-year gap in their ages and Iran's post-Revolution history. Nor did she have the added complications of an alternative religion (Christianity), or status as a refugee, as did Abraham. I had not deliberately or directly asked Abraham about these topics, but they spontaneously arose in conversation, suggesting that they were important to him.

Parinaz's family in Iran were probably of a similar class to Abraham's as she had been able to attend university and continue with some study of English for several years before coming to NZ, while gaining a Diploma or Certificate in Graphic Design. She was employed as a shop assistant in Tehran, however, and also worked in NZ as a worker in a takeaway bar, possibly one of the several Iranian-owned kebab shops in Auckland. She did not discuss with me the circumstances under which she came to NZ, other than to say she came to join her husband. As he had been in NZ for 12 years already, they must have had a long-distance relationship. Although Parinaz talked about businesses run by Iranians where they could obtain Persian food, she did not mention any efforts to maintain other aspects of her cultural background in NZ:

D: OK. Are there any shops or businesses in Auckland where you can go and speak Farsi to the owners or the...

*P: Persian store. Yeah **we have a lot of Persian store.***

D: Do you go there very often?

*P: Yeah **I go there maybe each week** I go there.*

D: What about restaurants, are there any restaurants?

*P: Yeah if you have other restaurants, **I think two or three restaurants in Auckland.***

D: And do you ever go there?

*P: Yeah, yeah **sometimes, maybe each month.** (I2:188-195)*

In fact, in class she deliberately avoided contact with the Iranians in her class, except when she was allocated to a group with them by her teacher, in a conscious attempt to improve her chances of being able to demonstrate her WTC:

*P: ... and now in my class I think **seven Iranian people.***

*D: And **do you usually talk to them or talk to your other classmates?***

*P: **I think more speaking with other peoples because Iranian is same language with me and I think that after class I can speak Persian. This time is important for my speaking.** (I1:94-96)*

One of the Iranian students in her class was Marjan, who she admired for her proficiency in English:

*P: Yeah **most of the time [Marjan] is more talking, more than us more than other classmate because I think she's speaking very fast and she knows a lot of word and hard word.** Yeah [Marjan] most of the time she's speaking more in class in group. (S:14)*

This deference to an older woman (Marjan was 59 at this time), was also remarked on by Parinaz's teacher, Gillian, who felt that it may have been a form of cultural politeness when Parinaz hesitated to contribute orally in class:

*Gi: **[Parinaz] is always willing to communicate when asked, but does not always volunteer to speak due to a lack of confidence (and perhaps a strong sense of politeness and/or deference to those older than her).** (TJEQ2: remark)*

As a matter of interest, she apologised twice to me too in the first interview: *Sorry my English is so hard for you* (I1:136) and *Sorry my speaking, my English is little bit difficult for you* (I1:156).

As for contact with Kiwi 'culture', so far Parinaz did not have any Kiwi friends (I2:199), but she did mention that her husband had established good relationships with Kiwi people through his job as a chef:

P: Yeah, he speak very well and he can speak with accent Maori.

D: Oh really? Is that because of his job?

P: ... He's chef but he have a good relationship with Maori people, Kiwi people until his accent is very well. (I2:31-33)

In the long term, therefore, perhaps Parinaz could see herself as achieving a similarly high level of WTC. Such future goals are also considered to be a factor in the *macrosystem* which makes up the final and overarching layer in the ecosystem of the individual learner.

Parinaz's goals were clear and firmly dependent on increasing her ability in English, including her WTC:

P: Next year I think so if my English is going to better, I go to university for graphic design or AUT continue graphic design and I find a job, a new job or maybe continue job at kindergarten. (I2:211)

After the end of these three semesters of class, Parinaz did not, however, continue her studies at this university but had a son who she was caring for at home. This year she returned to AUT to join the AE2 (Academic English 2) class but had to drop out when childcare became too much of an issue for her (personal communication, July, 2019).

In summary, therefore, at the *macrosystem* level, Parinaz's WTC in class could have been positively affected by the level of previous education she had had in Iran due to her family's position in society, the support of her husband, and her ambitions for work in NZ.

Moreover, although culturally she may have gravitated to speakers of her language outside the class, she was quite strong minded about resisting the temptation to speak Farsi in class. On the negative side, her teachers and I noticed her innate shyness, which sometimes prevented her from volunteering answers and reduced her self-esteem and faith in her own ability to communicate. Whether the origin of this was cultural and related to a deference

to elders and teachers, or is just an aspect of a shy personality trait, is not clear from the findings.

6.3.5 Conclusion

To conclude this individual case history of Parinaz, taking into account the different levels of the ecosystems framework which describe her WTC in the NZ classroom, and the multiple influences from other variables, she could be seen as a student with a low level of WTC in her own view, and that of her teachers and me, the observer. However, in some less threatening circumstances such as group work, she showed confidence and as much readiness to participate as other students in her class. She was also able to conduct successful negotiations outside the class in the NZ community and obtain employment. She had a positive attitude to learning and chose not to sit with fellow Farsi-speakers in class, unlike some other members of the study. As was pointed out above in Abraham's case, WTC appears to be a dynamic mixture of trait and situational elements. As a result, some of Parinaz's WTC was situationally high, for example in class group work, but low, when it came to full class contributions. Overall, she gave the impression of a person with a relatively shy personality, which was consistent over place and time (Iran and NZ, past and present), and contrasted with the more outgoing nature, for example, of Abraham.

6.4 Summary

The key similarities, therefore, of these two case studies, Parinaz and Abraham, are their cultural and linguistic background and their choice to settle permanently in a new country, where English is the dominant language and a high level of WTC is necessary to succeed socially and economically. They attended similar language learning classes to achieve this goal and intended to seek employment after completing their courses, which would necessitate a reasonable proficiency in English.

As for differences in their background, however, the twelve-year gap in their ages meant they may have had a slightly different experience of the political circumstances and educational approaches to English language learning in Iran, which could have influenced their NZ classroom WTC behaviour. Parinaz was also at beginning of her work life when she arrived in NZ, unlike Abraham, who had already had a successful career in Iran before he came to NZ. This could have affected their levels of self-esteem and confidence in regard to

getting a job, where willingness to communicate in English was essential. Nevertheless, they both seemed very positive about their chances.

Moreover, Abraham stated that he eschewed the company of his fellow Iranians both inside and outside the class partly because of his religion and a desire to practise his English as much as possible. Although Parinaz also made strenuous efforts to avoid associating with other Farsi-speaker in class, she did have a husband in NZ and some contact with other Iranians outside in the Auckland community. Abraham had come to NZ by himself and thus lacked this opportunity to speak Farsi at home, except when skyping his family in Iran. However, both Parinaz and Abraham made an effort to exercise and increase their WTC as much as possible.

Finally, the most significant difference between these two participants was their personality. On interviewing and observing them both, my overall impression of Abraham was of an extrovert, confident, even if not always accurate speaker of English, while Parinaz was quiet, and somewhat shy, but nevertheless used her less competent English to effectively get her point across. However, as can be seen from the presentation of the findings above in this Chapter 6, the WTC of each of these individuals is affected at different times in the *chronosystem* by a complex mixture of factors which can be identified in all the layers of the ecosystems framework. (Appendices AA and BB provide visual representations of Abraham's and Parinaz's individual ecosystems.)

Chapter 7. Discussion of findings

7.1 Introduction

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that a longitudinal qualitative study into the WTC of one particular group of adult migrant participants can not only identify the most important factors which influence their WTC, but also provide insights into the reasons for their varying levels of WTC, as influenced by past experience and a change in residential context. By the repeated application of research tools over a period of 12-18 months, uncommon for WTC studies at this point in time, the study shows that such change is truly 'dynamic', as suggested by Dynamic Systems Theory. In addition, its innovative application of Bronfenbrenner's (1993) ecosystems framework demonstrates that changing levels of WTC can be interpreted theoretically and visually in the contexts of *micro-*, *meso-*, *exo-*, and *macrosystems*, overlaid by the *chronosystem*, which locates the framework in time, both past and present. An additional focus on data related to the use of English outside the classroom in this research adds another dimension to previous investigations into the WTC of language learners that has significance for language pedagogy. Moreover, the inclusion of teachers' viewpoints, both about their students' WTC and their own perceptions of the role of WTC in SLA, adds a unique contribution to the field. Overall, this study reveals the important role played by language teachers in promoting the WTC of their students in the ecological *microsystem* of the classroom, while keeping in mind the impacts both positive and negative of the world *outside the class* on their students' *in-class* WTC behaviour (i.e., the other levels of the ecosystems framework – *meso-* to *macro-*).

Thus, the study's findings identify the factors which the participants felt were influential in raising or lowering their WTC, both inside and outside their Iranian and NZ English language learning classrooms. However, it goes further than previous studies in eliciting the *reasons* for these choices and the extent to which the learners' viewpoints tallied with that of their NZ teachers and myself as an observer. The data make it clear that these variables were not always fixed and immutable but could fluctuate over time and context. This allows for a comparison of the individual trajectories of each participant's WTC and the generation of valuable information about WTC as a primarily situational rather than trait phenomenon, which is affected positively or negatively by context. Finally, the application of all four levels

of the ecosystems framework to the two selected case studies demonstrates the value of this framework in tracing the ebb and flow of WTC between the contexts of not only of their NZ English language classroom, but also the wider world of the outside NZ community, as well as their past lives in Iran. Overall, the findings demonstrate the validity and value of an approach to exploring WTC that situates the study in an ecosystems framework, incorporating aspects of MacIntyre et al's (1998) 'pyramid' model, as well as the additional dimension of *time*, and applying the principles of dynamic systems theory (DST).

This chapter provides a discussion of the key research findings presented in the previous chapters, with reference to each of the research questions. The findings are compared and contrasted with the results of previous empirical studies, and recommendations made, where appropriate for future investigations. The relevance of these findings to the theory sections of the Literature Review Chapter 2 is also explained, theoretical conclusions drawn, and suggestions made for the extension of such theory where applicable. The value of the methodological approach is assessed and improvements proposed. In addition, pedagogical insights for other L2 teachers which arise from these points of discussion are shared.

Following this introduction, Section 7.2 of this chapter reviews the findings for *RQ1* – factors influencing the participants' WTC; Section 7.3 examines *RQ2* and *RQ3* – perceived variations in their levels of WTC over time and context; and Section 7.4 considers *RQ4* – two WTC case studies in an ecosystems framework. At the end of Sections 7.2, 7.3, and 7.4, the contributions of these aspects of the study are presented from a theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical viewpoint. Finally, Section 7.5 summarises this Discussion Chapter.

7.2 Factors which influence WTC in and out of the classroom

While a number of the factors identified in this study as influencing WTC have been investigated elsewhere, the findings show that by employing a range of methodological tools, i.e., questionnaires, observations, stimulated recall, and semi-structured interviews, I was able to identify the *specific* variables which the target group of Iranian migrants to NZ perceived to be most relevant to their context. Previous studies, which were limited to one-off questionnaires, pre-selected the factors and thus were only able to comment on those limited results. In fact, despite the change in learning context, the extensive range of data

which I collected and analysed revealed that the same seven factors (with the exception of private school attendance in Iran) were key influences on my participants in both Iran and NZ: teacher experience, style and behaviour; texts/methods; class activities (pair and group work); self-perceived communication competence; confidence/personality/shyness; anxiety/embarrassment/unWTC; and motivation. These factors have been divided into *external* (out of the students' control) and *internal* (arising from the inherent nature of the student) influences, but clearly, they could have a mutual effect on each other, for example, *motivation* (internal) and *class activities* (external).

Moreover, few studies have examined the influence of past language learning experience on students' present WTC, so the insights provided by my investigation add a new aspect to previous scholarship. In the case of Iran, the educational system and English language learning policy under which most of the participants studied, resulted in a lack of opportunity to demonstrate their WTC, as only in private language institutes (if they were able to attend) were speaking skills and group work fostered and encouraged by their teachers. Indeed, the role of their classroom teacher in Iran was considered to be pivotal by most of my participants in providing an appropriate classroom atmosphere for the external and internal variables affecting their WTC to have a positive impact.

Despite these experiences in Iran, however, the participants generally showed an increased interest and desire to speak English in NZ and a heightened level of motivation, which correlates significantly with WTC, according to previous research. Although the same factors were felt to be important for their WTC in their NZ English language classroom, some of these became more constructive influences than they had been in Iran, e.g., on the whole, their attitudes to their teachers were more positive in regard to the fostering of their WTC in class and their general 'helpfulness' and support. A move from rigid adherence to texts and curriculum, as experienced in Iran, was considered to be an improvement by most, and an aid to fluency and WTC. However, when this method of teaching became the basis for the higher level 'academic' classes in NZ, several members of the study considered it a backward step for their willingness to speak. Unlike Iran, pair and group work was common practice in most of their NZ classes, which they all acknowledged as advantageous for their developing WTC. On the other hand, their internal or more personal qualities such as SPCC, confidence and anxiety were found to be more situational and less dependent on their

geographical context. These findings were supported by my interviews with their teachers and my own observations, which are methodological tools not yet widely used in WTC research. Thus, although most of these antecedents of WTC have been investigated previously, the detailed exploration and comparison of two distinct learning contexts past and present are so far unique to this study.

Another innovative approach in this study was to explore the factors which increased or decreased the participants' WTC *outside-the-class* in Iran in the period of 1980-2002. It became clear that the political situation in Iran after the 1979 Revolution greatly reduced the opportunities for the use of English outside the classroom for all my participants, although in the 1990s access to satellite TV, and later the internet, provided other avenues for learners to practise their English, at least in reading and listening. Access to English speakers, however, remains more problematic than in most other countries, particularly in the present global political climate.

In NZ, however, influences on the WTC of the Iranian migrants *outside-the-class* were related to common issues for new members of a community where they do not speak the dominant language. The very few research studies which have been conducted in this area in NZ found that living in a large immigrant community (e.g., Chinese) can reduce the need or desire to communicate outside the classroom. My Iranian participants, however, lived all over Auckland (the location of my study) and were a very small minority. Therefore, they could not avoid the need to use English formally and informally on an everyday basis. Living in a family unit, however, meant less pressure on them to make contact with English speakers and, in fact, they had mixed levels of success in showing their WTC by making this type of social contact in the wider community.

Thus, in this section of the study, by exploring the variety of factors which influenced the WTC of these Iranian migrant participants, I was able to investigate the *microsystem* of their classroom in NZ, and the *mesosystems* of their English language learning experiences in Iran, as well as the *outside-the-class* opportunities to speak English which they utilised in both Iran and NZ. However, it is clear that the *exosystemic* elements of public policy and *macrosystemic* factors related to migration and culture also influenced the other levels of the ecosystems framework. This interrelationship is a key feature of ecosystems theory.

In Sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 below in relation to the English language classroom in Iran and NZ, I discuss the three *external* and four *internal* factors which affected my participants' WTC. In Section 7.2.3, I examine the context-specific factors which were most influential on their WTC outside the class in both Iran and NZ. In all these sections I also discuss the findings in regard to those of previous empirical researchers. Then I present the contribution of this section of the study to theory, method, and pedagogy.

It should be noted that themes for Section 7.2 were selected on the basis of their frequency in the body of data collected and analysed (see Chapter 3, Section 3.5.2).

7.2.1 In the Iran classroom – Mesosystem – seven factors related to WTC

Teacher experience, style and behaviour

The important role played by their teachers in the participants' English language learning experiences in Iran, and consequently their WTC, was reflected in the fact that all the students commented on how their instructors' teaching style and behaviour affected their oral participation in class. For some it was a positive experience, but for six out of the ten students their WTC was diminished by the teaching practices of that time. It should be noted that, except for Sima and Marjan who were older and studied in pre-Revolution (1979) English classes, possibly with foreign teachers, the period referred to by most of the other participants was approximately 1980-2010. This would have meant that their English teachers were Iranian (rather than native English language speakers), with little exposure to communicative language teaching practices, and were unlikely to have studied English outside Iran. The provision of opportunities for students to speak in class would have been limited, and therefore restricted their ability to display their WTC even if they felt intrinsically ready (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5.3 above for the significance of this historical difference for Iranian education). (See also Aliakbari, 2004; Eslami & Fatahi, 2008; Maleki, 2007; Razmjoo & Riazi, 2006a & 2006b; and Vaezi, S., 2007; for further discussion of the nature of English language education in the period when most of my participants were at school in Iran).

As for research studies carried out in Iran into WTC in English, their publication in English language journals only began in about 2013, but, according to even very recent articles, the EFL teaching practices and methodology seem to have changed very little since the 1980s

(Sadeghi, K., & Ghaderi, 2018; Yaghoubinejad et al., 2017; Zarrinabadi & Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, 2018). In 2014, Zarrinabadi published his qualitative study into the effect of teachers in Iran on their learners' WTC. His findings were that the teachers' wait time before expecting a response, error correction methods, support for their students, and their decision on which topics to discuss, were the key influences on the participants' WTC. Of these factors, teacher support seemed to be most important for my participants' WTC in their classrooms in Iran. For example, Abraham and Ramin stated that their teachers were too strict and impatient, and this reduced their WTC. However, while she agreed with their view, Azadeh found this approach encouraged her to learn more. Thus, Azadeh and Ramin had opposite responses to the teaching style of Iranian English language teachers, which suggests that although the learning context may be important for students to develop WTC, not all students react in the same way to the same environmental conditions. Other students in my study remarked on the positive effect the teacher's kindness had on their WTC in class, while Zarrinabadi's (2014) participants also responded well to their friendly and supportive teachers, and blamed their overly judgmental teachers for their unWTC (see also Riasati, 2012).

Another qualitative study in the context of Iran by Zarei, Saiedi, and Ahangari (2019) investigated the socio-affective and pedagogic strategies used by teachers of English to foster WTC in their classes. Although the researchers acknowledged the importance of teacher immediacy for the fostering of students' WTC, the teachers in their study felt constrained by Iranian cultural values from displaying too familiar a manner with their students, and believed their role was to maintain a teacher-centred class, thus inhibiting their students' WTC (see also Elahi Shirvan, Rahmani, & Sorayyae, 2016). However, the use of praise and humour offset the "accepted power rules" in the Iranian system of education (Zarei et al., 2019, p. 7 of 11), as was also expressed by Marjan in my study: *It depends on the teacher in your class. He or she is the person that make the class friendly, comfortable ... so I feel very comfortable* (11:90). The teachers that Zarei et al. (2019) interviewed in their study agreed "that their liveliness encouraged the learners' WTC" (p. 6 of 11), which was mirrored by Shirin, who praised her teacher in Iran for declaring to her students: *I love English and I love learning English* (11:24).

Texts/methods/private & public

The methods and texts used by Iranian teachers in public schools attended by the participants would have been closely monitored and prescribed by the educational authorities of the time, particularly after the Revolution (1979) (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5.3 above) (see Aliakbari, 2004). Such texts were *not* based on communicative language teaching (CLT) methods and focussed primarily on grammar-translation and reading skills. As a result, most of the participants in this study felt the use of such texts in their English language classrooms (during the period of 1980-2010) served as a barrier to the development of their WTC. Moreover, the employment of only non-native English speakers as English teachers at this time was mentioned by three of my participants as having a detrimental effect on their WTC. In contrast, Marjan, who had attended an American school before the Revolution, praised her American teachers for their encouragement of her oral contributions to the class. Even in 2008, Eslami and Fatahi noted that none of the 40 Tehrani English teachers in their study had travelled or studied in English-speaking countries. In their opinion, lack of proficiency in the target language would have reduced their feelings of self-efficacy and consequently these teachers would use fewer communicative-based strategies in their classes.

Private institutes, however, seemed to have greater freedom to choose texts written in the West and to employ native speaker or non-Iranian teachers, at least before 1979. Therefore, in theory, their students would have been exposed to the CLT methodology espoused by Western textbook writers from the 1970s onwards. The five participants in this study who were able to attend these establishments felt that such factors had a positive influence on their opportunities and desire for communication in English (WTC). They believed that the classes encouraged them to speak in English and created a more enjoyable atmosphere. Although I have not been able to source any Iranian studies of WTC which can provide a comparison with these findings, the nature of private English language institutes in Iran has been commented on by a variety of educational researchers. For example, Razmjoo and Riazi (2006a & b) found that, although all the English teachers they interviewed ($n = 100$) had a positive attitude towards CLT methods, only private institute teachers even partially implemented these principles in their classrooms. Razmjoo and Riazi (2006a) suggest that

“the teachers may encounter resistance on the part of their students, school principals and the educational system” to the application of such methods in class (p. 358).

In addition, Maftoon, Yazdani Moghaddam, Gholebostan, and Beh-Afarin (2010) support my participants’ assertions that “the educational materials used by language institutes – the private sector – are more diverse and attractive” (p. 1 of 10), and are likely to encourage WTC. Moreover, Rahimi and Nabilou (2011) claimed that “the quality of teaching English as a foreign language was notably higher in private schools” (p. 74), in their survey of eighty-three teachers in both private and public establishments. Moreover, they outline the disadvantages of public school teaching, such as large classes, lack of suitable teaching materials, and students with low levels of motivation. Sima, in my study, also mentioned the lack of motivation of other students in her classes to speak English because they felt it was *not necessary* (I1:134). Keihaniyan (2011) found that private institute learners of English were more motivated than public high school learners in his comparison of the two types of institution, as well as there being a more active role for teachers and a greater variety of textual materials in the private setting. More recently, Ghanizadeh and Rostami (2015) and K. Sadeghi and J. C. Richards (2015) came to similar conclusions, suggesting that the contrast between learning English in a public or private setting in Iran has not changed since the time my participants were in class.

Class activities (pair and group work)

Although theoretically five out of the ten participants in my study were open to the possibility of becoming involved in pair or group work in their classrooms in Iran, they made it clear that it rarely occurred in their public school classrooms, as a teacher-centred approach was the norm (see Table V.4, Appendix V; also Section 7.2.1 above). Private English language teaching institutions were the only places where group work ever occurred, according to Azadeh and Neda, thus, this very important opportunity to demonstrate their WTC was mostly unavailable.

In Zarei et al.’s (2019) study of EFL teachers in Iran, they found that even in the private institutes of today, students “adopted passive roles”, had no “sense of cooperation” and “did not develop the social skill of working in groups or pairs” (p. 7 of 11). Moreover, the teachers they interviewed stated that they did not know how to implement group or pair

work strategies in class. Previous researchers into the WTC of Iranian students of English had arrived at the same conclusions as Zarei et al. (2019), criticising the students themselves for a lack of “cooperative skills as well as motivation and WTC” (Rahmani & Taghi Hassani, 2015, p. 9), reticence to speak (Rashidi, N., & Mahmoudi Kia, 2012), as well as their teachers for avoiding the oral/aural aspects of textbooks to focus on exam preparation (Rahmani Doqaruni, 2017). According to Alikhani and Bagheridoust (2017): “Unfortunately, instructors do not involve language learners in as much pair work or group work as possible... This in turn has an adverse effect on the class atmosphere and the learners’ WTC” (p. 45).

Not all reports on Iranian English language teaching are as critical as those above. Barjesteh, Varseghi, and Neissi (2012) reinforced my participants’ views that in some private language institutes group discussions did take place, and even in public schools, motivated teachers and principals promoted group work in their classrooms (Montasseri & Razmjoo, 2015). Moreover, in a recent (2017) example of action research over eight weeks, Rahmani Doqaruni, a teacher in a private language institute, successfully overcame the reticence of his students, which had been engendered by their unhappy high school English experiences, by fostering their WTC in pair/group activities.

However, in this study, most of my participants were less negative than many of these Iranian researchers in their criticism of the English classes of their time (1980-2010) in Iran, and despite having had few opportunities to take part in cooperative classroom activities, they readily adopted these techniques to improve their WTC in their NZ classrooms (see Section 7.2.2 below). Nevertheless, they certainly felt that their competence in speaking English had not been greatly enhanced by their experiences in their Iranian classrooms.

Self-Perceived Communication Competence (SPCC)

In fact, eight out of the ten participants in my study reported that their perceived ability to speak English in Iran was lower than they would have liked. Therefore, it could be assumed that this would have had a negative effect on their WTC, as past research has suggested that the more competent a student feels in speaking a language, the more confident they are, and the higher the level of their WTC (see MacIntyre et al., 2007). This lack of faith in their competence in English may have been the result of their personality, cognitive abilities, or the external factors discussed in this Section 7.2.1 above.

Although there have been a range of studies in Iran relating higher levels of self-perceived communication competence (SPCC) to greater WTC (e.g., Aliakbari, Kamangar, & Khany, 2016; Bahadori, 2018; Marzban, & Mahmoudvand, 2013; Riasati, 2018), most have used quantitative scales to measure such correlations. However, Riasati (2012), Riasati and Rahimi (2018), and Safaei, Moghmizade, and Shariati (2014) also conducted interviews to support their contention that SPCC positively affects WTC. In Riasati and Rahimi's (2018) study, their respondents, just as those in my study, felt dissatisfied with their ability in English and this discouraged them from speaking in class. On the other hand, in 2012, Riasati also found that one student with a high level of confidence in her spoken language took every opportunity to speak in her English lessons. My participant, Golnaz, was equally assured of her ability in English and expressed her superiority to other students in the class in Iran, whom she suggested found the language *very hard* (I1:80).

Confidence/personality/shyness

According to my findings, most of the participants in this study were not always confident in expressing themselves in English in their classes in Iran, while Parinaz, as the least confident student overall, ascribed her shyness to lack of faith in her ability (i.e., low SPCC, see above). Others were affected both positively and negatively by the behaviour of the teacher and the teaching methods used (see above).

As with SPCC, Iranian researchers have focussed on such factors as confidence and shyness mainly in quantitative studies, in order to explore whether they exert any positive or negative influences on students' WTC. For example, Ghonsooly, Khajavy, and Asadpour (2012) established L2 self-confidence as the most significant predictor of L2 WTC, whereas in 2016, Khajavy, Ghonsooly, and Hosseini Fatemi, using structural equation modelling (SEM), found that the classroom environment was now the strongest direct predictor of WTC, but communication confidence also still directly affected WTC.

However, so far only a few investigations into WTC in Iran have been conducted using qualitative or mixed method approaches. Riasati and Rahimi (2018), as a result of their interviews with seven participants learning English in Iran, found self-confidence to be a determining factor in their WTC. Their participant, Parisa, could equally be describing my learner, Parinaz, when she says:

*Probably one factor is shyness. Or because some students do not have enough self-confidence to speak or **they think their speaking is not good and that they are weak, so they prefer to be silent.** (p. 12 of 15)*

In fact, Parinaz had said when asked if she was shy in her Iranian classroom:

*Learning English actually no, same now me, I think if I have a question, **I think that my question is stupid question, yeh because sometimes, most of the times I am silent in class, in English class.** (11:81-82)*

Finally, Rahmani Doqaruni's (2017) action research study was prompted by his recognition that most of his students wanted to improve their speaking but "lacked *confidence* to speak" (p. 48). He suggested that "few ... studies in Iran had previously provided valuable information about confidence in an Iranian L2 context" (p. 46), in other words, the *reasons* for such a lack of confidence. As a result of his increasing use of enjoyable interactive class activities, he noted that his students' confidence was boosted, and they were more relaxed and willing to communicate in English.

Anxiety/embarrassment/unWTC

This area of research has been frequently explored from the early days of WTC investigation in Iran, with several studies establishing a link between lower levels of anxiety and higher levels of WTC (e.g., Ghonsooly, Khajavy, & Asadpour, 2012; Khajavy et al., 2018; Riasati, 2018; Tavakoli & Zarrinabadi, 2018).

For some of my participants, the two main areas of concern were being corrected by the teacher, and losing face when making errors in front of their classmates. Overall my impression as an interviewer (as recorded in my field notes after the occasion) was that the participants were unusually quick to respond positively to the question as to how they felt about being corrected by the teacher in Iran (see Table V.5, Appendix V). Consequently, I felt that they may have thought that this was the right answer to give to me as a teacher, or that the idea that "correction is good for you" may have been culturally appropriate. With no other questions did I think that they were replying in a less than sincere way, but I was a bit taken aback here with the promptness of their replies. They were also mostly reluctant to discuss at length negative feelings such as unWTC, anxiety, embarrassment, and frustration, which I had added to later interview questions as this was an area which had been suggested for further exploration by MacIntyre and Legatto (2011).

A few WTC researchers in Iran have covered this topic of error correction and students' reaction to such teacher behaviours using qualitative methods. Zarrinabadi (2014), in his focussed essay study, found that teachers' immediate error correction increased the participants' anxiety and reduced their WTC, whereas delayed error correction had the opposite effect. However, my students were seemingly unconcerned by teacher correction, as were the learners in Kaivanpanah, Alavi, and Sepehrinia's (2015) investigation. Both Kaivanpanah et al. (2015) as well as Zarei et al. (2019) point to a cultural basis for Iranian students' acceptance of teacher correction. According to Zarei et al. (2019), "The students trust their teachers as a source of knowledge to alleviate their anxiety in case of being exposed to complicated learning situations" (p. 8 of 11) (see also Tavakoli & Zarrinabadi, 2018, for similar findings).

As for the topic of feeling shame or embarrassment when speaking English in front of classmates in Iran, Abraham and Shirin in my study were concerned enough to mention this in the interviews, and it was also an issue for both teachers and students in Jamshidnejad's (2010) study. Lack of proficiency and, conversely, fear of being criticised for 'showing off' were both given as reasons for reluctance to speak (unWTC). Riasati (2012) provides justification for this as follows:

The fact is that Iranian EFL learners are highly sensitive to the judgment of the other students on their performance and will therefore try to avoid situations that are risk-taking. Such predisposition influences their willingness to speak to a great extent. (p. 1292)

This may be a cultural generalisation, but Rahi Shahraki and Seyedrezaei (2015, p. 100) also report that "being negatively judged by other learners, and leaving unfavourable impressions on others", as contributing to their EFL student participants' classroom anxiety.

Motivation

Motivation has been a frequent factor under investigation in quantitative WTC studies in Iran since the second decade of the 2000s, when researchers began to publish in English language journals (e.g., Fallah, 2014; Ghonsooly, Khajavy & Asadpour, 2012; Riasati, 2018; Zarrinabadi & Abdi, 2011). Significant correlations were found between levels of motivation

and WTC. However, three out of ten participants in my study confessed that they had no motivation to learn English when they were in Iran due to a lack of interest in the subject. Neda changed her attitude when she began university studies and was even more strongly motivated when she decided to emigrate to NZ (as was Azadeh). On the other hand, three of the students expressed a strong and consistent level of intrinsic interest, despite their having few opportunities to practise their speaking skills while still in Iran.

In Elahi Shirvan and Taherian's (2016) qualitative investigation into the reasons for their private language institute students' levels of WTC, they found that instrumental or extrinsic motives were most prevalent – finding a better job, and passing courses, although some of their participants also showed an interest in understanding English speakers and their culture. However, the more recent nature of this study may reflect greater opportunities for students in Iran, such as through the internet, to be exposed to English-speaking cultures, unlike the time my participants were attending school (1970-2010). Travel abroad as a motivator was low on their list, as even now it is only possible for financially well-off Iranians to send their children to English-speaking countries, or to take a trip themselves if they are able to obtain the appropriate visa (Pourakbari et al., 2017).

In terms of theory, it can be seen from the examination above of the findings of researchers in Iran, that the WTC factors first identified by MacIntyre et al. in 1998 are still commonly investigated individually, with a focus on exploring their quantitative correlations to the construct (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3). So far, only a few qualitative studies have ventured to explore the *reasons* for their participants' varying levels of WTC, but, with the exception of Elahi Shirvan and Taherian (2016, see Section 7.4 on ecosystems below), they have not analysed their results using any particular overall theory. Future research in Iran may productively follow this recommended path with the interconnected contextual nature of WTC as an initial premise (Larsen-Freeman, 2016b; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011; Mercer, 2016).

As for my methodology, questionnaires and interviews with the participants which asked them about their past English language learning experiences in Iran were a productive source of data, with the proviso that I was relying on their memories of past events. Unfortunately, such self-reported data could not be backed up with information from their

teachers in Iran or observations, as was their NZ classroom WTC behaviour. However, I read many accounts of the nature of the English language teaching practices in Iran at the time these participants were studying, and also conducted informal interviews with some Iranian English teachers now studying in NZ to confirm the accounts I received. Certainly, data collection from Iranian English teachers in Iran would be another useful source if, and when I was able to visit Iran in the future.

For such English language teachers in Iran, working within the constraints of the exam focussed curriculum, prescribed textbooks, and possible reluctance of their students to use a language which they still have few opportunities to practise outside the classroom (see Zarei et al., 2019), employing communicative language techniques as suggested by SLA proponents may be an ongoing challenge and arguably less important than in other countries (Holliday, 1994, 2016; Littlewood, 2011). Some teachers are attempting to make changes to include more collaborative classroom activities in which even shyer students can demonstrate their WTC (e.g., Elahi Shirvan, Rahmani, & Sorayyae, 2016; Rahmani Doqaruni, 2017; Tadayyon, Zarrinabadi, & Ketabi, 2016). On the one hand, new media outlets have increased possible contact with English language sources, but on the other, isolationist policies by countries such as the USA do not help to encourage tourism, or provide educational exchange possibilities for Iranian English language students, or foreign business investments which would require English as a *lingua franca* (ELF). Therefore, the promotion of their students' WTC in English will continue to test the skills of Iranian teachers and should remain a worthy topic for future research.

7.2.2 In the NZ classroom – Microsystem – seven factors related to WTC

In this section, where possible, comparisons are made with empirical and theoretical studies related to the WTC of students of other languages in NZ and elsewhere in the world. As I have been unable to find reports on any similar investigations into the WTC of Iranian *migrants*, I focus mainly on qualitative studies which endeavour to ascertain reasons for their participants' choice of specific factors affecting their readiness to speak.

Teacher experience, style and behaviour

As pointed out in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3, the role of the teacher is clearly important in promoting or reducing their students' WTC (MacIntyre et al., 2011). However, in Box 5

(Interpersonal Motivation) in Layer IV of the model created earlier by MacIntyre et al. (1998; see Chapter 2, Figure 2.1 above), teachers are hardly mentioned other than to briefly describe their control and affiliation functions. The focus of MacIntyre et al.'s 1998 model was primarily on the student. In contrast, many subsequent studies, particularly using qualitative methods, have included the influence of the teacher on their students' WTC (e.g., Cao, 2009a; Peng, 2014; Syed, 2016; Zeng, 2010). In fact, MacIntyre et al. (2011), in the report of their investigation using focussed essays, suggested that:

Students and their teachers also form long-lasting relationships that satisfy the need for relatedness while building language competence, so it is not surprising that students describe many ways in which their teachers affect WTC. (p. 88)

For the participants in my study, the teachers in their NZ classrooms were key factors in enhancing their confidence to speak. Over the year-long period of the study, all ten students had mostly positive impressions of these teachers, who they considered approachable and open to questions, and felt the classroom atmosphere encouraged them to speak. The Chinese migrants to Canada in Zeng's (2010) study agreed with the importance of the teacher in fostering WTC, but shared the same negative experiences as a few of my participants. Lu, in Zeng's study, as well as Abraham in mine, became frustrated and anxious when the teacher did not understand their questions, and the negative feedback Neda received from her NZ teacher was similar to that of Liang (Zeng's student), so they both became embarrassed and offended and decide to speak less. However, Neda was able to recover from it and move on to a more positive relationship with her next NZ teacher.

On the other hand, Shirin, who experienced a 'shaming' incident with one teacher (see Teimouri, 2018), was able to approach her previous teachers for help, and so it seems such unpleasant experiences of teacher behaviour did not have a long-lasting effect on the students' WTC. Moreover, Abraham, who later developed a very relaxed interactive communication style with his S1 teacher, initially clashed with her quite strongly (in his and her opinion), as did Kate with Carla, a participant in House's (2004) study of six Study Abroad students in NZ. An incident where Carla and her teacher "came to blows" (House, 2004, p. 69) meant that her WTC dropped considerably from its previous level. Such findings are supported by Cao (2009a), who found that her Study Abroad (SA) students in NZ were

encouraged to talk by their teacher's vivid teaching style if they liked her attitude and felt she was tolerant and accepting of their answers. On the other hand, they were discouraged if she would not physically approach them to explain any difficulties they had. Overall, several of my participants saw the role of the teacher as needing to be 'helpful', possibly because as migrants to a new country, they saw the teacher's function as extending beyond the classroom to assist them to communicate in the outside world as well.

Texts/topics/methods

Such classroom environmental factors as the texts and methods used by teachers as well as the topics chosen for discussion perhaps fit most logically into MacIntyre et al's (1998) Layer V, Box 9 – Social Situation, where they discuss the nature of "the participants, the setting, the purpose, the topic, and the channel of communication" (p. 553). Although they do not specifically mention texts or classroom methods, they do suggest that "the topic of the communication will significantly affect the ease of language use: Topical expertise and the familiarity with a certain register will boost one's linguistic self-confidence, whereas a lack of these may inhibit even a generally confident speaker" (p. 554).

For the ten participants in this study, textual material in their NZ classroom was dependent on their teacher's choice, and varied with the eight different levels of class they attended. Whereas some of the students appreciated the flexibility of not adhering closely to a prescribed text book as they had in Iran (see Section 7.2.1 above), and felt they were learning practical language to use outside the classroom (Tina, I1:262), others considered the security of following a book *step by step* to be an advantage (Neda, I1:40). Abraham and Marjan, however, were very critical of their past Iranian teachers' practice of teaching *page by page* (Abraham, I1:62) and speaking *like the book* (Marjan, I1:112). However, those participants who reached the higher levels of class regretted the increasing focus on the academic skills of reading and writing, and the reduction in opportunities to demonstrate their WTC. Preparation for topics for discussion was also noted as increasing WTC, as was the choice of interesting subjects which were relevant to their personal experience (Marjan, I2:2).

Cao (2005, 2009a), also identified the importance of familiarity and interest in conversation topics for her SA participants in NZ. House (2004) had come to the same conclusion with a

similar group of students, noting that lack of interest led to reduced communication. This would imply that *theoretically* students could have a high level of WTC, but would not demonstrate it for situational or circumstantial reasons. (See also Al-Murtadha, 2017; Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2016; Peng, 2014; Shaffer, 2019; Syed, 2016; for similar results).

Class activities (pair and group work)

The role of WTC in classroom group activities has been under examination for some time. Intergroup motivation and affiliation occupied Layer IV of MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model, and later versions of WTC scales such as MacIntyre et al.'s (2001), Cao and Philp's (2006), and Peng and Woodrow's (2010), all examined levels of learners' WTC within group situations. Whereas in MacIntyre et al.'s (1998, p. 547) view, this WTC was a relatively "stable and enduring" influence, other researchers have revealed dynamic fluctuations in WTC as a result of topic, interlocutors, or group members (e.g., Cao, 2011; Eddy-U, 2015; Gallagher & Robins, 2015; Kang, S.-J., 2005; Mulvaney, 2015; de Saint Léger & Storch, 2009; Yu, 2015).

As discussed above, opportunities for pair or groupwork differed from class to class for my participants, but generally speaking, these would have been more frequent than in their classes in Iran (see Section 7.2.1 above). Although all the participants acknowledged the importance of such collaborative class activities, four out of ten felt under cultural pressure to work with other speakers of their native language if they were given a choice by their teachers (cf. Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003). Even though they recognised that this was not beneficial to the practice of their WTC in English, Tina and Shirin also pointed out that it could be helpful if they needed some extra explanation of a grammar point etc. It is worth noting that this was the only time that my participants mentioned any cultural barriers to their learning of English, unlike the Chinese participants in Zeng's 2010 study in Canada (see also Cao, 2005; Zhong, 2013).

On the other hand, Ramin attributed his enjoyment of group work to the nature of his *collectivist culture* (I2:56). Moreover, four of the students (i.e., Abraham, Ramin, Sima, and Parinaz), despite cultural loyalties, deliberately chose to separate themselves from fellow Farsi speakers to take the greatest advantage of opportunities to speak English in class. However, the students were still reliant on their teachers to make provision for this type of

activity, so Golnaz and Tina, in particular, saw a marked reduction in actual communication possibilities in their higher-level class, even though theoretically they knew they still needed to practise their spoken English. On the positive side, even the shyer students such as Neda and Parinaz were able to take part quite confidently in group work though they were reluctant to speak up in whole class interaction situations.

In House's 2004 study, Miko, just like my participant, Parinaz, was described as a quiet, shy student, but they both demonstrated a much greater level of WTC in groups. S.-J. Kang (2005) reported similar findings with her four Korean SA students in the USA and their conversation partners, and termed this WTC variable "security" (p. 282). Such familiarity with interlocutors as a factor in raising WTC levels is also mentioned by Syed (2016) and Cao (2009a).

Self-Perceived Communication Competence (SPCC)

Although MacIntyre et al. (1998, p. 554) claimed that "one's degree of L2 proficiency will have a significant effect on his or her WTC", it was McCroskey and Richmond's (1991) assertion that "self-perceptions of competence ... may have a strong influence on individuals' WTC" (p. 27). Even though McCroskey and Richmond were referring to **L1** WTC, it may still hold for **L2** WTC that, if speakers are low in proficiency but high in WTC, they may be competent communicators, and those who hold a low opinion of their capabilities, but are actually quite proficient, may be unwilling to attempt communication. In MacIntyre et al.'s 1998 model, communicative competence was Box 10 in Layer V, i.e., a more enduring influence on WTC, but they advised that further research was needed into the links between actual and perceived levels of competence.

According to later writers on WTC such as MacIntyre et al. (2007), a self-perceived high level of competence is indeed a key precursor to using the L2 with confidence. Although it could be argued that for WTC a student's self-perceived level of competence may be more influential than his or her actual assessed level, some studies have correlated proficiency and WTC (e.g., Han & Wang, 2018; Pawlak et al., 2016; Yashima et al., 2018). Peng (2007b), however, found that higher levels of proficiency did not necessarily lead to higher levels of WTC. It is certainly possible that a student may achieve high scores in a testing situation but

during social interaction in or out of class may be hampered by lack of confidence, a feeling of low self-esteem, or simply a shy personality.

In this study, I was able to link the participants' actual grades or academic achievements with their perceived levels of competence in English. My conclusion was that they were quite successful students, possibly because of their sound educational background in Iran (see Appendix U, Table U.7). In terms of their SPCC, in Semester 1 (S1), seven out of the ten students were happy with their progress so far in learning English, whereas in Semester 2 (S2) only three were entirely satisfied, four were unsure, and three were dissatisfied. In their third semester, only one student continued to feel upbeat about his achievements, while the other three who continued to study were feeling overly challenged by their higher-level classes. This reduction in SPCC may reflect the increasing difficulty of the classes they were enrolled in and the greater academic focus on reading and writing rather than speaking. In comparison, the participants' mostly high estimations of their WTC, as evidenced in their responses to the Questionnaires in S1, showed a more varied pattern in S2 (see Chapter 4, Table 4.5). This may suggest there is indeed a possible link between levels of SPCC and WTC.

Zeng (2010), in her study, observed such connections with her higher WTC group, who felt they would be more likely to talk if they were confident about their language proficiency. In contrast, two out of Syed's (2016) six participants felt apprehension because of their inability at times to express themselves accurately in English. Sabrina, a student in House's (2004) study, demonstrated lower levels of SPCC at first, which increased with her growing confidence in her ability and then translated into greater WTC. Yue (2016) also noted the variation in her participants' SPCC and consequent WTC according to circumstances. This implies that SPCC is not a trait variable affecting WTC but rather responds to situational constraints. MacIntyre et al. (1998) describe this as "state perceived competence" which "refers to the feeling that one has the capacity to communicate effectively at a particular moment" (p. 549).

Another aspect of the factor of SPCC is what has been termed 'social comparison', a process by which a student estimates their linguistic competence in relation to others in the class. According to MacIntyre et al. (2011), "situated WTC seems to involve a continuous assessment of relative competence" (p. 91). Almost all the participants in my study provided

estimates of their own ability in comparison to their classmates (as recorded in Appendix X), which suggested that this was a significant feature of their classroom self-perceptions. In S1, except for Marjan, who justifiably set herself at the top of the class, the students estimated their place to be more or less in the middle of the class. In S2, however, all but Marjan became less confident about their place in class, along with their level of SPCC (as discussed above). Moreover, in the third semester of the study, Azadeh and Ramin attended a class which also contained native English speakers, so their previously higher levels of SPCC were more difficult to maintain in such circumstances.

Interestingly, in Yue's (2016) study, she found that, in the individual conversational situations which she recorded, social comparison could have both positive and negative effects on WTC, since impressions of having higher or lower SPCC than an interlocutor could either enhance the student's self-confidence, or lead to embarrassment, anxiety and subsequent unWTC. Moreover, Al-Murtadha in his 2017 investigation into the WTC of Yemeni English language students, described the 'competition' between classmates as spurring on most of his twelve participants to show their WTC in class, although some preferred to keep quiet in order to give others a chance. He considered that this desire to compete may be a cultural characteristic and compared his findings with those of Peng (2007b), where in a Chinese context, students' WTC was negatively affected by the anxiety resulting from a reluctance to compete against others and suffer a possible loss of face. Not all Peng's participants were affected in this way, however, and some were prepared to take more risks and exhibit high levels of L2 WTC. Cultural generalisations then may not be totally appropriate.

Confidence/personality/shyness

In MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) heuristic model of WTC, they distinguish personality and L2 self-confidence as more stable enduring influences (in Box 12 of Layer VI; and Box 7 of Layer IV, respectively), in comparison with state communicative self-confidence as a situation-specific construct (in Box 4 of Layer III). However, for both types of self-confidence, they identify the same two components: anxiety (or the lack of it), and perceived competence to speak the L2. Confidence in speaking an L2 continues to be regarded by WTC researchers as likely to be the result of high levels of SPCC in combination with low levels of anxiety and other negative feelings (see Clément et al., 2003; Yashima et al., 2004). If this feeling of confidence

is inherent and unchanging, perhaps it could also be considered as part of the students' personality, an area which has engendered a great deal of quantitative research on WTC (e.g., Cao, 2011; Çetinkaya, 2005; Öz, 2014; Piechurska-Kuciel, 2018; Yashima et al., 2018). In regard to personality, however, as my qualitative investigation was focussed on oral communication, only 'shyness' or its obverse is reported on. I drew on evidence from questionnaires and interviews with both the students and their teachers, supported by my observational data.

In regard to their levels of confidence in the NZ classroom in S1, my participants showed higher self-ratings of WTC in group work rather than whole class activities (c.f. Table U.5 with Table U.8, in Appendix U), which is not unexpected as it presumably takes less courage to speak to a small group of classmates, often without the presence of the teacher. Except for Parinaz at the low end of the scale, and Marjan at the totally confident other end, all the other participants reported that they had levels of confidence which varied from time to time. In the case of Sima, she displayed greater levels of assurance than she would admit to herself, according to her teacher. Thus, the weakness in totally self-reported results is revealed. However, for Neda and Parinaz, the two students who judged themselves as the lowest in confidence, their teachers' descriptions matched their own quite closely. Overall, five out of ten saw an increase in confidence as compared to their classroom situation in Iran and two of the participants regarded their personality, whether extrovert or shy, as being unchanged in both contexts. Moreover, Azadeh and Tina, as outgoing and shy personalities respectively, considered that their WTC did not change whether they were speaking in their L1 or L2. Similarly, Aliza and Zeeshan, in Syed's (2016) study of Pakistani graduate students, attributed their high and low WTC to their stable personality features i.e., talkative and silent respectively.

In S2, the upward trajectory of confidence for most of the participants continued, while for one student, Shirin, there was a marked decrease due to an unfortunate encounter with her teacher, so, although she had a naturally talkative personality in both her L1 and L2, she felt inhibited in her new class. In contrast, Mossad, a student from Saudi Arabia in House's (2004) study, was an example of a quiet and withdrawn young man who seemed to change personality to that of a confident and outgoing class member over the six weeks of the project. He also stated that he was not much of a talker in his own country but now in NZ

was intent on making new friends from many different cultures. House (2004, p. 83) attributes this drastic change in WTC to a better “mood” as the result of some problems (possibly political?) being resolved in Saudi Arabia. Shirin’s level of confidence could also be described as being affected by the negative emotional events she experienced in her NZ class, as was Abraham, who sometimes felt his usually high level of WTC was overwhelmed by his concerns about his refugee status application. House’s (2004) student Miko had a similarly quiet and shy personality in class to Parinaz, but seemed to have developed a more confident persona outside the class, just like Parinaz, who had found herself several jobs in the NZ community.

Personality and shyness were also considered to be factors for participants in Zeng’s (2010) study of Chinese in Canada, although cultural reasons such as face protection were given as justification for lower levels of WTC (p. 121). In contrast, according to my participant, Marjan, the Iranians in her class were *more active* (I1:102) than other nationalities, which is borne out by Iranian writers such as Djavadi (2016), who describe Iranians as being uncomfortable with silence (p. 53). However, the danger of cultural generalisation should be acknowledged for both Chinese and Iranians, as three of the students in this study were quite shy in class, according to their teachers’ impressions and their own admissions.

Anxiety/embarrassment/unWTC

The role of anxiety has been explored extensively in L2 learning (see Horwitz, 2010), and in WTC studies (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; MacIntyre et al., 2003a), also under the label of communication apprehension (the obverse of Box 4 in Layer III and Box 7 in Layer IV of the Pyramid Model of MacIntyre et al., 1998). It has been suggested that while language anxiety is predominantly of the debilitating variety, a lack of anxiety (i.e., self-confidence) is a facilitating component of WTC (see also Dewaele, 2019; Peng, 2014; Ryan, 2009; Yashima et al., 2004).

In this study, six out of ten students were considered by their teachers to be nervous or anxious in class from time to time (see Table V.15 & V.16, Appendix V). Moreover, eight out of ten admitted that their WTC was on occasion negatively affected by feelings of insecurity. Of these individuals, Parinaz, Neda, and Shirin seemed to be particularly subject to these uncomfortable feelings (see Table V.16, Appendix V). Their teachers’ as well as my

impression was that they could have been experiencing more than just anxiety related to language learning. In other words, it could have been trait rather than situational anxiety.

One situation which impacted negatively on their self-esteem, according to seven of my participants, was speaking out in front of the class. The adjectives they used were *embarrassing*, *uncomfortable*, and they were concerned that they may be *laughed at* by their classmates (see Table V.14, Appendix V). Zeng's (2010) student Huo had similar fears despite his faith in his speaking ability, as did Aliza in Syed's (2016) study, Fatima in Cao's (2009a) investigation, and Weitao in Peng's (2014) report. Such concerns seem to be a natural human reaction to public exposure, as "oral communication in a new language ... can pose a threat to individuals' selves or their ego" (Peng, 2014, p. 83).

Another stressor for Shirin and Marjan was the frustration experienced when trying to remember vocabulary that they should know, but which eluded them at the time of speaking. MacIntyre, Mackinnon, and Clément (2009) describe this situation as: "Though the spirit is willing, the body of vocabulary is weak" (p. 20). In other words, there is a willingness to communicate overall, but at the moment of communicating, the learner becomes overwhelmed by opposing feelings of anxiety and low competence. Therefore, although there is no trait anxiety preceding a particular communication situation, a transitory state of anxiety may impede or prevent the communication event from taking place. Even Marjan, who was usually very confident, had experienced this type of difficulty. Sabrina, in House's (2004) study, expressed similar frustration with her command of English vocabulary.

Dörnyei (2005, p. 198) has suggested that anxiety may not be purely a debilitating factor but can actually motivate learners to try harder. This was the case for Parinaz, in my study, who rose above her nervousness, when she came to view her position in class as being no different than her classmates. For the other participants, anxiety *was* an inhibiting factor for their WTC in the moment, even if they remained positive about the future improvement of their English language skills. A reduction in negative feelings such as nervousness and anxiety could be an expected result of the students' becoming more familiar with the NZ classroom environment and the language they were learning. It is interesting to note, though, that the participants were more forthcoming about their unhappy feelings in NZ

than they had been about their experiences in Iran (see Section 7.2.1 above), although that may have been because these were more recent and immediate memories.

Motivation

MacIntyre et al. (1998) conceptualised the motivation of L2 learners to speak, whether between individuals (Box 5) or groups (Box 6) to be comparatively more stable and enduring influences on L2 WTC in Layer IV of their model. The link between positive motivation and higher levels of WTC by many researchers is considered to be strong (e.g., MacIntyre, MacMaster, & Baker, 2003; MacIntyre et al., 2003b; Peng, 2007a; Yashima, 2013).

In this study, the achievement of academic or employment goals were strong motivators for all the participants. Three of them had an intrinsic desire to learn English for its own sake, two had a form of motivation which was based on a wish to integrate with the NZ community, while two had further study ambitions, and one wished to improve her employment prospects (see Table V.17, Appendix V). Their teachers were also impressed with their level of motivation although they recognised that Shirin, in particular, was less consistent in her attitude to study in Semester 2 and thus seemed to fluctuate both in her drive to learn and level of WTC. Hamad and Mossad in House's (2004) study were also examples of students whose levels of motivation and WTC increased or decreased over the five-week period of the investigation. On one hand, Hamad began with an intrinsic desire to learn English but then lost interest when he felt he had learned enough and even ceased to attend classes, whereas Mossad began with an instrumental motivation to pursue further studies in his country, which later translated into a more integrative purpose to improve his relations with members of the NZ community.

In comparison to my participants' attitudes to learning English in Iran, however, there was a marked increase in their desire and intention to learn in their NZ classroom (see Section 7.2.1 above). In the EFL environment of Peng's (2014) study in China (similar to that of Iran), she found an equal lack of interest in learning English expressed by two of her students, as well as their having purely exam-oriented attitudes. In another comparable context, Yue (2016) discovered all her five Chinese participants were focussed on instrumental academic goals. Nevertheless, among Peng's (2014) students there were still two individuals who had an intrinsic interest in learning English as well as employment goals. Therefore, it is likely

that “different dimensions of motivation may coexist within a student” (Peng, 2014, p. 124), so a combination of forces in dynamic interaction are more likely than MacIntyre et al.’s (1998) stable view of motivational factors affecting WTC. Indeed, at a later time, MacIntyre et al. (2011) refer to “a blurry continuum of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation” (p. 93). In addition, Syed (2016) remarked on the motivation of his participants as having both state and trait characteristics, depending on whether their goals were short or long-term. Thus, the picture of motivation in these qualitative studies of WTC is less clearly drawn as being dichotomous choices than may have been conceived by earlier theorists and researchers.

From the above discussion of factors influencing the participants’ WTC in their NZ classroom, it can be seen that the ‘pyramid’ model of MacIntyre et al. (1998) still forms a useful basis or stepping off point for exploring the reasons why particular variables are more or less important for the WTC of L2 learners. However, MacIntyre et al. (1998) themselves admitted: “We have not discussed every construct that might create variations in WTC. There may be additional variables that need to be added to the model or more circumscribed relationships that should be removed” (p. 559).

Certainly, when using qualitative thematic analysis of data, certain factors will be revealed as relevant to learners in specific contexts, which might not have been included in a pre-set questionnaire in quantitative studies. This focus on the *situational* nature of WTC was also suggested by MacIntyre et al. (1998): “... one’s communicative experience in one situation may not be transferred automatically to another, which, in turn, increases the perceived variability in L2 communication events and may generate different levels of WTC in various social situations” (p. 554). They saw their model as a stimulus for further research, which has clearly been the case from the volume of WTC studies being conducted from then until now. Although many are still quantitative investigations, the value of qualitative research appears to be in its ability to probe for *reasons* for the selection of specific variables related to certain individuals or groups of learners in their unique environments.

In terms of the usefulness of research into individual variables for the classroom teacher, perhaps Tudor’s (2001) advice is still relevant:

We can no longer assume that our students are ‘simply’ students, nor that they are bundles of discrete variables. They are complex human beings who bring with them to the classroom their own individual personality as it is at a given point in time, and this influences how they interact with what we do as teachers. (p. 14)

Therefore, Tudor (2001) recommends that teachers do not attempt to vary their teaching in response to a single variable but accommodate learner differences in a more holistic manner. Moreover, Gregersen and MacIntyre’s (2014) vision of a classroom as a “kaleidoscope” suggests that teachers “use the information emerging from emotion, cognition and behavior to understand and influence the ongoing stream of activity in the classroom” (p. 244). As a result, heightened awareness of the possible influences affecting the WTC of members of a particular language class is the possible ‘take-home’ benefit for teachers from such studies as this one.

7.2.3 Outside the classroom – Mesosystem – factors related to WTC

In Iran

As explained in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.3, opportunities for the three older participants in this study (Marjan, Sima, and Ramin) to demonstrate their WTC *outside* the English language classroom decreased dramatically after the 1979 Revolution, as the political climate became hostile to Western culture, languages, and business investments (Tavakoli & Tavakol, 2018). Previously, at least for wealthier families, there had been contact with English-speaking foreigners in Iran and their children often studied abroad (Farman Farmaian & Munker, 1992). The other seven younger participants would have had little access to English outside the classroom until the advent of satellite TV and the internet after the 1990s (Barraclough, 2001; Fathi, 2014; Zarrinabadi & Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, 2018). Although the youngest member of the study, Parinaz, reported a growing number of English-speaking tourists in Tehran, her home city, she felt her level of English was insufficient to communicate with them.

As there have been no WTC studies published in English by Iranian researchers before the last decade, it can only be suggested that the findings of Jamshidnejad (2010) would still be indicative of the period when my participants were learning English in Iran. He found that for his twelve students and four teachers in Iran, there was not “much opportunity to

communicate and therefore, their English speaking is not fluent nor proficient enough to use in real L2 interactions” (p. 19). Any interaction with native speakers of English is often impossible, and newspapers, movies, and internet sources are the only way they can practise their English, which does not count as oral communication. None of Taheryan and Ghonsooly’s (2014) three hundred English language students had ever lived or travelled abroad even though they were private language institute students and may have been financially better off than others. Tavakoli and Davoudi (2017) attribute this situation to Iran’s lack of response to the issues of “globalization and internationalization”, for which other countries “have seen English as the key” (p. 1510). In fact, using English outside the classroom can be construed in cultural terms as “showing off” (p. 1510).

Not all recent researchers paint such a gloomy picture, however, as in 2017, all of Zarrinabadi and Khodarahmi’s twenty participants from a private language institute reported that they had had interactions with native speakers of English. On the other hand, they were still concerned about being judged for having a poor accent, or conversely, regarded those who had excellent accents as possibly ‘showing off’ and thus did not want to speak with them. In addition, one at least of Zarrinabadi et al.’s (2019) ten participants stated that he “tried to learn and use English outside the class in home, the gym, or in the market” (p. 346). Finally, the thirty participants in Pourakbari et al.’s Phase 1 study in 2017 were studying in Isfahan, which has always been a very popular city for tourism, so they reported making a personal effort to practise their WTC with foreign visitors. Nevertheless, they regretted the fact that they had no foreign students or instructors at their university and, as the result of visa and financial issues, only one student had ever visited an English-speaking country, although fourteen had travelled to other destinations outside Iran.

In New Zealand

For my participants, who had left Iran to make their home permanently in a country where Farsi-speakers are a small minority, they had no choice but to communicate in English outside the classroom as they went about their daily lives in NZ.

In terms of the MacIntyre et al. (1998) model, their focus was on factors leading to WTC *inside* the classroom, and the realm of *outside* the classroom is only briefly mentioned in the concluding section devoted to suggestions for further research. A short time later,

MacIntyre et al. (2001) extended their investigation to include *out-of-class* WTC, and as a result of their study, they found that an interlocutor is necessary for authentic communication and thus social support is a key factor in developing WTC. However, they were not able to probe any further for reasons for this data as this was a purely quantitative scale-based investigation.

Later researchers into language ‘beyond the classroom’ have described the greater opportunities provided by living in an English-speaking country as ‘affordances’ (e.g., Menezes, 2011). She suggests that by employing research methods that “allow us to listen to our learners’ voices, we realize that learning experiences happen in different contexts rather than traditional classrooms” (p. 70). Moreover, “schools alone cannot gather all the necessary affordances for language development, and we must open our students’ eyes to the world around them” (Menezes, 2011, p. 71). Palfreyman (2011), in the same volume, stresses the importance of social resources outside the classroom, i.e., a learning community or social network comprising family, friends, and sympathetic interlocutors. However, Benson (2011) points out the obvious reason for the paucity of such research, which is that classroom teachers are often also the researchers, and their students’ life outside the classroom is “invisible” or “at least less easily accessed” (p. 8). Nevertheless, he suggested that a theory of language acquisition beyond the classroom may evolve in the future along with an increased volume of research in the field. Certainly by 2017, Reinders and Benson had added to the 2011 model of LBC (Learning Beyond the Classroom), and suggested a range of qualitative research methods including ethnographic observations, interviews, learning logs, and questionnaires to investigate this new area of SLA.

The situation for my Iranian participants *outside* their NZ English language classroom was perhaps not the same as for other migrant groups around the world who are able to locate themselves in a large expatriate community (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.4 above). Moreover, as mentioned above, unique factors pertaining to the WTC of this group of migrants were revealed that may not apply in other studies. In this case, the small size of their community, whether they had other family in NZ, how many English-speaking friends they had acquired, and how successful they were in carrying out formal interactions, were the main issues for their WTC as far as they were concerned. Overall, I asked the students to judge whether they felt more confident to speak English in or out of class. From Table V.18 (Appendix V), it

can be seen that five out of eight responders still felt higher levels of WTC in the safety of their classroom (see MacIntyre et al., 2001, for a similar result).

Other comparable studies into the WTC of migrants to NZ are very small in number, whether in or out of the classroom, but it seems important to try to compare 'like with like'. In Bellingham's (2005) case studies of five older (39-50s) East Asian migrants to NZ, she discovered that the three more advanced learners found opportunities in the outside community to speak with local people, sell in a street market, help in a child's school, and visit 'open homes', which were considered useful language practice strategies. My participants also reported mostly successful interactions with church friends, and in school and hospital negotiations, but mixed reactions from neighbours and casual contacts. It is clear that WTC can only be fostered when interlocutors in the community are receptive and welcoming. As Norton (2006, p. 96) has proposed: "While adult ESOL language learners may strive to make a productive contribution to their new societies, unless the host community is receptive to their arrival, they will struggle to fulfil their potential". In addition, specifically in reference to NZ, White, Watts, and TrIn (2002) state that "the commitment of the entire community is essential to the inclusion of immigrants in everyday life" (p. 160).

In addition, Zander (2016), who focussed her investigation of six migrants on their daily lives in the NZ community, learnt that their desire to communicate depended on context, receiver/interlocutor, and their own personality. Her participants as well as mine found it hard to make Kiwi (NZ L1 English) friends. Her participants attributed this failure to a lack of common ground, as well as cultural differences, which my participants also alluded to, suggesting that Kiwis do not want foreign friends (Neda, I1:162), and that it was hard to be accepted into their homes or private lives (Marjan, I1:32). Moreover, Zhong's (2013) Chinese migrants to NZ had little need to make any contacts outside their classroom because they lived in a high enclosure community which provided for most of their requirements, so their WTC in English was not necessary. Overall, the members of all these NZ migrant studies lacked a high level of integration into their new country of adoption, which my students at least seemed to regret.

As suggested in the discussion above, investigations into WTC *outside* the classroom boundaries are still developing, particularly those using qualitative methods. Benson (2011),

and Reinders and Benson (2017), among other theorists and researchers, have been laying the parameters for this new area of SLA research and suggesting appropriate methodological approaches. Section 7.2.3 (above) of my study would fall within the scope of this theory and procedure as well as the *mesosystemic* layer of Section 7.4.1 (below). Nevertheless, further research is warranted into the real-life interactions English language students need to take part in, particularly in a migration situation, where permanent solutions need to be found for all problems, even though these events may be much more difficult to monitor than those *inside* the classroom. My use of interviews could be supplemented by the participants recording their own out-of-class encounters or keeping learner diaries. However, in the WTC field, it seems that *virtual* interactions are becoming an increasingly popular focus for investigators, perhaps because digital observation is more accessible than in the past (e.g., Alm, 2016; Ockert, 2015; Reinders & Wattana, 2015).

Contribution of study related to Section 7.2

In terms of pedagogy, it is perhaps easier for a teacher in a country where the target language is the primary language spoken outside the classroom to bring elements of this culture, and everyday practices of the outside community, into the classroom. Thus, it may be possible to familiarise the students with some of the encounters they might find themselves in, and, as a result, increase their WTC. Zander (2016) suggests that:

... diverting more of the focus towards pragmatic competence and strategic skills in an ESOL class may help migrants close this perceived gap [between themselves and their new society] and so support the integration process. Further, instruction of this type would support the development of *situational WTC* and *perceived fluency* when the migrant has left the safety of the ESOL classroom. (p. 71)

Benson (2011) also recommends moving the 'locus of control' from the teacher to the student so that they develop a greater level of autonomy, which will transfer to their activities *outside* the classroom where they need to make their own decisions. Certainly, from a learning point of view, there are also a large number of digital resources available now for students to take more responsibility for their own language learning progress *outside* the classroom.

7.3 Individual trajectories of WTC over time and context

Having established the individual variables which affected the WTC of the participants in this study and the reasons they gave for these choices (see Section 7.2 above), it became clear that these were not always stable and unchanging but could vary in response to changes in time and context. Therefore, from a theoretical point of view, this aspect of the study relates to the ongoing debate among researchers and theorists as to whether WTC itself, or the antecedents which influence this phenomenon, either positively or negatively, are situational or the result of individual trait characteristics (see Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1 above).

Unlike many previous studies which have focussed solely on variations in classroom WTC over a single lesson or a couple of semesters, my findings showed the fluctuations in my participants' WTC in English over an extended time period, e.g., from the 1990s in Iran to 2014 in NZ. Such a change in a temporal and geographical context has been rarely investigated so far in this area of research. Despite some similarities in the participants' past and present educational experiences and their status as relatively new migrants to NZ, their WTC trajectories were largely individual in nature, although some common patterns could be attributed to a change in curriculum, and a consistently high level of WTC which matched the very confident personality of the most able student. Although other researchers have come to similar conclusions, the reasons for this stability or fluctuation are likely to be unique to my participants in this specific context.

From a theoretical point of view, the application of the principles of Dynamic Systems Theory (see Chapter 2, Section 2.4.2 above) to WTC research is still uncommon, although the notion of WTC as a 'dynamic' variable or construct has been suggested more frequently. Therefore, my discussion of the findings of this aspect of my study in these terms (see Section 7.3.5 below) provides another dimension to the situational vs. trait WTC debate. Certainly, I found evidence in my data of attractor and repeller states, threshold effects, non-linearity and feedback sensitivity, which could combine and interact to create a 'dynamic' fluctuation in the participants' WTC in the classroom. On the other hand, some stability was also noted when WTC became an *attractor* state for highly confident and motivated students, or a *repeller* state after a discouraging experience with classroom

teachers. Such variation is also a feature of a dynamic system, but the role of context is so important that both trait and situational WTC cannot be predicted or generalised beyond the scope of the present investigation.

As a result, following Larsen-Freeman and L. Cameron's (2008a) suggestion that the focus of dynamic systems (DST) research should be on change rather than the variables themselves, seeking linkages across timescales, and the investigation of both stability and variability, this aspect of my study focussed on the 'bigger picture' of the participants' WTC as recorded and observed over an extended period of time. Moreover, Larsen-Freeman and L. Cameron (2008a) advised that overall ecological validity should be ensured by "including context(s) as part of the investigation" (p. 241). In fact, in ecosystems terms, the participants in this study are moving from the context of *meso-* to *microsystem*, while under the influence of *exo-* and *macrosystems* and the overarching dimension of time – the *chronosystem* (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5.2 above; and Section 7.4 below).

Indeed, time and context are the key aspects of WTC as discussed in this Section 7.3 below. The order of the following subsections (7.3.1 – 7.3.4) replicates that of the Findings Chapter 5, moving from the context of Iran to NZ, and from one timescale to another in NZ. Where possible, in all sections, I suggest reasons for any changes in levels of WTC and discuss these findings in regard to those of previous empirical researchers. Finally, in Section 7.3.5, I outline the overall trajectories for the participants' WTC during the period of the investigation and present the contribution of this section of the study to theory, method, and pedagogy.

In this section, it should be noted that so far only a few WTC researchers have applied dynamics systems theory directly to their studies, so where applicable, I have made comparisons with other investigations which examine similar 'dynamic' variations in WTC.

7.3.1 Participants' levels of WTC in Iran

For this aspect of the study, I collected and analysed the data from the students' responses to the first questionnaire (Appendix A), which posed questions about the level of WTC they experienced in a range of classroom communication situations in Iran. By allocating a possible maximum score of 21 to their responses I was able to determine their levels of WTC

in Iran in comparison to each other, and later compare this result to their WTC in NZ (see Chapter 5, Table 5.2). Information gained from my interview questions about their English language learning experiences in Iran was added to these data.

My findings were that for the participants who professed to have low or medium levels of WTC in Iran (three and six students respectively), lack of opportunity to speak English, either in or out of class at the time they were at school or university (1980s and early 2000s), was a primary factor in lowering their WTC. As the number of tourists or English-speaking workers in foreign companies reduced dramatically after the Revolution of 1979, it was unlikely that they would ever have met another person with whom to practise their class-learned English (Dahmardeh, 2009; Zarrinabadi & Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, 2018; see also Chapter 2, Section 2.5.3 above; and Section 7.4.1 below). Moreover, teachers of English in Iran were either not familiar with communicative language teaching techniques or felt constrained by curriculum demands (Razmjoo, 2007). Other influences on WTC mentioned by these two groups as negative factors were personal shyness and lack of enjoyment and motivation, while on the positive side, teacher encouragement to ask questions and having an extravert personality fostered a greater desire to communicate. The one participant with a high self-rated level of WTC in her English language classroom in Iran was Marjan, who, because of her age (she was 59 in 2015), may have experienced a more communicative teaching approach in pre-Revolution times, but also displayed a lifelong interest in the language, which was not affected by changing political circumstances.

As a means of comparison, other researchers into WTC using a dynamic systems perspective have incorporated past language learning experiences into their qualitative findings. Although some reported only negative effects on present WTC (Eddy-U, 2015; Syed, 2016), Yashima et al. (2018), in their examination of WTC on different timescales for Japanese university students, found that, for one of their three participants, her Study Abroad (SA) experience positively enhanced her trait WTC, while for another it had no noticeable effect. Moreover, Yue (2016) described three of her five Chinese university cases as having unhappy experiences in their previous English language classrooms, which negatively influenced their present WTC behaviour, whereas parental encouragement and teacher support created a positive trajectory for a fourth student. In addition, King's (2013a) investigation into the silence (or unWTC) of Japanese L2 classrooms revealed that two

students, as a result of their extensive SA experience, felt discomfited when their other classmates showed a reluctance to speak English, and a third, due to her profound lack of self-confidence throughout her schooling, used large classes to hide from her teachers' questions. Thus, even though negative past experiences may have present effects on WTC, it is by no means inevitable. In fact, King (2013a) warns against such conclusions, as "a complexity perspective teaches us to be wary of what at first glance appears logical, linear, cause-effect reasoning" (p. 125).

As with the studies discussed above, for my investigation I mostly used qualitative methods when interviewing the participants about their previous language learning history in the context of Iran. However, while Syed (2016) and Yashima et al. (2018) only administered scales to determine *present* levels of WTC, the questionnaires (Appendix A) completed by my participants also provided me with information about their *past* impressions of their WTC. Even though this could be considered a fairly rough quantitative measure, it tallied quite closely with the data from the interviews. In fact, so far none of the commonly used WTC scales include questions about past WTC, but rather the present or a notional future (see also Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2 above). Future researchers could employ such mixed methods to support their interviews or ask students to write about their past language learning experiences in focussed essays (see MacIntyre et al., 2011; Zarrinabadi, 2014).

For teachers, some understanding of the educational experiences which their students have previously undergone may explain their present level of WTC. Classroom discussions about different countries' systems of language education, or opportunities to write comparisons of their past and present classrooms may reveal the *complete interconnectedness* of "the multiple and interrelated factors influencing a language learner's behaviour", which is one of the central tenets of DST (King, 2013a, p. 113).

In fact, past experience of language learning, whether negative or positive, has long been considered a factor affecting WTC (see MacIntyre et al., 1998), and in dynamic systems terms a key element is the tracking of components of the system (here WTC) as they change over time (see also Section 7.4.1 below). On this topic, Larsen-Freeman and L. Cameron (2008b) suggest that:

Systems and behavior can, of course, be described retrospectively, after change has happened, and this is the central work of a complexity theory approach. What we can observe in language development is what has already changed – the trajectory of the system. (pp. 201–202)

7.3.2 Participants' levels of WTC in NZ in S1

Three data sources were used to provide evidence for this section of the study: WTC questionnaires for the students and similar questionnaires for their teachers about their impressions of the students' levels of WTC, interviews with both groups, and my observations in their S1 English language learning classrooms. From the questionnaire results I once again allocated the students to low, medium, and high level WTC groups (see Chapter 5, Table 5.3). As might be expected from the fairly negative picture they drew of their L2 educational experiences in Iran, more of the participants moved to a higher level of WTC in NZ, although Parinaz with her shy personality (see Section 7.3.1 above) remained in the low band. From her two teachers' point of view, this was an accurate picture of Parinaz's level of classroom WTC. They agreed that she was a hardworking and able student, but her lack of confidence held her back. In groups however, she held her own as I also observed (see Chapter 6, Section 6.3 above).

Two students who noticeably increased in their levels of WTC in S1 in NZ were Abraham and Sima. My observation in Abraham's class supported his teacher's opinion that he was a very good communicator, although he could dominate the class if given a chance (see Chapter 6, Section 6.2 above). Sima was also an active participant in her class but interacted well with other classmates of different nationalities, according to my observation. The other students in the medium level group felt their WTC had remained steady from their time in Iran, although Azadeh and Ramin saw an increase in their WTC over the length of the semester in NZ. They were husband and wife but chose not to sit together in class, which may have given them more chance to display their WTC with other classmates. In addition, Neda and Tina, who were also in this group, described a growing confidence in speaking English as they attended their NZ classes. Neda, in particular, after an unhappy experience with her previous NZ teacher, now felt more willing to ask questions if she did not understand, although she regularly chose to sit next to other Farsi speakers, which her teacher felt was

detrimental to her speaking opportunities. According to Tina's teacher, she also relaxed more over the semester although she was less confident than the other four Iranians in the class (Shirin, Ramin, Azadeh, and Golnaz).

In the high band Marjan also maintained her place, while Shirin and Golnaz joined her there from their medium WTC level position in Iran. However, Shirin's level of WTC, in her view and her teachers', was not consistently high, but fluctuated because of her shyness to speak at times when she felt concerned about her grammatical accuracy. In contrast, Golnaz was always eager to contribute in class and was not at all concerned about making mistakes.

Therefore, in S1 in NZ, issues of shyness, personality, relationship with teachers, and who they sat next to in class, all had an effect on the levels of WTC experienced by the participants in this study. Moreover, an increase in levels of WTC from Iran to NZ was only felt to be the case for some, although most observed a growing level of confidence by the end of this first semester.

7.3.3 Participants' levels of WTC in NZ in S2

In S2 in their NZ class, two students described a drop in their level of WTC to the lower band. In Abraham's case it was a change in the focus to a more academic curriculum, which provided fewer speaking opportunities, although his teacher and I (as an observer) considered his WTC still to be at a high level. Shirin, on the other hand, attributed this drop in WTC to her less positive relationship with her new teacher, and a reduced level of confidence in her ability to speak. Shirin's teacher also described her classroom WTC behaviour as *up and down* (TA11:54), but an incident involving a plagiarism accusation may have contributed to this feeling of discomfort.

As there was no questionnaire data in S2 from the students for the medium WTC level group, I based my findings on the interview data with both students and their teachers and my observations. In this semester, Parinaz stated that she had increased in confidence (possibly because of her job), which was supported by my observation, as well as her teacher's opinion, although group work was still a more comfortable environment for her. Tina and Neda remained at this medium level in S2, with Tina also advocating group work as the best opportunity she had to practise her WTC. Neda, however, as well as Tina and

Golnaz could have been hampered by their choice to sit next to other Farsi speakers, which reduced the actual amount of time they spoke English in class. Neda's teacher, though, saw her attachment to another very extravert Iranian student as possibly being a source of encouragement. The other factors which may have increased their WTC in S2 were a job for Parinaz and a better relationship with her teacher for Neda.

At the highest level of WTC in S2, there were now four students (as opposed to one in Iran and three in S1 in NZ), two of whom (Azadeh and Ramin) attributed their sharp increase to a greater level of self-confidence (see Chapter 5, Table 5.2 & 5.3). Ramin's opinion coincided with that of his teacher, and she added that, although his ability did not match his level of confidence, his WTC allowed him to successfully *get his message across* (TA11:12). Sima's teacher, on the other hand, gave a higher estimation of her WTC than Sima did herself. When I observed Sima's class, I gained the same impression, so based on these data and the teacher's answers to the questionnaire, I placed Sima in the high band of WTC for this semester. The final member of this high level group was once again Marjan, who showed a consistent overall level of WTC from Iran to S2 in NZ, although she herself could still see improvement in her level of self-assurance in speaking English.

Thus, in S2 in NZ, similar factors as in S1 were influences on the participants' WTC, i.e., personality, self-confidence, curriculum, teachers, classroom seating choices, as well as outside opportunities for practice such as jobs. While some students dropped in their professed levels of WTC, eight out of ten stayed the same or increased.

7.3.4 Participants' levels of WTC in NZ in the third semester of the study

For a third semester of the study, I was able to continue to track the WTC trajectories of four of the participants. Although I did not administer any further questionnaires, I re-interviewed the students and some of their teachers to determine any changes in their WTC.

Azadeh and Ramin were still pursuing the same course, now a pre-university academic preparation course. Although they both appeared to be progressing in their confidence and WTC, their teacher differentiated between them, describing Azadeh as anxious and needy and asking many questions, but acknowledging that her assertiveness showed a level of

bravery (TAI2:12). Ramin, on the other hand, she considered to be quite willing to speak although his proficiency in English still did not equal his level of confidence (TAI2:30).

The other two students which I tracked for a third semester were Golnaz and Tina, who had progressed to a higher level than Azadeh's and Ramin's class. This class was quite different in content and delivery from their previous English language learning classes, as the papers were more related to English literature and delivered in large lecture-type situations. Many of their fellow students were native speakers of English and there was little opportunity for group work or speaking in class. Tina felt the class was too big for them to ask questions of the teacher and she was embarrassed about speaking English in front of her native speaker classmates. As a result, both Golnaz and Tina reported a sharp drop in their levels of WTC and they mainly communicated with each other in Farsi.

7.3.5 Variations in participants' WTC trajectories over time and context

As is described in detail in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.5 above, each participant had an idiosyncratic WTC trajectory over the period covered by the study (see Chapter 5, Table 5.4 and Figure 5.1). Only two participants (Ramin, and Sima) showed a steady rise in WTC from their time in their Iranian classroom to their final class in NZ, and one a consistently high score throughout (Marjan). On the other hand, Parinaz remained quite low in comparison to the other participants, due to her greater lack of self-confidence.

Abraham and Shirin, however, fluctuated more in their levels of WTC, possibly because of their stronger emotional reactions to changes in circumstances and relationships with their teachers. Neda was also affected by a negative past experience with a teacher but kept to a steady level of WTC throughout.

Azadeh followed a similar trajectory to her husband, Ramin, but did not quite reach his level of confidence, whereas Golnaz and Tina followed a similar path of WTC, which in the third semester dipped considerably due to the nature and content of their course.

In summary, the reasons for variations in the participants' WTC ranged from a lack of speaking opportunities in Iran, as well as personality as either a negative or positive influence; and in NZ, levels of self-confidence, teachers' behaviour, group work availability, and being seated next to other Farsi speakers in their classrooms.

Other researchers who based their studies on the principles of DST, have also explored variations in levels of their participants' WTC, as outlined above in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.3 and Section 2.4.4. Unlike my study, most have used a variety of *idiodynamic* tools to measure these moment-to-moment fluctuations in WTC during classroom events at a *microsystemic* level (e.g., Kamprasertwong, 2010; King, 2013b; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011; Mulvaney, 2015; Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2016; Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2014, 2017; Pawlak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2015; Pawlak, Mystkowska-Wiertelak, & Bielak, 2016; Syed, 2016; Yashima, et al., 2016; Yashima et al., 2018). The focus of my investigation was over a longer period of time, and the use of repeated interviews with the participants and their teachers enabled me to determine any possible reasons for these changes. However, some of these studies revealed factors which the researchers felt were influential even during the short periods of these classroom events.

For example, Kamprasertwong (2010), an early researcher into WTC using DST as a basis for her study, after conducting stimulated recall type interviews with her participants, identified physiological causes for variations in WTC, such as tiredness; external variables, such as the topics set for discussion; and cultural influences, which meant her Thai subjects, who she suggested were inhibited by their manners and natural introversion, participated less than the Chinese or Dutch. Such personality differences were also noticeable in my study, with the participant with the lowest WTC level overall (Parinaz) having the shyest personality. However, these variations may be individual rather than cultural differences, as overall, it was suggested by one of the participants, Marjan, that Iranians were more talkative in class than other nationalities (I1:102).

In a similar way, MacIntyre and Legatto's (2011) Canadian participants were asked to explain their self-ratings of WTC after their speaking tasks in French as an L2 were completed. They found that "the respondents most often attributed falling WTC to the inability to find L2 vocabulary items" (p. 164). Shirin in my study expressed the same feeling of shyness when the correct grammar forms escaped her (I1:4). MacIntyre and Legatto see this as evidence that WTC is a dynamic system because "the affective system exerted a strong influence on linguistic performance" (p. 165). They also saw data which were consistent with the notion of an *attractor state*, in that a high-scoring student on their WTC scale never experienced fluctuations or a low level of WTC during the tasks. As for my

participants, Marjan was an equally consistent high scorer, as was Parinaz a consistently low scorer, both according to their own estimations, as well as those of their teachers and my observations. On the other hand, threshold effects (*the butterfly effect*) caused some of MacIntyre and Legatto's subjects to give up the task due to an excess of anxiety, while another managed to recover and found ways of coping with the task and the anxiety it had been causing her. Equally, although over a longer period, Abraham experienced periods of anxiety, which caused his levels of WTC to fluctuate, while Sima, who generally rated herself as less competent than her teachers did, overcame her initial lack of confidence in speaking and continued to gain in self-assurance throughout my investigation.

Moreover, King (2013a) in the qualitative section of his study in Japan, with a focus on unWTC, used retrospective interviews like those of Kamprasertwong (2010) and MacIntyre and Legatto (2011) to establish that, in one student's case (Nao), both learner-internal aspects such as lack of interest, as well as external features such as a strictly controlling teacher, combined in "an interconnected dynamic system to produce a relatively stable attractor state of silence" (p. 140). A teacher's negative or positive influence on a student's WTC was remarked on by Shirin, Neda, and Abraham in my study, and like one of King's (2013a) participants (Yuri), this antecedent of WTC was capable of fluctuation in different environments. Moreover, Jiro, in King's (2013a) study, kept silent under the peer pressure of his sports club teammates in a similar, but opposite, way to the attraction to speaking Farsi with their classmates which was experienced by Tina and Golnaz, as discussed in Section 7.3.1 above. From the DST perspective, King mentions the "multiple, interconnected, concurrent variables" (p. 150) at play which affected the predominant silence (in his study), and it seems clear that these also affected my participants' WTC.

Stimulated recall interviews were also used by Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2015), in which their Polish participants could comment on the reasons for their levels of WTC after their paired ten-minute discussions. Even over such a short period, their self-rated WTC fluctuated and the factors that appeared to affect their inclination to speak were the topic, the interlocutor, and the presence of the teacher, as well as individual variables such as mood, personality, distressing outside events, personality, and motivation. Therefore, the findings were similar to those of my study, although my investigation took place over a much longer range of time (see also Section 7.2 above). Pawlak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak

suggest that in accord with the claims of dynamic systems theories, learners' WTC is affected by a multitude of influences, which are "intricately interwoven, interact in unpredictable ways and are often themselves in a state of flux" (p. 8). It is interesting to note that in 2016 when Mystkowska-Wiertelak extended the length of her study to a whole semester of seven classroom discussions, once again the interlocutor, and topics and tasks set for group discussion were the main causes of rises and falls in her participants' WTC. Such variables were discussed above in Section 7.2 as also having importance for my participants.

In order to explore a greater range of possible influences on both trait and situational WTC from a CDST (Complex Dynamic Systems Theory) point of view, Yashima et al. (2018) expanded their methodology to observations, student self-reflections, and interviews over a period of a semester, as well as anxiety and WTC scales. They regard WTC as a phenomenon which can be conceptualised from a CDST viewpoint as being on different timescales: 'ontogenetic' (for trait WTC) as opposed to 'microgenetic' (for situated WTC) (see Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, L., 2008a, p. 169). However, they also propose that learners' state WTC in the classroom is the result of interactions with their trait WTC developed from past learning experiences (see Section 7.3.1 above).

In this 2018 article, Yashima et al. chose to report on the WTC of three Japanese university students with high, moderate, and low levels of classroom oral participation. Taki, who demonstrated high levels of trait WTC, which the researchers attributed to her personality and overseas English language experience, behaved in a manner similar to Marjan in my study, who despite her trait self-confidence in English, also felt a sense of responsibility to engage others in group discussion and avoid monopolising the floor. Indeed, Marjan's teacher specifically remarked on her role as a facilitator in group work (TJEI2:16) (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2 above). Nachi, in Yashima et al.'s study, demonstrated a natural inclination to communicate but had a low level of perceived competence (SPCC), yet overcame this when given enough time to prepare. Sima had a comparable attitude to Nachi, because throughout the year of my study she had a low estimation of her ability in English, while her teacher ranked her quite highly (see Chapter 4, 4.2.2 above). In addition, both Nachi and Sima demonstrated elevated levels of trait anxiety about speaking English in class (see Chapter 4, 4.2.2 above). Yashima et al.'s third participant, Oto, demonstrated the

same trait level of shyness as evidenced by Parinaz, and a similar type of anxiety to Shirin, who hesitated before speaking just in case she made a grammatical mistake (see this Section 7.3.1 above). Overall, in their study as well as mine, from a CDST perspective, there was an “underlying influence of enduring learner characteristics ... as well as the dynamically changing intra- and inter-personal, and many other contextual factors” (Yashima et al., 2018, p. 132).

Finally, when Syed applied the Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) framework to his investigation into the WTC of six Pakistani business students, he identified a range of contextual, linguistic, psychological, and physiological factors, which he felt showed “interconnectedness and interdependence in the sense that a change in a variable caused changes in other related variables” (as reported in Syed & Kuzborska, in press, p. 14 of 20). Other aspects of DST were revealed in his examination of WTC as a phenomenon: dynamism, non-linearity, sensitive dependence on initial conditions, feedback sensitivity, self-organisation, and attractor and repeller states (Syed, 2016, p. 276).

For example, non-linear interaction between variables was demonstrated by Zubair in Syed’s (2016) study, who, despite his higher trait-like L2 proficiency, displayed a lower level of WTC in class. There was a similar contradiction between Shirin’s very high self-rated WTC score in S1 in NZ and a decided drop in S2, which she attributed to a deterioration in her relationship with her teacher. Umair’s feeling well prepared for a discussion topic in class was an example given by Syed of dependence on initial conditions, which led to a higher level of WTC (Syed, 2016, p. 204). Shirin, in my study described her experience in her class in Iran:

*... when teacher she told us and last, next week I ask you something and **if I was learning or studying at the day before I want to go to class and I feel ready, it was really good, but if suddenly she ask us something and I didn't know it was really hard for me.** (11:46)*

As for feedback sensitivity, in Syed’s study, he felt that underlying variables constantly reacted to the actions of other related variables. For example, Umair reacted negatively to his teacher’s perceived lack of patience (Syed, 2016, p. 186), in the same way as Neda had done in my study when the teacher suggested that she should understand immediately and ask a question no more than one time (12:96). Syed also found evidence for self-organisation

in his participants' L2 WTC, which involved a shift "from attractor state to repeller states [or the reverse] as a result of dynamic and non-linear interaction of underlying variables" (p. 183). This explained why at the beginning of one lesson, Umair lacked confidence, but as it progressed and the teacher raised his level of motivation, his participation and WTC increased (p. 184). In my observation of Tina and Golnaz's class in S2 in NZ, they initially took no part in the whole class discussion, but later as they moved to work in groups to prepare their oral presentation, they were very active and showed a high level of WTC (O2: fieldnotes). However, as Larsen-Freeman observes, in a dynamic system, self-organisation is not a "once-and-for-all process", therefore periods of organisation and disorganisation will continue to occur due to its feedback sensitive nature (2011, p. 51).

Contribution of study related to Section 7.3

Therefore, in terms of theory, WTC may indeed be a good candidate for the label of a dynamic system, as the various components as outlined above can be identified in the communication behaviours of the participants in these researchers' as well as my studies. However, so far, other investigations have focussed primarily on the classroom *microsystem*, where moment-by-moment fluctuations in WTC are measured. Past levels of WTC in previous classes or countries of residence have not been the main topic of study, although the investigation of multiple timescales is an accepted feature of DST research methodology. In fact, Larsen-Freeman and L. Cameron (2008b) suggest "it is important when we are conducting research within a complex systems approach that we seek to find relationships within and across different levels and timescales" (p. 205). As a result, my longitudinal study over an extended time period and multiple contexts has a contribution to make to the breadth of present research into the applicability of DST to WTC investigations.

As for my choice of methodology, a primarily qualitative approach using interviews and observations over repeated intervals, as well as supporting data from student participants with their teachers' views, provided a range of evidence to draw on when reporting my findings. Such methods were also used by the DST researchers discussed above in this Section 7.3.1, in addition to the *idiodynamic*, moment-by-moment student self-ratings, which they admitted could be intrusive and not part of an authentic classroom experience (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011; Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2017). The descriptive statistics I used from WTC questionnaires to create low, medium, and high level groups,

although supported by qualitative data, could be criticised as a rough measure, but have also been used by other researchers such as Cao (2009a), Peng (2014), and Yashima et al. (2018) to select cases for closer qualitative study. Divisions between the groups could be considered arbitrary but this provided an organisational tool with which to compare the participants. Overall, the method used for this study seemed to satisfy one of Larsen-Freeman and L. Cameron's (2008b) recommendations for DST research, which is "a longitudinal, case-study, time-series approach, which enables connections to be made across levels and timescales" (p. 208).

From a pedagogical point of view, it may seem that understanding learners from a DST perspective, merely emphasises the complex nature of the individual trajectories that each is following in their classroom WTC behaviour, from more distant past to present, and minute to minute. However, as Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014) assert, although no two patterns for learners are the same, they make sense from a dynamic systems perspective (p. 244). They encourage teachers to be open to "the kaleidoscope of people in the classroom, taking note of the patterns that are forming and the forces that cause those patterns to change" (p. 244).

7.4 Examination of two WTC case studies using an ecosystems framework

The aim of this part of the study was to provide a means of illustrating the interconnected nature of the individual variables influencing WTC, as presented in Chapters 4 and 5, and discussed in Sections 7.2 and 7.3 above. Therefore, a holistic picture could be drawn of two individuals with apparently contrasting levels of WTC in the context of not only their NZ English language classroom, but also the wider world of the outside NZ community, as well as their past lives in Iran.

Thus, as a theoretical background to this section, I selected the nested ecosystems of Bronfenbrenner (1979), originally conceived in regard to education, but further extended to second language acquisition by theorists and researchers such as van Lier (2004) and Mercer (2016) (see Chapter 2, Sections 2.5.1 & 2.5.2, for further detailed discussion of this theory and framework). In particular, the *exo*- and *macro*-levels or layers of the framework were worthy of further investigation as there have been few studies so far to report on these aspects of a learner's WTC. At this point in time (late 2019), to my knowledge, only Cao

(2009a), Peng (2014), and Elahi Shirvan and Taherian (2016) have used the full ecosystems framework for their WTC studies, and the limitations of their studies meant their focus was primarily on the *microsystem* of the language classroom.

In this study, diagrammatic representations of WTC in an ecosystems framework (Chapter 6, Figure 6.1) and individual frameworks for the two selected case studies (Appendices AA & BB) provide a new contribution to this area of scholarship, although it has to be acknowledged that any graphic depiction of such a complex phenomenon has limitations when trying to portray the interconnections between the various systems.

The key findings of this area of the study show that for the two participants, Abraham and Parinaz, when their cases were examined in detail in regard to all levels of the ecosystem, there were both similar and dissimilar factors which influenced their WTC. However, despite their shared nationality and common language, and their status as new migrants in an English-speaking country, the overall difference in their personalities (Abraham was very outgoing and confident while Parinaz was shy and self-deprecating) seemed to be the most significant feature to be revealed in this investigation.

While at the *mesosystemic* level they shared a lack of motivation and interest in learning and speaking English in Iran, they both reported successful efforts to communicate in English in the social and work environment outside the class in NZ, which could have had a positive influence on their *in-class* WTC. In this *microsystem* of their NZ classroom, they regarded their relationship with their teacher as important, but Parinaz, with her shy personality, saw the importance of group work as fostering her WTC, whereas Abraham's natural extraversion enabled him to confidently present his views to the class as a whole. At the *exosystemic* level the two participants both felt their classroom WTC was negatively affected at times by the external events which took place in their lives, but, on the other hand, support from the church (Abraham) and a spouse (Parinaz) could offset these difficulties and restore their confidence. The nature and content of educational curricula in both Iran and NZ could also be regarded as components of the *exosystem* which are out of the direct control of the participants. In fact, Abraham and Parinaz expressed their dissatisfaction with the methods and textbooks of their teachers of English in Iran, although only Abraham continued to find this a handicap to his WTC in NZ, i.e., in his previous school

and when his classes took a more 'academic' turn. Thus, these *exosystemic* influences once again had an effect on their classroom behaviour. Finally, in the overarching *macrosystem*, although the two participants could have shared similar past cultural experiences in Iran and now a new experience living as migrants in NZ, they emphasised different aspects of their lives as having an influence on their WTC according to their individual circumstances.

Abraham felt his past WTC, in and out of class, was negatively affected by his experiences in post-Revolution Iran (1979 onwards), when the importance of English was superseded by Arabic and tourism declined. However, his social class meant he could attend university and continue his English studies. In NZ, while his affiliation to a church increased his opportunities to speak English with other migrants, he found it difficult to make contact with locals. Parinaz, however, was twelve years younger than Abraham and possibly because of a change in the political climate in Iran, she made little comment about the past and was more focussed on her future in NZ. Although she had not yet made English-speaking friends, she saw the advantages enjoyed by her husband, who was a long-term resident and had developed a good command of English through his WTC with workmates. Both Abraham and Parinaz shared strong life goals to obtain employment in NZ, which is another element of the *macrosystem* which relies on a high level of WTC. One aspect of their behaviour at the cultural level, which is perhaps contentious from an identity point of view, was their decision not to speak their L1 (Farsi) in class, and, in Abraham's case, to avoid sitting with other Iranians in class, and not to associate with any members of the local Iranian community outside the class. These were choices they made which they felt increased their opportunities to speak English as often as possible and thereby increase their WTC, but from a sociolinguistic point of view might warrant further examination.

Thus, the findings of this aspect of the study demonstrate the value of a comprehensive examination of individual case studies using the ecosystems framework. Moreover, the detailed exploration of the factors which affected the participants' WTC at the *exo-* and *macro-*levels added an important dimension to the holistic depiction of their overall inclinations to communicate in English. Although the attribution of the various factors influencing the WTC of these two participants to the different ecosystemic levels could be considered arbitrary, it should be borne in mind that the emphasis is on the interrelationships between the levels of contexts and the individual. Moreover, it only

represents the situation as perceived by the members of the study at the time of the investigation so any future research may reveal different results even for the same participants. Nevertheless, this partially fulfils Bronfenbrenner's (1989) notion of a *chronosystem*, which encompasses the experiences of a whole lifetime.

In Sections 7.4.1-7.4.4 below, I compare and contrast the WTC of the two participants, Abraham and Parinaz, in the four layers of the ecosystems framework, discuss these findings in regard to those of previous empirical researchers, and then present the contribution of this section of the study to theory, method, and pedagogy.

7.4.1 Mesosystem of Abraham and Parinaz

At this level there were three aspects of the two participants' lives which were examined for their *mesosystemic* influences on their WTC: their past English language learning experiences in Iran, and their activities outside the class both in Iran and NZ. In theoretical terms, the *mesosystem* focuses on the interface or connections between several settings or contexts within which the individual operates (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Despite the twelve-year gap in their ages, Abraham and Parinaz had similar educational experiences in Iran in regard to learning English. They both lacked motivation to speak, which they attributed to poor teaching methods, their own lack of interest, and concerns about diminished self-esteem if they made mistakes in front of their classmates. Outside the class in Iran, Parinaz had more opportunity than Abraham to use her English with visiting tourists, but she was hampered by her natural shyness. In Abraham's time such visitors were rare but, based on his eagerness to communicate with other nationalities in NZ, his extravert nature might have meant he would have taken greater advantage of any chance he had to speak in English with foreigners in Iran.

In the NZ community, Abraham certainly made the most of any chances he had to demonstrate his WTC, joining a church and a variety of clubs, and rejecting the company of other Iranians. Whereas he lived alone and thus was more exposed to English on a daily basis, Parinaz was married and maintained some contact with the local Iranian community. However, she very quickly got a job in NZ when she first arrived and was able to raise her level of confidence in speaking English despite her negative experiences in Iran.

Thus, both of these two participants overcame their previous reluctance to speak English in Iran, and their more positive experiences outside the class in NZ combined to have a likely effect on their behaviour in the NZ classroom at the *microsystemic* level.

The only comparable study (published in English), which provides present day insight into the WTC of Iranian students in Iran when viewed from the ecosystems perspective, is presented in Elahi Shirvan and Taherian's (2016) report. Although more than a decade or two has passed since Abraham and Parinaz were learning English in Iran, five out of six of Elahi Shirvan and Taherian's (2016) participants at a private English institute also described negative classroom experiences which impacted on their WTC. For example, Maryam had been ridiculed by classmates for her mistakes when speaking English in high school, which now made her anxious and reluctant to speak. Although Parinaz, in my study, did not mention any actual incidents, she was worried that any question she might have asked would make her look stupid, while Abraham thought his classmates would laugh if he made a mistake. In this Iranian study, Shadi was also frightened of losing face and being negatively judged by her peers. However, Elahi Shirvan and Taherian found that extra activities such as discussion classes at private institutes, while nerve-wracking, increased their participants' WTC. As these were voluntary, the participants may have been more highly motivated to speak and thus overcame their natural reluctance and embarrassment.

In Cao's (2009a) PhD investigation of Study Abroad students at a NZ university, she found that the efforts made by two of her participants outside the classroom environment to speak English also had a positive effect on their in-class WTC. Like Abraham, Jun socialised with international friends, as well as practising his English with his homestay family, while Cai-Wei continued to meet up with her non-Chinese classmates after class. Takuya, however, was disappointed that he was unable to extend his opportunities to speak English with his fellow students to after-class situations as had done previously in Japan. As for their previous educational experiences, Yi-Yun's reluctance to speak in his NZ class was attributed to the 'keep quiet and listen to the teacher' philosophy he brought with him from Taiwan. Ines, on the other hand, was disappointed not to be taking part in the kind of extra group work outside the class she had been accustomed to in France.

Moreover, Peng (2014) reported that two students in her PhD study in a Chinese university who displayed low levels of WTC in their English classes had problems with self-esteem, based on previous negative educational experiences related to speaking English. This could also have been the case with Abraham and Parinaz, but they seemed to have overcome these past obstacles. The two students with high levels of WTC in Peng's study, Dongmei and Manling, however, regularly attended extra-curricular English activities, in contrast to Weitao and Zefeng, the pair with lower levels of WTC. Peng (2014) also emphasises the greater importance for these students to take advantage of opportunities to speak English whenever possible, as they are not readily available in China. In fact, Abraham and Parinaz did have these possibilities in NZ, and Abraham appeared to be making more effort on a social level, while Parinaz was more successful in gaining employment in order to practise her WTC. This variation between the *mesosystems* of China and NZ in terms of opportunity to show WTC highlights the possible differences between an EFL (English as a Foreign language) versus an ESL (English as a Second Language) context, where learners live in the target language speaking community. On the other hand, as described in Zhong's (2013) study of Chinese migrants in NZ, interactions with the 'locals' can be avoided if there are enough of the L1 group to socialise and do business with, and the migrants themselves lack WTC. (For further discussion of the EFL/ESL topic see Dörnyei, 1990; Ellis, 1994; Holliday, 1994; Ortega, 2009; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Simpson, 2016).

All in all, it is clear from these studies that past educational experiences, particularly negative ones, can have an influence on present classroom WTC behaviour (see MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, 1991a & b; Young, 1991; for anxiety caused by past experiences of L2 learning). Such internal "memories and experiences" are part of the "evolving interactions between learner and context", according to Ushioda (2015, p. 48). Moreover, Kramsch (2002) supports this premise that present linguistic phenomena are "indissociable from an individual's memory of past phenomena", even if they are nonlinguistic in nature (p. 19). Thus, teachers should be aware of the historical 'baggage' students may have brought to class, although Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014) feel that focussing in a positive way on past experiences, even if they previously did not go well, can increase students' perceptions of their language competence and convert their *intentions* to communicate into *actions* (p. 219).

On the other hand, participation in activities outside the classroom, which provide opportunities for and promote WTC in English, creates a distinct advantage for the learners who want to enhance their L2 speaking skills. In fact, in order to achieve the goals of language instruction – “bringing cultures into contact” – learners should be encouraged to use their WTC for “real world contact” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 558). Therefore, it is an important part of the role of language teachers to embolden their students to take part in *out-of-class* activities which allow them to further practise what they have learnt *in-class* (see also Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). (See also Section 7.2.3 above).

From a theoretical point of view, such interrelationships or ‘linkages’ between one system and another, as evidenced by the findings discussed above in relation to the *mesosystem*, are regarded by van Lier (2004) as a very valuable aspect of Bronfenbrenner’s model (1979). They also provide an example of the permeable nature of boundaries between ecosystems (van Lier, 2004). Moreover, according to Tudor (2003, p. 8): “An ecological approach ... focuses in the first instance on local realities — what language learning and teaching mean to local participants in the full context of their lives, within but also beyond the classroom”. As for future research, other elements of this *mesosystemic* level might emerge with different groups of participants, so there are further avenues for researchers yet to explore.

In terms of methodology, a longitudinal qualitative approach involving repeated interviews was arguably the best way to investigate these *mesosystems*, as the researcher is unlikely to be able to track participants outside the classroom or investigate their past language learning experiences first-hand. However, I was able to examine other researchers’ accounts of language teaching practices in Iran for comparison purposes (see Literature Review Chapter 2, Section 2.5.3), and following the trajectories of their WTC over a prolonged period (12-18 months) meant I was able to track any changes and elicit any reasons for these fluctuations. Very few WTC researchers have had this advantage, which was only possible for me as I worked as a teacher in the institution where I was conducting this research project. In addition to these methods, learner diaries, or mobile phone recordings, in which participants could record their experiences of high or low WTC outside the classroom as soon after the event as possible, could be useful tools for future researchers.

7.4.2 Microsystem of Abraham and Parinaz

At the *microsystemic* level, which was described by Bronfenbrenner (1993, p. 15) as a “pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics”, the focus is on the participants’ WTC in the *microsystem* or “immediate environment” of their English language learning classroom. For both of the learners discussed in this section, a good relationship with their teachers was a key factor in their level of classroom WTC. For Abraham external aspects such as teaching methods and curriculum were important, whereas for Parinaz, personal and internal variables such as shyness and a low level of perceived competence in the target language were also significant. Nevertheless, the opportunity for group work was a factor in Parinaz’s increasing confidence over the year. On the other hand, Abraham’s consistently dominant role in his classes was likely the result of his personality and trait-like WTC.

A parallel situation to Parinaz’s can be seen with three of Elahi-Shirvan and Taherian’s (2016) participants learning English in Iran. They also felt a low level of confidence in class due to lack of faith in their ability to speak and a perception that their classmates had higher proficiency. Once again, they were afraid of losing face in front of their teacher and other students (see Section 7.4.1 above). They enjoyed groupwork but only if the membership was small. For them, like Abraham and Parinaz, the teacher was the “most prominent dimension” (p. 426) among other environmental factors, and the cause sometimes of anxiety and insecurity, particularly when correcting their spoken errors. On the other hand, if the teachers in Iran offered positive affective support, the students felt encouraged and their WTC was increased. Such did not seem to be the case with Abraham and Parinaz, who reported negative past experiences in Iran, although they would have occurred at least ten years prior to the Elahi Shirvan and Taherian study, and teachers’ roles in Iran could have become less autocratic since then. Certainly, Parinaz found her NZ teachers so far to be *all the best* (I2:67) and speaking in groups was a new opportunity to practise speaking which she had not experienced in Iran in her day.

Cao (2009a) mentioned the same factors of self-confidence, personality, teacher, and class interactional pattern as having an influence on the WTC of her NZ Study Abroad

participants. Her participant, Cai-Wei, seemed to have a similar temperament to Parinaz in that she was a very shy student and showed “higher WTC in pairs and small groups but low WTC in whole-class activities” (p. 173). On the other hand, Seung, like Abraham, was an example of a student with naturally high WTC due to an outgoing personality (p. 193). His teacher describes him as “a more mature student with his own strong views as compared to the other students” (p. 173). Abraham’s first semester teacher used very similar words to explain his high level of WTC: *he’s a very good communicator.... it was his personality* (TJA11:4); even though initially *he was trying to run the class* (TJA11:36).

As far as their relationship with their teachers was concerned, Cao’s participants displayed greater WTC in class when they liked the teacher, and less when the teacher’s attitude was unreceptive and impatient. Abraham and Parinaz in my study expressed similar sentiments (see also Section 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 above). Group work was another factor which both Cao’s and my two participants agreed was a preferred interaction pattern, as it gave them greater opportunity to speak in a less threatening environment than whole-class activities. Parinaz, in particular, appreciated this new conversational possibility, which was not available in her previous English classes in Iran. Moreover, unlike Cao’s mostly Chinese students, who were sometimes tempted to use their L1 in the classroom, Abraham and Parinaz made deliberate choices to avoid using Farsi, which increased the amount of time, at least in class, that they could practise their spoken English.

On the other hand, Abraham’s dislike of the more ‘fun’ communicative activities of the previous school he attended is paralleled by two of Peng’s (2014) case studies, Weitao and Zefeng, although, unlike Abraham, they were judged to have low levels of WTC. In fact, all four of her participants were reluctant to speak up frequently or ask questions of the teacher, which she attributes to their Chinese cultural background. Moreover, they expressed similar feelings of nervousness about contributing to class discussions as did Parinaz. Teacher factors such as styles, methods, and perceived support were also considered to be significant, as with Cao’s (2009a) and my participants above.

Therefore, at the *microsystem* level of the classroom, whether in an EFL situation such as China (Peng, 2014), or an ESL situation as in NZ (Cao, 2009a; and this study), learners’ WTC seems to be positively or negatively affected by similar influences. The importance of the

teacher's role has been discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3, and in Sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 above, as well as the other individual factors of personality, confidence, and preferred types of classroom interaction. In this section, I have focussed only on those factors that the two individual case study participants felt were significant for their WTC. What is important here from an ecological point of view is that, in Peng's (2012) words, "the individual and contextual factors that emerged from the data were not isolated, but instead synergistically interacted with each other and jointly led to the ebbs and flows of classroom WTC" (p. 208).

In addition, in terms of the whole ecosystems framework, there were negative flow-on effects from the *mesosystem* level of their past education experience in Iran into the *microsystem* of their NZ classroom (i.e., for Abraham, an initial mistrust of teachers, and for Parinaz a low level of WTC due to a naturally shy personality). In the other direction, as a result of a growing level of speaking confidence there was a positive spinoff from the classroom for Parinaz's *out-of-class* WTC in the NZ *mesosystem* context. This is another example of the porous nature of system boundaries in the ecosystems framework used to illustrate these participants' WTC. As a result, in order to promote effective teaching and learning, classroom teachers need to be aware of the diversity of the "understandings and perceptions which participants bring with them to the classroom and to the teaching-learning experience" (Tudor, 2003, p. 6).

Consequently, Tudor (2003), as well as other research theorists (e.g., Kramsch & Steffenson, 2008; van Lier, 2005), has suggested an *emic* approach to ecological studies, "which can provide insight into the understandings and motivations of participants" (p. 7). In this study, in order to explore the factors which affected the WTC of my participants in the *microsystem* of the classroom, I employed all the tools I had devised, i.e., questionnaires, observations, stimulated recalls, and interviews both with the students and their teachers. In that way, I tried to draw as detailed a picture as possible of the classroom influences which facilitated or inhibited their WTC. Future researchers could usefully employ aspects of modern technology such as discreet classroom cameras with highly sensitive sound systems for more accurate observations, but this would involve gaining ethical consent from whole classes and perhaps further inhibit natural WTC behaviour. *Idiodynamic* software has also been employed by some researchers for students to self-measure their WTC at frequent intervals during actual classes (e.g., Mulvaney 2015; Pawlak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2015;

Wood 2016), but the disruptive nature of this process has been acknowledged even by those who carried out these studies.

From a researcher's point of view, this *microsystemic* level of the ecosystem is the most straightforward to investigate, and therefore the most common aspect which has been reported on in both quantitative and qualitative studies. It certainly appears to be the most immediately relevant to teachers of such classes. However, a closer examination of the other levels of the ecosystem provides a more in-depth description of the nature of the influences on participants' WTC and the reasons for any consequent ebbs and flows.

7.4.3 Exosystem of Abraham and Parinaz

According to Bronfenbrenner (1993, pp. 24), the *exosystem* comprises once again "the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings" but unlike the *micro-* and *mesosystems*, the individual is only directly involved in one of the settings. However, the events that occur, or the decisions which are made, indirectly affect the person concerned. For the two case studies discussed in this section, aspects of the educational curriculum of both Iran and NZ, as well as external events in their personal lives, could be considered as elements of an *exosystem*. The key factor is that they as individuals had little or no control over these situations.

For Abraham, the curriculum, the texts, and teaching methodology of the various schools he had attended affected his level of WTC in English. He felt there were not only negative impacts from his experience in classes in Iran, but also in NZ, when his class began to focus more on 'academic' rather than 'communicative' skills. (See Chapter 2, Section 2.5.3, 2.5.4 above). Moreover, in NZ he had to deal with his application for refugee status (a lengthy process) and his lack of immediate family support, which at times made him feel reluctant to attend or talk in class. On the other hand, he had the positive backing of his church affiliations, which provided him with greater opportunities to use his English and gave him moral support. Parinaz was also dissatisfied with her experience of learning English in Iran but was attending classes in NZ with a more practical focus, so she had greater opportunity to demonstrate her WTC throughout the year of this study. The NZ teachers of both these students certainly stated their belief that WTC was very important for their students' progress in English. In her personal life, Parinaz was affected by such external events as

moving to a new house, which she felt had a negative influence on her classroom WTC, but, unlike Abraham, she had her husband to support her, and his ability in English was beneficial to her in developing a greater competence in the language of her new country.

Elahi Shirvan and Taherian (2016) also comment on the role that curriculum plays on the WTC of their participants, four of whom mentioned the pressure that English teachers in Iran felt to complete the syllabus of the textbook, and that as a result they skipped the communicative tasks the texts contained. The demanding assessment schedule added to the students' anxieties and did not provide a suitably relaxed atmosphere for the development of their WTC. Although Abraham was not subject to oral tests at his time in Iran, Parinaz would have been more likely to share this kind of stress.

In Cao's (2009a) PhD study, she focussed on the external events which affected her participants' classroom WTC. Rong-rong was upset by a dispute in her family back in China, while Shu-wei discovered that oral English proficiency was not required for the job he wanted so his motivation dropped along with his WTC.

Curriculum was an issue for two of Peng's (2014) participants, who complained about the speed and intensity of the course which left them little time to prepare themselves for related oral activities. In their opinion, oral skills should be taught as a separate course. However, in both these cases, it is perhaps relevant that their English classes were for medical purposes rather than general communication.

As can be seen from the limited comparative data available for this level of the ecosystem, there is scope for further research in this area. It is clear from the findings above that institutional requirements can serve as a straitjacket for teachers who may ideologically understand the worth of teaching communicative techniques but are bound by an assessment or curricular programme imposed on them by their employers. As expressed by Tudor (2003):

... although practising language teachers are well aware of the complexity of their task, the same cannot always be said for the other actors who, in one way or another, play a role in the endeavour of language education — political and educational authorities, the management or administration of teaching institutions,

clients, sponsors, parents, and many others. Nevertheless, it is often within frameworks set up by these actors that teachers have to live out their tasks in the classroom. (p. 2)

At a more personal and individual *exosystemic* level, students are unavoidably affected in their classroom by events taking place outside the classroom. According to Stevick (1980, p. 7), “a language class is one arena in which a number of private universes intersect with one another”, and it cannot readily be separated or distinguished from any of the individual’s other worlds and lives. For teachers, it is perhaps a tall order to expect them to be aware of all the external influences which are affecting their students’ WTC on any given day, and their students may not always want to share this information with them, but the importance of the teacher-learner relationship cannot be overemphasised according to Mercer (2018). She states that “the learning of anything, but especially a language, is a social undertaking involving interpersonal connection” (p. 515).

Future researchers could examine more closely the institutional practices which impinge on the communicative possibilities for students in their English classes, while at another level, look outside the classroom for the external influences in learners’ daily lives which could be affecting their WTC in class. Whereas the evaluation of curriculum could be carried out more remotely, interviews with teachers as were undertaken in this study could be quite revealing. Personal insights into the lives of student participants in my study were shared through interviews, but were unsolicited, and probably only possible because a trusting relationship had been established over a period of months and multiple interviews. I would not recommend or feel comfortable using any other more probing types of methodology.

As can be seen from the discussion of the findings related to the *exosystem* in this section, “the interrelatedness of the ecosystems that jointly work on classroom WTC” (Peng, 2012, p. 209) is clearly evident. However, one layer or level in Bronfenbrenner’s (1993) framework yet remains to be discussed – the overarching *macrosystem*.

7.4.4 Macrosystem of Abraham and Parinaz

Each ecosystem of Bronfenbrenner's (1993) framework is nested inside the other with the outer *macrosystem* enclosing all the others. This *macrosystem* encompasses the wider cultural background in which individual learners find themselves, i.e., the larger social context recommended by van Lier (1988) as worthy of investigation by SLA researchers. However, the key quality of these systems is the linkages between them and the influences that they have on each other. In this section of the present study, therefore, the focus is on how such influences affect the WTC of the two selected participants. For Parinaz and Abraham, this includes their past country of origin as well as the country to which they have chosen to migrate. It is clearly not possible to cover all aspects of Iranian or NZ cultural norms, so I have restricted this discussion to those topics which were introduced by the participants themselves as being relevant to their past or present lives and their WTC in English.

As a refugee seeking asylum in NZ, it is perhaps not surprising that Abraham was more forthcoming about the influence that past political events in Iran had on his life there. He was born in the year of the Revolution, so he experienced a period of history when Western values were rejected and foreign investment and tourism were severely curtailed (Tavakoli & Tavakol, 2018; Zarei et al., 2019; Zarrinabadi & Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, 2018). This meant he was unable to practise his English outside the classroom and he felt that Arabic had now attained a greater educational status than English. Social class seemed important to him and his relatively wealthy family meant he could complete a university degree with an English component, which provided him with more opportunities to learn English (see Shahriari Ahmadi, Ansarifard, & Ansarifard, 2015). As a result, he made a distinction between himself and some other Iranian refugees in NZ who were from a *poorer* class (I1:202), which may have been a factor in his avoidance of his fellow countrymen in NZ. Although this eschewal of his cultural identity might not be regarded as a positive step from a psychological point of view, it did mean he spent more time speaking English and this may have increased his WTC. Nevertheless, such choices could also have had a negative effect on the maintenance of his own cultural values and lifestyle (see Norton, 2013, p. 154).

In addition, his choice of religion, as another *macrosystemic* element, enhanced Abraham's WTC, as his church provided a great opportunity for him to converse with other migrants. However, he found contact with native English-speaking locals very difficult to arrange so his experience of NZ cultural activities was quite limited. As far as life goals were concerned (Bronfenbrenner's, 1993, p. 25, "life course options", as a component of the *macrosystem*), Abraham rejected the academic content of his Semester 2 class, because he now wanted to get a job and for that he needed better communication skills.

Parinaz, on the other hand, as a much younger woman than Abraham, appeared to be less focussed on her past experiences in Iran, which may have been because the political circumstances had eased since his time. Employment was her way of establishing herself in the new cultural environment of NZ and she had worked in a takeaway bar and a kindergarten in order to improve her spoken English. Although she also had not made native speaker friends, she had seen how her husband, who had been here for 12 years, had good relations with Kiwis. Like Abraham, she chose not to speak Farsi in class with other Iranian students but did maintain some contact with the local Iranian community.

In Elahi Shirvan and Taherian's (2016) recent WTC study, they describe the increasing importance of English as a *lingua franca* as a key factor in the expansion of Iran's international relations with other countries. Unlike the situation in the early 2000s as described by Abraham, four out of five of their participants stated that promotion in their professions depended on their proficiency in English. Some aspects of Iranian culture which may inhibit WTC according to Elahi Shirvan and Taherian, such as 'face-saving' in front of teachers and classmates, have also been mentioned in Section 7.4.1 above. In addition, they describe Iran as having a hierarchical culture which still regards the teacher as an authority figure in the classroom, making students reluctant to answer spontaneous questions or contradict their statements. Certainly, Parinaz in my study seemed to defer to a much older Iranian woman in her class (Marjan) as well as to the teacher, who attributed Parinaz's reluctance to volunteer answers to a strong sense of politeness.

Although Cao (2009a) does not go into detail, she suggests that her Study Abroad participants in NZ had positive attitudes towards the L2 community, evidenced by their desire to demonstrate their WTC outside the classroom (see Section 7.4.1 above). As they

were a group of mixed nationalities, she made no observations about any common cultural characteristics which could affect their WTC. Peng (2014), on the other hand, mentioned Chinese cultural inhibitions about responding voluntarily to the teachers' questions, which are comparable to those of students in Iran as discussed above. Moreover, her description of the role of teachers as an authority figure in the construct of a hierarchical Chinese society has a parallel in Iranian society. Peng also pointed to the rising importance of English in China for job-hunting although oral proficiency was not so vital.

However, Peng's (2014, p. 31) observation that Chinese culture "should not be viewed as a static or universal explanation of any learning and communication behaviour" could equally be applied to any other culture, including that of Iran. Clearly, members of a country with a population of more than 83 million such as Iran, with many different languages and ethnic groups should not be assumed to have uniform attitudes to any educational process. Moreover, political and historical events in Iran, as also in China, have contributed to a fluid and dynamic society, which is unavoidably influenced by other cultures due to the speed and accessibility of modern technology.

Contribution of study related to Section 7.4

Theoretically speaking, *time*, in fact, is the final component of the ecosystems framework, i.e., the *chronosystem*, which overlays all the other elements. According to Bronfenbrenner (1989, p. 41) an individual's past experiences, "singly or sequentially", combine to affect their present behaviour. In addition, multiple timescales can operate simultaneously, and linguistic phenomena are "indissociable from an individual's memory of past phenomena and his/her anticipation of future ones" (Kramsch 2002, p. 19). Therefore, in this study, past positive and negative experiences of WTC have been examined to trace their influence on present WTC (see Section 7.4.1 above). This is an area of WTC research which has not yet been fully explored.

Besides the more conventional methodological tools of multiple interviews with my participants, I explored aspects of the culture of Iran both past and present by reading as many novels and historical accounts as were available to me in English (see Appendix Z). I watched movies produced in Iran, and by Iranian exiles in other European countries, and studied basic Farsi with an Iranian teacher/friend. I also read many articles published in

English over the last decade on topics such as Iranian culture and education, as well as academic reports on WTC and other individual variables affecting SLA. I am not claiming to be an expert on Iranian culture, but I would recommend such an approach to another researcher investigating students from another cultural background to their own. Only a visit to Iran itself would have added a useful dimension to my understanding and I intend to take any such opportunity in the future. For more insight into Iranians' views of their own culture, see Cohen and Yefet (in press); Ghanizadeh, Eishabadi, and Rostami (2015); Javidan and Dastmalchian (2003); Papi (2010); Pishghadam, Hashemi, and Bazri (2013); Pishghadam and Naji Meidani (2011); Saboori, Pishghadam, Hosseini Fatemi, and Ghonsooli (2015); Zarei et al. (2019).

From a teacher's point of view, it is unrealistic to expect such an in-depth investigation into the cultural backgrounds of all the students in a class, particularly in the multicultural environments which are often found in migrant English language learning classes. However, some knowledge of the background of the individuals in a class could offer insights into why certain WTC behaviours are likely, even if cultural norms are not necessarily shared by all members of a nationality group, or possibly some of the other multiple factors discussed above in Section 7.2 could be the reason for the demonstration of more or less WTC on a particular day at a particular time.

7.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed and analysed the findings in response to the four research questions framed at the end of Chapter 2, which explored different aspects of the WTC phenomenon as experienced by the migrant Iranian learners who were my participants. My aim was to draw a more holistic picture of their relationship to their social and educational environments in both Iran and NZ, i.e., to present an 'ecological' study as suggested by theorists and researchers such as van Lier (2005) and Mercer (2015). Data collected to answer each research question built on the previous, so that first the factors which were most influential on the WTC of the participants were identified and explained, then their levels of WTC were tracked from Iran to NZ, and finally, as exemplars, two cases were analysed in depth using the different levels of the ecosystems framework.

In response to *RQ1*, even though the three most significant *external* factors (teachers, methods, class activities) affecting the WTC of the participants in their English language classrooms were the same in Iran and NZ, the circumstances were quite different as a result of the political and educational history of Iran and the common pedagogical practices. Many reports by Iranian researchers and teachers have been published in English as to the importance of fostering WTC and spoken communication in class, but curriculum and methodological change is more difficult in a country with a strongly centralised education system (Zarrinabadi & Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, 2018).

In terms of the *internal* factors (SPCC, confidence, anxiety, and motivation), each participant differed, as would be expected, but there were some commonalities in their experiences when learning English in Iran. Most were not confident in their ability to speak or to express themselves adequately and some feared correction by the teacher and losing face in front of their classmates if they made a mistake. In their view, such negative feelings reduced their WTC. As for motivation, at the time they were studying in Iran, opportunities for practising their English, even if their WTC was high, were rare due to the political climate, and travel overseas was difficult, so only three participants expressed a level of high intrinsic interest. It is to be hoped that my study may encourage more researchers in Iran to investigate the precursors of WTC, particularly using qualitative methodology to survey the phenomenon in greater depth.

In the NZ educational context, where admittedly the bulk of my data was collected, teachers played a key role, mostly in a positive way. Their methods followed more closely Communicative Language Teaching practices, which provided more opportunities for their students to speak, especially in group work. This meant even the students with shy personalities felt comfortable to take part. An issue which was viewed as an advantage by some and a disadvantage by others was the choice or avoidance of speaking their own language in class or sitting next to fellow Farsi-speakers. Some of their teachers in NZ actively discouraged this, while others were more relaxed about it. Several of the participants, however, spontaneously remarked on this as a handicap if they wanted to turn their theoretical WTC into more confident communication. Pressure to sit and work with other Iranians in the class was the only direct cultural influence on learning English mentioned by my participants.

As for the four internal factors, although previous studies have not conclusively linked greater proficiency with higher levels of WTC, *self-perceived* communicative competence has been considered a significant factor. My participants were mostly good achievers in terms of grades and had had a sound educational background in Iran, but their SPCC was not always so high, especially when their classes became more challenging academically. As a result, their levels of WTC also wavered from time to time, as did their levels of confidence, which continues to be regarded by researchers as an important precursor to actual speech. Anxiety, or rather its absence, has also been suggested as an important facilitating component of WTC. For my participants in NZ, nervousness about speaking in class was a fairly common feeling, particularly when speaking in front of the class and as a result, their WTC was lowered. On the other hand, their academic and employment goals in NZ were strong extrinsic goals which fostered high levels of motivation, another positive precursor of WTC according to a range of researchers.

Thus, the factors which were identified by this study are not new to WTC researchers, but their significance lies in their connection to the specific environment of my participants, whether in Iran or NZ and the unique facilitating or debilitating forces exerted on their opportunity and readiness to speak. The same holds for the *outside-the-class* variables revealed by my investigation. Iran's political and economic history since 1979 created an environment where its inhabitants had little exposure to English until the advent of the internet and provided few contact possibilities with English speakers. On the other hand, in NZ, Iranians form a small ethnic or language minority, which means they have limited resources to function in the outside community if they are reluctant or unable to speak English well. Fortunately, as yet, more serious migrant issues are less noticeable in NZ than in other countries, but incidents where the participants were received less openly by locals were described to me. Most, however, had integration into the wider NZ community as a social and linguistic goal. Although this study has made a contribution to the study of WTC outside the classroom, more investigation is warranted, since for migrants, communication in this milieu is likely to occupy a great amount of their time and has serious implications for their ability to successfully manage many aspects of their lives in their new country of residence.

As for the possibly 'dynamic' nature of WTC, which has been a common topic of investigation in recent years under the banner of Dynamic Systems Theory, the findings for my research questions (*RQ2 & RQ3*), which covered changes in WTC over a period which could be termed 'longitudinal', and occurred in two quite disparate geographical situations, revealed that the WTC trajectories for each of my participants were largely unique. Although there were some common patterns for two students when their classes became more academically-focussed, this study reinforces the description of WTC as a 'dynamic system', particularly as it was able to demonstrate such dynamicity over a longer period of time than has been common for most DST researchers.

Finally, in response to my fourth research question, I discussed and analysed the findings, using the ecosystems framework, of two individual participant case studies chosen for their apparently high and low levels of WTC. I wanted to explore the relevance and usefulness of Bronfenbrenner's (1993) framework, later adapted for SLA and WTC by other researchers (see van Lier, 2004; Cao, 2009b; Peng, 2014), to the presentation and analysis of my data. This framework provided a means to categorise and classify the influences of the various systems (*micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-*) on the participants' individual WTC in these different environments. However, as pointed out by van Lier (2004), it is the linkages between systems that are important, as the divisions between them, although visible in the ecosystems diagram as solid lines, are not barriers but rather porous in nature. Certainly, such cross-systemic influences on the participants' WTC were revealed in the findings. Although the use of such a framework to present results may not suit all researchers/writers, and it has been criticised for its possibly arbitrary divisions (van Lier, 2011), ecosystems theory itself can encourage researchers to explore more areas of their student participants' lives than just those in the *microsystem* of the classroom.

Chapter 8. Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter provides a reminder of the aims and approach of my study (Section 8.2), summarises the main findings in response to the research questions (Section 8.3), evaluates the study in relation to its contribution to the advancement of knowledge, theory, and methodology in the area of WTC research, and suggests practical applications for teachers (Section 8.4). Section 8.5 outlines the study's limitations, while Section 8.6 recommends further avenues of research. Finally, Section 8.7 offers my personal reflection on the research process, and my thoughts for the future direction of investigations into the area of willingness to communicate of learners of another language.

8.2 Aims and methodology of the study

In this study, my main aim was to investigate the reasons for the willingness to communicate (or conversely, the lack of it) of a particular group of migrants to New Zealand. This group of Iranians was chosen because I had heard and read about the difficulties teachers of English in Iran had had in encouraging their students to speak (e.g., Vaezi, S. 2007). In contrast, in my classes at the pre-university level, most Iranians could be relied on to contribute to class discussion and interaction to a greater extent than other nationality groups. Therefore, I was curious as to whether it was the teaching techniques they had experienced in the past in Iran, or their present NZ English language learning experiences, which predisposed them to participate orally either reluctantly or keenly. Other personal and environmental factors could have been instrumental in their WTC, so they also merited closer investigation. Whether their shared cultural background had a similar effect on their readiness to speak was another question which I had posed to myself at the beginning of my study, but it seemed other individual factors were more dominant.

When I reviewed the literature, there was some empirical evidence suggesting certain factors could be relevant, particularly those originally described in MacIntyre et al's (1998) 'pyramid model' (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2), and included the three most commonly researched WTC variables, self-perceived communicative competence, language anxiety, and motivation (see Elahi Shirvan, Khajavy, MacIntyre, & Taherian, 2019), but as my focus

was on the WTC of my participants in the two disparate geographical and temporal contexts of Iran and NZ, I anticipated that there would be other influences which were specific to these times and locations.

Therefore, I designed a study which would attempt to answer the question as to which variables were perceived by the participants to have the most influence on their readiness to speak in an L2 (second language), both now in NZ and in the past in Iran. As the focus of most previous research had been WTC in the classroom, I also added the *outside-the-class* dimension, which in a migrant situation is very important for personal survival. Moreover, I was committed to including their teachers' views, as relying only on the information provided by the students themselves would have limited the credibility of my data (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition, as an observer in their classes, I was able to add a third source of evidence. Finally, in order to track any variations in their levels of WTC over the change in time and context, I devised a *longitudinal* study, which set as a baseline their WTC in Iran, and then tracked changes in their NZ classrooms over 12-18 months.

In order to achieve these aims, I felt a qualitative case study was the most appropriate methodological approach, so the project was based on multiple semi-structured interviews with the students and their teachers, and observations on my part. Questionnaires were also completed by the participants at regular intervals, which provided some descriptive data in a similar way to those collected by previous WTC researchers.

Finally, I needed a way to adequately represent my findings in a visually accessible theoretical framework, so I chose the ecosystems approach as described by Bronfenbrenner (1993), which provided a context for my participants' WTC at the *micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystem* level, as well as including a *chronosystem*, which was particularly relevant to my study where the past and present lives of the students were being examined. Such an emphasis on time, context, variation, and interconnection between individuals and their environment is an integral part of Dynamic Systems Theory, which formed another layer of the theoretical background of my study.

What is more, at the time I conceived this study (2013), possibly because of the preponderance of quantitative studies into WTC, there had been little pedagogical advice

given to teachers about how to implement the information they gained from these findings in order to foster their students' WTC. Thus, I hoped to gain insights from my study which would inform my own teaching practice as well as those practitioners who have students in their classes from the same nationality background, in this case, Iranian.

8.3 Summary of key findings

8.3.1 Factors influencing WTC in and out of the classroom in Iran and NZ

For the student participants in my study, the key *external* factors which affected their WTC either negatively or positively in their English language classroom in Iran were the expertise and behaviour of their teachers, the texts and methods used in both public and private schools, and the opportunities provided for classroom interaction, such as group and pair work.

As for the *internal* factors which influenced their WTC in Iran, self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC), personality traits such as shyness, degrees of confidence, anxiety and other negative feelings, as well as levels of motivation, all had a role to play.

In New Zealand, similar *external* factors were identified as being important for the participants' WTC: their teachers and their methods, and types of class activities. In relation to the *internal* factors which increased or decreased the participants' WTC in NZ, SPCC, confidence, anxiety, and motivation were still relevant.

Factors related to *outside-the-class* WTC were clearly different in the two geographical and political contexts of Iran and NZ. In Iran, the most prominent influences were: the political situation pre- & post-Revolution (1979); the advent of satellite TV; the availability of the internet; and the low number of English-speaking tourists visiting Iran. As a result of political events since the 1979 Revolution, opportunities to converse in English with tourists or use it as a *lingua franca* in international companies had almost disappeared. Satellite TV and the internet provided some exposure to English but no real chance for my participants to show their spoken WTC outside the classroom.

On the other hand, after they had migrated to NZ, the key factors which affected their levels of WTC *outside-the-class* were: the small size of the Iranian community in Auckland;

whether they lived alone or with other family members; how many English-speaking friends they had made; how well they were able negotiate formal interactions; and whether they felt more confident speaking in class rather than outside. However, as members of a society where English is the most dominant language, they were obliged to conduct at least some part of their lives outside the classroom in that language.

8.3.2 Variations in WTC over time and context

Although it could have been expected that the participants' level of WTC would rise as their ability in English increased, when measured from their experience in Iran to their two or three semesters in NZ, in fact each person had a unique individual trajectory (see Chapter 5, Tables 5.2 and 5.4; Appendix W, Figure W.1). This suggests that there may not be a direct link between proficiency and WTC and other factors may be influential. However, there were some discernible patterns, since two members of the study displayed a consistent rise in levels of WTC from their time in Iran to the end of the study three semesters later, while one had a high level of WTC throughout. Moreover, the two students who progressed to mainstream classes experienced a marked decrease in their WTC, as their confidence dropped in an environment where there were many native speakers of English.

Reasons for these variations from Iran to NZ included a lack of opportunity to speak English in or out of class, and degrees of confidence, shyness, and motivation. Over their time in NZ classrooms, factors such as confidence and personality were still influential, as well as relationships with their teachers, group or pair work opportunities, and the tendency (or not) to sit with other speakers of their first language.

8.3.3 WTC case studies in an ecosystems framework

In this part of the study, I examined in detail the WTC of two of my participants (Abraham and Parinaz) as individual cases set in an ecosystems framework (see Chapter 6, Section 6.1 and Figure 6.1). They were chosen as contrasting examples of students with generally high and low levels of WTC, as declared by themselves and observed by me and their teachers in their classrooms.

At the *mesosystem* level, which I discussed first as being most remote in time (the overlying *chronosystem*), I compared the two participants' English language learning experiences in

Iran in regard to their WTC. They had similarly negative impressions of the teaching practices, personal lack of enthusiasm for the subject, and self-consciousness in front of their peers, which all combined to reduce their WTC. Outside the class in Iran, in Abraham's time (he was 12 years older than Parinaz), he had little opportunity to meet English speakers, whereas Parinaz could have made contact with foreign visitors, but was constrained by her innate shyness to communicate.

Another *mesosystemic* element was the experience of both participants *outside* the class in NZ, where in spite of their differing personal circumstances (Abraham was single and Parinaz married), they took advantage of opportunities such as clubs and church membership, or employment, to demonstrate their WTC with other English speakers.

In the *microsystemic* environment of their NZ English language classrooms, both Abraham and Parinaz saw a good relationship with their teachers as key to their WTC in class, but for Abraham, *external* factors such as curriculum and teaching practice were more important, while for Parinaz, *internal* variables such as her self-assessed low level of competence and natural timidity were dominant.

For these two case studies, the educational practices of schools in Iran and NZ, as well as events in their lives outside the classroom, had an effect on their classroom WTC behaviour, thus forming elements of an *exosystem*, over which the participants had limited influence.

Finally, both Parinaz and Abraham shared a similar *macrosystem*, i.e., the broader cultural background of Iran and NZ. However, as an older person, born in 1979 (the year of the Revolution), Abraham seemed more negatively affected by the political climate of those early years of the Islamic Republic. Parinaz, however, appeared less concerned about her past life in Iran, and unlike Abraham, came to NZ as an ordinary migrant to join her husband, rather than as a refugee from the political system there. While Abraham deliberately cut himself off from the local Iranian community, Parinaz still maintained some links with aspects of her original cultural background, although both students chose not to speak Farsi in class.

Thus, the cases of two individuals were compared and contrasted, using the ecosystems framework as a backdrop and organisational tool. However, although the various levels

were discussed separately, the mutual interaction of elements of one level of the ecosystem on another should still be emphasised (see Appendices AA & BB for their individual WTC frameworks).

8.4 Contribution of the study

8.4.1 Contribution to empirical knowledge

Factors influencing WTC in and out of the classroom in Iran and NZ (RQ1)

Although I followed a fairly arbitrary division into *internal* and *external* of the seven factors affecting WTC which I identified from the data collected, I felt that examining the *interaction* between the factors was more relevant to a study with a holistic contextual approach (as covered below in RQ4). No additional factors were added to the ever-lengthening list of learner IDs which could affect WTC (Larsen-Freeman, 2018), but in concert with other qualitative or mixed method studies such as House (2004), Cao (2009a), Zeng (2010), Peng (2014), and Syed (2016), I was able to canvass the *reasons* why such variables were important to the learners.

Moreover, in regard to the student participants' past English language learning experiences in Iran, they reported that using communicative methods to foster classroom interaction was yet to be developed, the behaviour of individual teachers enhanced or impeded WTC, group or pair activities in class were not common, and as for better opportunities to speak English, private schools had the advantage over public institutions. Concerning the possibility of extending students' WTC to outside the English class in Iran, they suggested that little opportunity existed for such practice in the political climate of the time.

Where my study differs and has a contribution to make is that it focusses on the WTC of Iranian migrants in a country where being willing to speak English outside the classroom is part of daily life and an essential survival skill. There have been a few investigations into Iranian migrants in their new countries of residence (i.e., Bigdeli, 2007; Elahi, 2006; Modarresi, 2001; Jamarani, 2012a & b; Kouritzin, 2000; Sadeghi, S., 2006), but none specifically focussing on WTC. Moreover, except for my two previous exploratory studies (Cameron, D., 2013, 2015), there has been no research published on the WTC of Iranian students of English in NZ, although Zhong (2013) and Zander (2016) have focussed on Chinese and other mixed nationality groups respectively. However, these researchers

reported, in line with my findings, that making and maintaining contact with the local population was not easy despite the students' theoretical WTC.

Variations in WTC over time and context (RQ2 & RQ3)

Since the inception of research into L2 rather than L1 WTC, the changing nature of the variables which influence this phenomenon has been a source of contention. When the only tool used was a single self-report questionnaire, it has been difficult to establish whether WTC is truly 'dynamic' or possibly the result of a mixture of situational and trait characteristics. The multiple application of qualitative tools such as those used in this study has added another dimension, as has the longitudinal design over 12-18 months and the exploration of two geographical contexts. Therefore, the conclusions of researchers such as Yashima (2002), S.-J. Kang (2005), Cao (2009a), MacIntyre and Doucette (2010), and Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak (2017), were also borne out by my study, which suggested that the patterns of fluctuation in my participants' WTC did vary over time and context (from Iran to NZ). However, their trajectories were idiosyncratic in most cases (see Chapter 5, Table 5.4 and Appendix W, Figure W.1), which suggests that generalisations should be avoided, and the reasons for their rise and fall in WTC may be more interesting than the variability itself. Although Dynamic Systems Theory has been recommended as a basis for this type of inquiry, few qualitative studies other than mine have yet moved beyond the classroom micro context or pursued a longer timescale to explore this area in depth (see, however, King, 2013a; Yashima et al., 2018; Syed, 2016).

WTC case studies in an ecosystems framework (RQ4)

The findings of this study have built on the groundwork set by Cao (2009a, 2011) and by Peng (2012, 2014) in their introductory studies, which related ecosystems theory to WTC research. In fact, it has answered Cao's (2009a) call for future research to look into other levels of the ecosystem beyond the microsystem of the classroom and to focus on the wider environment in order "to capture the complexity and the interrelationships occurring between the nested systems" (p. 233).

The three researchers so far (by late 2019) who have used the full ecosystems framework as the background for the presentation of their findings saw it as an effective way to acknowledge the context of their participants' WTC and the dynamic interaction of the

variables affecting this construct (Cao, 2009a; Elahi Shirvan & Taherian, 2016; Peng, 2014). However, they mostly focussed on the elements of classroom WTC (i.e., the *microsystemic* level) as this was the source of most of their data. My study draws a more detailed picture by describing two of the ten participant cases in depth and giving more prominence to the outermost levels of the framework – *exo-* and *macrosystem* – while also exploring the *mesosystem* of past language learning experiences and the participants' WTC *outside* the classroom in both Iran and NZ.

8.4.2 Contribution to theoretical understanding and development

The main theoretical contribution of my study is to link elements of Dynamic Systems Theory to an ecological perspective when describing the fluctuating nature of language learners' WTC and those factors which influence this phenomenon.

From its inception, L2 WTC research has identified the construct as having both stable and fluctuating aspects (MacIntyre et al., 1998), but in 2011, MacIntyre and Legatto were the first to describe WTC as a 'dynamic system'. In my study, I was able to identify the key components of such a system, i.e., interconnected changes over time, self-organisation into attractor or repeller states, and the so-called 'butterfly effect'. However, I was also able to add the temporal and geographical elements of past experience in another country, in response to Larsen-Freeman and L. Cameron's (2008b) suggestion that different timescales and contexts should be an integral part of DST research. Therefore, I was able to conclude that although the pattern of WTC behaviour for each participant was unique, it made sense from a dynamic systems perspective (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014).

Theorists have drawn a connection between dynamic systems theory and an ecological perspective on language learning (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, L., 2008b; Ushioda, 2015). The nested ecosystems framework has been proposed as a means of illustrating the relationship of an individual learner to their context(s), while also providing a way to represent the interconnections between factors which affect language acquisition (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; van Lier, 2004; Mercer, 2016b). Therefore, I sought an appropriate visual metaphor to portray the WTC factors influencing two of my participants in the *micro-*, *meso-*, *exo-*, and *macrosystems* of their lives, overlaid by a *chronosystem* to extend the framework across their past and present life history. I adopted and adapted aspects of

textual descriptions from Bronfenbrenner, (1979, 1993) and Cao, (2009a); Peng's (2012, p. 205) chart; and figures from Peng (2014, p. 148), van Lier (2004, p. 209), and Williams, Mercer, and Ryan (2015, p. 24); in order to create a new general ecological framework within which to place my participants (see Figure 8.1, below).

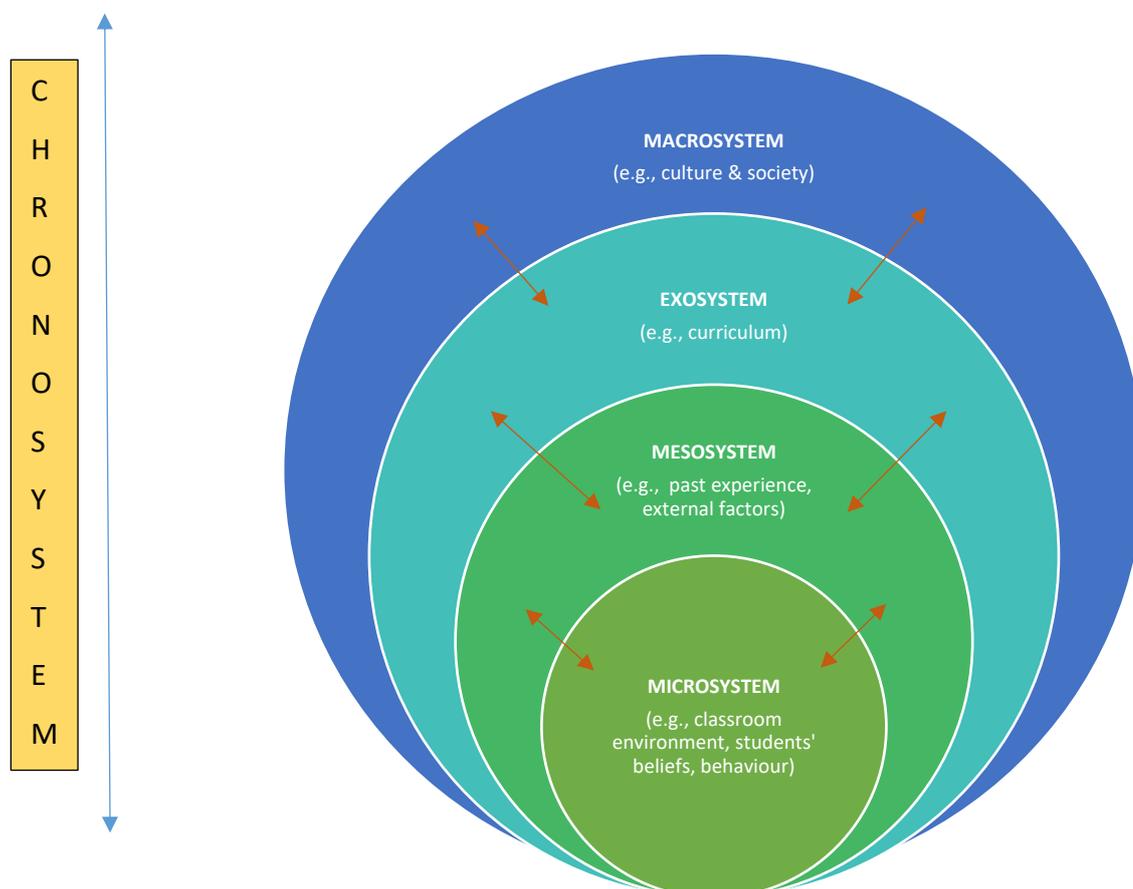


Figure 8.1 *Nested ecosystems*

Such a figure could be also adapted to individual participants as I have done for Abraham and Parinaz (see Appendices AA and BB), with the proviso that the boundaries between layers are porous, and influences of each system pervade those above and below. Dewaele (2019) has alluded to a similar visualisation of variables affecting WTC using concentric circles from micro- to macroscales, which he feels is “particularly useful for researchers who are interested in the effects of learners’ classroom emotions on WTC, both of which are constantly fluctuating and simultaneously shaped by learner-internal and learner-external variables over different time spans” (p. 526).

Therefore, although I drew on the ‘pyramid’ model of MacIntyre et al. (1998) as a theoretical background for the section of my study which focussed on identifying the factors which specifically affected my participants, I did not explore each component of the ‘pyramid’ in detail. Moreover, I felt that investigating reasons *why* these influences were important to my participants was a possible way to expand this one-dimensional ‘triangle’ into a truly three dimensional ‘pyramid’. In addition, the extension of my study to the past experience of my participants in their classrooms in Iran created a further temporal dimension, which added yet another facet to the construct. I would concur with Dewaele’s (2019) observation that “a pyramid may not be the best way to visualize the interaction between (potentially interacting) independent variables and WTC” (p. 525).

Another aspect of theory which has been extended in my study is that of WTC *outside* the classroom. Although L2 WTC scales including out of class behaviour have been in existence since MacIntyre et al.’s (2001) study, only more recently has this area begun to be explored in a qualitative way (e.g., Benson & Reinders, 2011) and theoretical concepts of LBC (Learning Beyond the Classroom) developed (Reinders & Benson, 2017). Although MacIntyre et al. (1998) acknowledged the prime purpose of engendering WTC in the class was to prepare students for communication outside the class, they did not extend their theoretical focus so far.

Therefore, although I continue to see value in the definition of WTC as a volitional act or readiness to participate in an act of communication, as originally suggested by MacIntyre (2007) and MacIntyre et al. (1998), I would like to extend Gallagher’s more recent (2019) definition of WTC and the variables which have influence over this construct (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1), to include influences of time, past and present, and context, both in and out of the classroom. From the findings of my study, I would suggest that:

An individual’s level of L2 WTC in any given communication situation is the result of a dynamic everchanging combination of variables, which, when viewed from an ecological perspective, arise from all levels of the ecosystems framework. Therefore, this readiness to communicate either fluctuates or remains constant owing to the effects of both temporal and physical contexts on the L2 learner.

8.4.3 Contribution to methodological insights

In order to collect data for this study, I could have been solely reliant on the participants' self-reports both of their WTC in Iran and in the NZ context. However, Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014) have warned that "WTC values reflect subjective self-evaluations of L2 users' ability to communicate rather than objective measures" (p. 214). Therefore, as well as my observations in the students' classrooms, I interviewed ten of their teachers in order to add another dimension to the 'trustworthiness' of the data collected. No other WTC study so far as I am aware has focussed such attention on the perceptions of teachers, who, after all, have much longer periods of exposure to students' classroom behaviour than a researcher who observes for a short period of time.

Whereas the factors I identified as being important to my participants' WTC may be unique to this particular group of individuals, and the coding system I used to identify the themes in my data was developed to suit the particular methods of data collection and the ecological framework of this project, such a scheme could be applied to similar studies. I chose to do this manually instead of using a computer programme, which meant that I became very familiar with my data and the individuals who had contributed this information, an asset, I believe, in the creation of qualitative case studies. The exploration of *reasons* for both the students' perceptions of their own WTC, and their teachers' views, is an aspect of my research methodology I would recommend to future investigators.

Although the methods I used to collect my data have commonly been employed by qualitative and mixed method researchers, i.e., questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, stimulated recalls, and classroom observations, a key contribution to methodology was the longitudinal nature of my study. By exploring a timeframe encompassing the participants' past educational lives in Iran (up to 5-50 years previously), and their present classroom experience in NZ, I was able to extend the range of previous WTC studies, which are often restricted by circumstances to a single semester of classroom activity (except possibly for Derwing, Munro, and Thomson's seven-year study of migrants in Canada beginning in 2008). Larsen-Freeman and L. Cameron (2008b) have particularly supported this type of approach for researchers intending to investigate dynamic systems [such as WTC] over a variety of contexts and timescales.

As the focus of the ecological approach is the examination of an individual in context in a holistic manner, detailed case studies as recommended by van Lier (2004) seemed to be an appropriate methodological procedure in this study. The choice of apparently contrasting cases of WTC allowed for an in-depth exploration of two of the ten participants at all four levels of the ecosystems framework. Although in previous WTC studies the focus has been primarily on the *microsystemic* level of the classroom, I was able to extend my focus to the *meso-*, *exo-*, and *macro-* levels. Since I had selected participants from one nationality group, I was able to investigate their common experience in Iran with a shared background of possibly similar cultural and educational experience. However, contrary to my initial expectations, in the view of my participants, cultural aspects did not play a large role in their WTC, with only a few comments recorded in relation to the perceived obligation to sit in class with other students from the same language background. The contribution of this aspect of my study is to demonstrate the value of applying the whole ecosystems framework to add further depth and structure to a conventional case study approach.

8.4.4 Contribution to practice

Although it is unlikely that language teachers would have time to explore their students' past and present WTC to the depth that I reached for my ecological case studies, I would hope, along with Elahi Shirvan and Taherian (2016), "that teachers should become aware of the factors within the ecology of the classroom influencing learners' WTC" (p. 434). In particular, understanding the influences on students of the levels of the ecosystems framework beyond the *microsystem* of the classroom, where teachers primarily focus their attention, that is, past learning experience, outside-the-class events, and elements of institutional and national culture, could provide greater insight into the reasons for their students' communicative behaviour. Above all, teachers may come to realise that they themselves are an important part of this "sensitive learning ecology" (Horn, 2008, p. 142), as was clearly acknowledged by all my participants.

Moreover, teachers should allow for and expect variations in the WTC of their students. The reasons may not be obvious, but if the student is comfortable enough with their teacher to share the cause of their reduced WTC, it may be possible to support them through this situation, or to use the group cohesiveness created in the class to call on other members to

step in. The ‘dynamic’ variations in the WTC of the participants in my study over a protracted length of time serve to illustrate the challenges faced by language teachers, who need not only to know the language and how to teach it, but also to have an understanding of the psychology of their individual students (Williams, Mercer, & Ryan, 2015).

As this study has focussed on the participants’ experience of English language teaching in two quite disparate geographical and political contexts (see Chapter 2, Sections 2.5.2 & 2.5.3), it may be appropriate to provide pedagogical advice and suggestions that are cognisant of some of the constraints imposed on teachers in both Iran and NZ. As suggested by Holliday (2016), “teachers can be victims of social, political, and economic forces acting on the classroom from the wider society that they cannot control” (p. 270).

Suggestions for teachers in Iran

The findings of this study identified the *external* factors of teacher behaviour and methods, suitable texts, and opportunities for interaction with classmates in English, as being important positive or negative influences on the participants’ WTC in Iran. In an ideal world, Iranian teachers of English would have greater access to texts which promoted oral communication skills, and would be less bound by an examination driven syllabus which is focussed on reading and vocabulary.

However, as a teacher in a more privileged BANA (British, Australasia and North American) context, I would be reluctant to make suggestions to language teachers in TESEP (tertiary, secondary, primary state education) situations in countries such as Iran (see Holliday, 2016). Nevertheless, Iranian researchers and teachers have themselves suggested steps that can be taken to encourage students’ WTC, such as choosing topics for discussion which have interest for the students, organising small group activities, delaying error correction when students are speaking, and, overall, creating a low anxiety classroom where students feel comfortable about contributing in English (Khajavy et al., 2018; Nazari & Allahyar, 2012; Zarei et al., 2019; Zarrinabadi et al., 2014). With more access to training in communicative language teaching techniques, provision of appropriate texts and materials, and a reduction in class sizes so there is more opportunity for students to speak, it is hoped that teachers in Iran will become more motivated to encourage their students to demonstrate their WTC in English (see Yaghoubinejad et al., 2017).

Outside the classroom in Iran, language teachers have little control over the resources available for their students to practise their speaking in English, and a significant increase in tourism or foreign investment in Iran seems unlikely in the near future in the present global political climate. However, aspects of modern technology such as the internet and other media sources were identified by my students as enhancing their English skills even in the past. Therefore, it could be expected that Iranian teachers of English today would be able to guide their students to make the best use of these windows onto the English-speaking world.

Suggestions for teachers in NZ

In the NZ context, the participants reported similar factors as influencing their levels of WTC in class. Once again, the role of the teacher was very important, so appropriate pedagogical approaches would seem to be vital for the fostering of WTC. Therefore, teachers should be aware of the deeper 'currents' and short lived 'waves' of WTC within the learner and the fascinating and complex process of enduring and situational variables interacting together (MacIntyre, 2012). In more practical terms, teachers could implement a range of group or pair work activities which increase their students' sense of security and cooperation. In this way, lowering learners' anxiety, recognising individual personality traits, and boosting their self-esteem should be appropriate teacher responses to the *internal* factors which were found to be important to the WTC of the members of this study. Nevertheless, even in NZ, teachers are restricted by institutional syllabi and exam requirements, which, in my study, reduced some of the students' WTC when the teaching focus moved to reading and writing skills rather than oral communication. Therefore, NZ teachers face some of same challenges as their counterparts in Iran. Often the successful promotion of WTC relies on the actions of an individual teacher who goes out of their way to foster communication in the classroom despite the constraints.

In line with the advice of Williams, Mercer, and Ryan (2015), I would like to remind teachers that "learners in our language classrooms can never be separated from the other areas of their lives" (p. 145). Therefore, their lives outside the classroom may have a positive or negative affect on their desire to communicate with teachers or other classmates.

Conversely, opportunities to take part in genuine communication events in the classroom, and strategies learnt there which can be applied outside in the 'real world', can foster *out-*

of-class interaction. Such successful transactions then provide higher self-esteem *in-class*, thus creating a virtuous cycle and higher levels of WTC. Unfortunately, the reverse is sometimes the case and unsuccessful real-life encounters can also reduce students' self confidence *in-class* (as with Abraham in my study over a house purchase). For migrants in a new country such as my participants, these events are to be expected and highlight the difference between learning English in an ESL rather than an EFL environment. In other words, whereas speaking English outside the class in Iran could be an ideal pedagogical goal, communicating with members of the local community in practical exchanges in NZ was vital for my participants' survival.

8.5 Limitations

In this section I outline the limitations of the study and make recommendations to overcome such shortcomings if this same project was conducted again.

8.5.1 Scope

As with other qualitative studies, this investigation was limited to a small group of student participants (n = 10, 8 of whom were women), partly to avoid the practical difficulties of dealing with an enormous amount of data, and, on the positive side, to allow an in-depth longitudinal analysis of multiple cases. In addition, the choice of one particular nationality group could have produced findings which would be quite different those from students of another country or a mixed group. Therefore, it is possible that Iranian students in other countries than NZ might experience other influences on their WTC. On the one hand, I feel the inclusion of their teachers' (n = 10) viewpoints broadened the scope in a beneficial manner. On the other hand, my study did not focus in depth on the conversation partners of these participants and the important role they might also have to play in their WTC, particularly in the migrant situation.

However, overall, "the essence of an ecological perspective on language teaching is precisely that it works with situations in their own terms and in the light of the dynamics which operate in these situations" (Tudor, 2003, p. 10). Therefore, I would not recommend as appropriate for comparison purposes a study which involved a large increase in the number of participants, or a purely scale-based quantitative investigation.

However, I would suggest changing the focus of this qualitative WTC investigation to other nationality groups, particularly migrants, as this area is under-researched, or to groups of Iranians in other parts of the world. The examination of a shared culture, although there are dangers in stereotyping, can provide a researcher with a *macro*-level ecological approach to background the *micro*-level communication behaviours of students in a classroom context.

In addition, although I extended the scope of my investigation to *outside-the-classroom*, I was unable to personally observe my participants' WTC behaviour in the NZ community. Therefore, I was reliant on their recollections as reported to me, possibly at some considerable time after the event. Thus, if a student journal or some form of digital device could be used to record communication events as they happened or soon after, it would add another dimension to the study. As for their experiences in Iran, data collection could be extended to teachers of English in Iran to corroborate the participants' accounts.

8.5.2 Method

As mentioned above, 'self-report' both in questionnaires and in interviews provided the bulk of the data collected for this study. Such a method could be regarded as self-biased and lacking 'scientific validity'. However, for qualitative researchers, it is a way to hear the participants' 'voice', particularly if they feel there is no right or wrong answer (McCroskey & McCroskey, 1988). The presentation in the findings of the actual, uncorrected text of the student interviews was also an attempt to give the readers of this thesis an opportunity to hear the 'voices' of the participants as I did and make their own interpretation. Not all researchers agree with this approach (e.g., Dörnyei, 2007), and others conduct their interviews in the students' first language and translate the data into English themselves (Peng, 2014). Although this may be appropriate for beginning or elementary speakers of the target language, in my study I was reluctant to employ a translator or interpreter who might act as a filter between me and the data collected (see Kouritzin, 2000). Therefore, I would recommend other qualitative researchers to follow a similar process.

Data collection in the classroom was based on my observations alone and audiotaped for comparison and stimulated recall purposes. Multiple observers and videotaping lessons may have been a way to verify any conclusions I reached in my findings, but, as with many aspects of such a detailed, longitudinal study, I had to weigh up the practicalities of enlisting

other researchers and take into account the ethical considerations of gaining the consent of non-participant members of class. Classrooms are not completely 'natural' environments, but I did not want to be more intrusive than was necessary. If a way could be found to do this more discreetly with modern technology, which also respected the wishes of non-participants, it would be advantageous.

8.6 Further research recommendations

Although my investigation has revealed in more depth the nature of an ecosystem as it relates to the WTC of individual student cases, Tudor (2003) has emphasised that "an ecological approach ... rests on the concept of local meaningfulness" (p. 8). Therefore, there is always a place for more research in different geographical contexts and with a variety of participants. Together they will make up the kaleidoscopic detail, which Tudor (2003) sees as the 'dynamics' of the learning-teaching situation in the language classroom. Moreover, he suggests that "the ecological perspective on language teaching has common ground with wider trends in current scientific research, many of which are discussed under the general heading of Complexity Theory" (p. 9).

Complexity or Dynamic Systems Theory, which has supplied the other theoretical background to this investigation, has been applied to WTC empirical studies since MacIntyre and Legatto's (2011) 'idiodynamic' exploration. However, an expansion of this theory to timescales beyond the immediate classroom environment has yet to be undertaken by WTC researchers. Links between DST and ecosystems theory could be further explored on the basis that dynamic systems "is an ecological theory" (Larsen-Freeman, 2016a, p. xi). Syed (2016) began this process in his WTC study, although finally he chose DST over ecological theory as having "a broader lens" (p. 53). Therefore, other than my present investigation, it yet remains an open field.

In terms of the variables affecting WTC, as initially described in MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) 'pyramid' model, it is likely that new factors will continue to be added to the existing 100 plus individual learner dimensions revealed so far by SLA researchers (according to Larsen-Freeman, 2018). However, it is my belief, based on the tenets of the two theories mentioned above, that focussing on one or two specific elements which positively or negatively influence learners' WTC, moves the research lens away from encompassing a

holistic picture of all aspects of their identity as individuals, in or out of a classroom.

Therefore, I would recommend qualitative studies which are flexible enough to allow more of the factors that affect WTC for a specific learner or group of learners to be revealed.

Moreover, as well as the variables which have been commonly tracked so far by WTC researchers, a focus could now be directed to the positive emotions which influence WTC (e.g., excitement, enjoyment, satisfaction, interest, and flow), rather than the negative, such as anxiety, and reluctance to speak (see MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Mercer, 2016). Although in my study, the participants seemed to contribute more when asked about negative learning experiences, I could envisage qualitative in-depth case studies, which, as a result of the establishment of long term relationships, would provide more data on the facilitating rather than debilitating influences on learners' WTC.

In terms of physical or geographical context, studies of the WTC of learners *outside-the-class* using qualitative methods are rare, and yet this is where students spend most of their lives, so there must be a flow on effect in the language classroom. Particularly when the learners are new migrants in a country where the target language is predominant, more research is needed to understand their specific needs. Globally, migration has become a very prominent issue in many countries and satisfactory resettlement including the desire and ability to communicate is vital. In addition, for students intending to study abroad, joint cross-cultural comparative WTC studies of groups of students in different parts of the world could be of benefit to them and their teachers (e.g., Iran and China; Pakistan and Korea; New Zealand and Japan).

Finally, classroom teachers and the role they have to play in their students' WTC are still under-researched topics. Although there have been a few qualitative investigations in Iran (e.g., Zarei et al., 2019; Zarrinabadi et al., 2014), and a handful in other parts of the world (e.g., Cao, 2016; Sari, 2016; Zhou, 2015), it remains a profitable avenue for further investigation. Teachers are an integral part of classroom ecology and, according to Kubanyiova and Yue (2019), need support if they are going to help their students to "make meaning" (p. 62) and communicate together.

8.7 Final remarks

On reflection, I am confident that, in the process of this qualitative and longitudinal study of the WTC of a group of Iranian migrants to NZ, I have achieved my aim to better understand which factors make them more or less ready to communicate in English, how those levels of WTC vary from time to time and place to place, and how this phenomenon or construct can be represented in an ecosystems framework. There are no definitive answers, as I believe, with Larsen-Freeman and L. Cameron (2008b), that from the perspective of complexity theory, “[e]ach individual ... acts as a unique learning context, bringing a different set of systems to a learning event, responding differently to it, and therefore, learning differently as a result of participating in it” (p. 205).

In terms of future research, the WTC field is still open for qualitative studies (especially in Iran). From recent publications, as with many areas of SLA research, the use of modern technology has broadened the scope of researchers, who are investigating WTC in chatrooms, gaming, and other virtual worlds (e.g., Freiermuth & Huang, 2018; Kruk, in press; Lee, 2019; Reinders & Wattana, 2011). However, from my experience of language teaching over many decades, I believe face-to-face communication in another language still involves a greater emotional challenge than CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) (cf. Arnold & Fonseca-Mora, 2015).

Therefore, as mentioned above in Section 8.6, I would like to see more research conducted into the specific geographical and political contexts in which the participants operate, including *outside-the-classroom* WTC behaviour, with more of a focus on the role of the interlocutors with whom they choose to have dialogue, in order to draw a larger more detailed picture of the nature of L2 learners and their environment. This may satisfy Kubanyiova and Yue’s recent call for “research that endeavours to study WTC by conceptualising individuals as persons whose biographies, identity projects and desires for meaning making with others collide with the broader socio-cultural and historical settings as they participate in specific acts of L2 communication” (2019, p. 45).

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Appendices

Appendix A - Questionnaire 1 for Students (S1)

Willingness to Communicate Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions. This questionnaire is part of my research project into Iranian English language students' willingness to speak in English in the language classroom. You have been given an Information Sheet and by filling in the questionnaire you are agreeing to take part in this research. You do not need to answer all the questions if you do not want to. I will keep your answers confidential.

A. WTC Questionnaire

In Iran

Directions: Below are 7 situations where you might choose to communicate in an English language classroom. **Circle one of the numbers** on the right to show how willing you were to speak in English **in your past Iranian classroom.**

1 = Never willing 2 = Sometimes willing 3 = Usually willing 4 = Always willing

In your past Iranian English classroom how willing were you to:

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Give an answer when the teacher asks a question in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Talk to your teacher before or after class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Ask a question in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Present your own opinions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Participate in pair discussions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Participate in group discussions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Help others answer a question? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

In New Zealand

Directions: Below are 7 situations where you might choose to communicate in an English language classroom. **Circle one of the numbers** on the right to show how willing you are to speak in English in your present New Zealand classroom.

1 = Never willing 2 = Sometimes willing 3 = Usually willing 4 = Always willing

In your present NZ English classroom how willing are you to:

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Give an answer when the teacher asks a question in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Talk to your teacher before or after class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Ask a question in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Present your own opinions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Participate in pair discussions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Participate in group discussions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Help others answer a question? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

(Adapted from Cao, & Philp, 2006)

English Language Learning Background

- 1. How many years did you study English in Iran?
- 2. How many years have you been studying English in New Zealand?
- 3. Are more willing to speak English now than in your English language classroom in Iran?

Yes No (Circle the answer)

- 4. Explain why you answered yes or no:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

B. Personal Background

- 1. Are you male or female?
- 2. How old are you?
- 3. How long have you been in New Zealand?
- 4. How long have you been studying English at AUT?

Name:

Email contact details:

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Denise Cameron

Ph. 9219999, ext. 6085

WT1102, AUT Tower

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7/2/14 (AUTEC Reference number 14/14)

Appendix B – Questionnaire 2 for Students (S2)

Willingness to Communicate Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions. This questionnaire is part of my research project into Iranian English language students' willingness to speak in English in the language classroom. You have been given an Information Sheet and by filling in the questionnaire you are agreeing to take part in this research. You do not need to answer all the questions if you do not want to. I will keep your answers confidential.

A. WTC Questionnaire

In S1 2015

Directions: Below are 7 situations where you might choose to communicate in an English language classroom. **Circle one of the numbers** on the right to show how willing you were to speak in English **in your past S1 2015 classroom.**

1 = Never willing 2 = Sometimes willing 3 = Usually willing 4 = Always willing

In your past S1 2015 English classroom (IAE or AE1) how willing were you to:

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Give an answer when the teacher asks a question in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Talk to your teacher before or after class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Ask a question in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Present your own opinions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Participate in pair discussions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Participate in group discussions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Help others answer a question? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

In S2 2015

Directions: Below are 7 situations where you might choose to communicate in an English language classroom. **Circle one of the numbers** on the right to show how willing you are to speak in English **in your present S2 2015 classroom (AE1 or AE2).**

1 = Never willing 2 = Sometimes willing 3 = Usually willing 4 = Always willing

In your present S2 2015 classroom (AE1 or AE2) how willing are you to:

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Give an answer when the teacher asks a question in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Talk to your teacher before or after class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Ask a question in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Present your own opinions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Participate in pair discussions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Participate in group discussions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Help others answer a question? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

English Language Learning Background

1. How many years have you been studying English in New Zealand?
2. Are more willing to speak English now in your S2 2014 class than in your S1 2014 class?
3. Yes No (*Circle the answer*)
4. Explain why you answered yes or no:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

B. Personal Background

1. Are you male or female?
2. How old are you?
3. How long have you been in New Zealand?
4. How long have you been studying English at AUT?

Name:

Email contact details:

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Denise Cameron

Ph. 9219999, ext. 6085

WT1102, AUT Tower

Appendix C - Questionnaire for Teachers

Questions for Teachers

Please answer the following questions. This questionnaire is part of my research project into Iranian English language students' willingness to speak in English in the language classroom. You have been given an Information Sheet and by filling in the questionnaire you are agreeing to take part in this research. You do not need to answer all the questions if you do not want to. Your answers will be kept confidential.

WTC Questionnaire

Directions: Below are 7 situations where a student might choose to communicate in an English language classroom. **Choose** the number on the right to show how willing you think (Student's Name) is to speak in English in his/her present New Zealand classroom.

1 = Never willing 2 = Sometimes willing 3 = Usually willing 4 = Always willing

In his/her English class how willing is (Student's Name) to:

- | | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. Give an answer when the teacher asks a question in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Talk to his/her teacher before or after class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Ask a question in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Present his/her own opinions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Participate in pair discussions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Participate in group discussions in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Help others answer a question? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Please comment on any other aspects of this student's willingness to communicate orally in your class:

.....

.....

.....

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7/2/14 (AUTEC Reference number 14/14)

Appendix D - Observation Record Sheet

WTC Classroom Observation Scheme

Date:

Class:

Duration:

| | Student Name..... |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Speaks/asks/answers to single student | |
| 2. To group | |
| 3. To teacher | |
| 4. To whole class | |

Observation notes:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7/2/14 (AUTEC Reference number 14/14)

Appendix E - Stimulated Recall Questions for Students

(In response to playback of recorded classroom responses and researcher's field notes)

1. How did you feel about today's class?
2. Did you feel like speaking/not speaking in today's class? Why or why not?
3. Why were you willing/unwilling to speak at this point in the lesson?
4. I noticed that you were willing/unwilling to speak in this part of the lesson? Why was that?
5. How did your teacher's/classmates' responses encourage or discourage you from speaking at this point in the lesson?
6. Any other comments you would like to make on this class?

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7/2/14 (AUTEC Reference number 14/14)

Appendix F - Interview 1 Questions for Students

These are some of the questions you will be asked in the interview

1. How long have you been learning English?
2. How long have you been in NZ? Did you come with your family?
3. What was your job in Iran? In NZ?
4. What are your future plans after you finish your English studies?
5. Did you learn English in Iran?
6. How long for?
7. At primary, secondary or tertiary level?
8. Was your teacher in Iran a native English speaker?
9. How important was it for you to learn English in Iran?
10. How motivated were you during your Iranian English language course?
11. How good were you at learning English?
12. What do you think your English level was like? What about your speaking skill in particular?
13. How much English were you exposed to outside the classroom e.g., books TV, movies, internet?
Has this changed since you were young/in Iran?
14. What did you do outside the classroom to improve your English (i.e. demonstrate your WTC)?
15. What are the main differences in teaching style/curriculum/texts between Iran and NZ
teachers/classrooms/schools?
16. How would you describe the biggest differences for you in your willingness to communicate in
English now that you are learning English in NZ instead of Iran?

Appendix G - Interview 2 Questions for Students

(given before the interview)

1. How important is it for you to learn English at this time in your life?
2. How good are you at learning English?
3. What do you think your English level is like at this time in your life? What about your speaking skill in particular?

In S2 2015

4. How motivated have you been during this (ILN6, IAE, AE1, AE2, AE3, or EAS) language course?
5. How competent do you think you have been to communicate in English during this course?
6. How much do you like learning together with your classmates in this course?
7. How would you describe your personality in class (quiet or talkative, outgoing or shy)? Is this different from your usual personality?
8. Did you feel anxious or nervous? Were you relaxed or tense? Why or why not? Is this different from how you usually feel?
9. What opportunities do you have to speak English in this class? Give some examples.
10. Do you feel confident when you are speaking English in this class?
11. Does it embarrass you to volunteer answers or ask questions in this class?
12. Do you feel that the other students speak English better than you did?
13. Are you afraid that other students will laugh at you when you are speaking English?
14. Do you get nervous when your English teacher asks you a question?
15. Are you afraid that your English teacher will correct every mistake you made?
16. In what situation do you feel most comfortable (most willing) to communicate: in pairs, in small groups, with the teacher in a whole class discussion, or talking to the teacher after class? Why?
17. How would you describe the biggest differences for you in your willingness to communicate in your (ILN6, IAE, AE1, AE2, AE3, or EAS) class now, in comparison to last semester in your previous class (ILN6, IAE, AE1, AE2, or AE3)?
18. If your willingness to communicate has changed over the last six (?) months can you explain why?
19. If you are ever *unwilling to communicate* in class, what is the reason? Is it because:
 - a) You don't feel you are generally good enough at English. If so please explain.
 - b) You are afraid to make mistakes which will be corrected. If so please explain.

- c) You always feel anxious about speaking English. If so please explain.
- d) You haven't got enough vocabulary (words to use). If so please explain.
- e) You haven't learnt enough grammar. If so please explain.
- f) You are always shy about speaking
 - i. In English OR
 - ii. In English and in your native language

If so, please explain.

- 20. Is there anything which makes you feel angry when you are trying to communicate in English in class?
- 21. Is there anything which makes you feel frustrated when you are communicating in English in class?
- 22. How could your teacher help you to be more willing to communicate in the class?

Outside the classroom, in the NZ community

- 23. What do you do outside the classroom to improve your English?
- 24. Can you estimate how much of the time (a percentage) you speak English outside of your AUT class? Farsi?
- 25. Are there any shops and businesses in Auckland where you can speak Farsi with the owner or salesperson?
- 26. In which situations do you mostly need to speak English?
- 27. Do you have friends you speak English with?
- 28. When you speak English in the NZ community do you feel more or less willing to communicate than in the classroom?
- 29. What factors/situations/problems make you willing or unwilling to communicate in the NZ community?
- 30. Do you use English to email, chat online, skype, or other internet activities?
- 31. What are your future plans for studying English in 2016?
- 32. How long have you been studying English (at AUT)?
- 33. What has been your motivation/kept you going for this time?

Appendix H - Interview Questions for Teachers

1. When did you begin ESL teaching?
2. How long have you been teaching at AUT?
3. How willing to communicate generally in class was (*named student*)?
4. Was he/she more willing to talk in group/pair/whole class situations? Why do you think?
5. Were there changes in the student's WTC from the beginning to end of the semester?
6. Describe the student's motivation/personality/level of anxiety in class. Did these factors change from the beginning to the end of the semester?
7. How important do you think WTC is for a student to progress in their English language learning?
8. How do you promote WTC in your classroom?

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7/2/14 (AUTEC Reference number 14/14)

Appendix I - Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced: 18/12/13

Project Title

An investigation into the dynamic nature of the willingness to communicate (WTC) of Iranian migrant students of English in New Zealand.

An Invitation

My name is Denise Cameron and I am a PhD student at AUT in the School of Language and Culture. To complete a PhD qualification, I am doing a research project into Iranian students' willingness to speak English in their English language classroom. As you are a student in an AUT English class and you come from Iran, you are invited to take part in this project. Your participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without any effect on your achievement and results in this class.

What is the purpose of this research?

I am carrying out this project to see why some students are more or less willing to speak with their classmates and teachers in English in their English language classroom. I would like to find out which situations they feel more comfortable speaking in, such as group or pairwork, or with the teacher. I am also interested in finding out about students' English language learning experiences in their classes both in Iran and in NZ. The results of this project will be written up in the form of a PhD thesis and may also be presented to conferences and published in journals which discuss English learning issues. Your identity will always be kept confidential.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You are a member of a 2014 class in the School of Language and Culture at AUT and you are studying English. Your contact details have been obtained from your reply to my invitation to participate in this study. You have also been invited to participate because your country of origin is Iran. Iranian

students have been selected for this study because I am interested in contrasting their willingness to communicate in English in their home country and NZ. Other nationality groups have been studied in this research area, but Iranian students outside Iran have not. There are many Iranian students studying English at AUT and in other countries all over the world so they make up an important group. This is also a small-scale study so the number of participants has to be limited.

If more than 20 students agree to participate, your questionnaire may not be used in the final report. Selections may be made to get a balance of age, gender etc. This is to restrict the size of the study to a level I can manage in the time available to complete my PhD.

What will happen in this research?

If you agree to take part you will be asked to fill in four short (approx. 20 minutes) questionnaires which will be emailed to you at the beginning and end of the next two semesters. When you have completed them you can return them by email to me, Denise Cameron, at dcameron@aut.ac.nz. You do not have to answer all of the questions in the questionnaires if you do not wish to. The information from these questionnaires will be included in my final PhD thesis report but your identity will be kept confidential.

What are the discomforts and risks?

There should be no discomforts or risks and the questionnaires should each only take 20 minutes of your time. The questions are about your learning and speaking English. This questionnaire has no connection with your class work or assessment programme.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

If you experience any discomfort you could consult AUT Counselling in B Block, Wellesley St, Level 2, WB 219.

What are the benefits?

If you agree to take part in this research project you will be helping me to find out more information about how students learn English both in NZ and other countries. This information can help teachers to improve their teaching and understanding of students. Students who take part in the study may also learn more about how and why they speak English in their classes. Your information will also provide the data for my PhD thesis.

How will my privacy be protected?

The questionnaires which you complete will be kept on a memory stick and as a hard copy in a locked cabinet in my, Denise Cameron's, office. Any data from the questionnaires which are reported on will be identified only by a code name or number. No one except the researcher, Denise Cameron, will know whether or not you have participated.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The four questionnaires will each take 20 minutes of your time and are completed out of class whenever it is convenient for you and emailed to me.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have 2 weeks to decide whether you would like to take part in this project. If you decide not to take part or you wish to withdraw at any time you are free to do so. This will not affect your class work or assessment results in your English class in any way.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

You agree to answering the questionnaire just by completing it.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

If you would like to receive feedback on this research, you can contact me, Denise Cameron on Ph. 921 9999, ext. 6085; or dcameron@aut.ac.nz. This PhD project will take several years to complete but I will send you a summary of the findings as soon as they are completed.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr John Bitchener, jbitchen@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999, ext. 7830. Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTECH, Kate O'Connor, ethics@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext. 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details: Denise Cameron, dcameron@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999, ext. 6085.

Project Supervisor Contact Details: Dr John Bitchener, jbitchen@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999, ext. 7830.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7/2/14 (AUTECH Reference number 14/14)

Appendix J - Consent Form

*Project title: **An investigation into the dynamic nature of the willingness to communicate (WTC) of Iranian migrant students of English in New Zealand.***

*Project Supervisor: **Dr John Bitchener***

*Researcher: **Denise Cameron***

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated **18/12/13**
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed. They will not be used for any class course evaluation purposes.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one):
Yes No

Participant’s Signature:

Participant’s Name:

Participant’s Contact Details:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7/2/14 (AUTEC Reference number 14/14)

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Appendix K - Confidentiality Form for Transcriber

Confidentiality Agreement



Project title: An investigation into the dynamic nature of the willingness to communicate (WTC) of Iranian migrant students of English in New Zealand.

Project Supervisor: Dr John Bitchener

Researcher: Denise Cameron

- I understand that all the material I will be asked to transcribe is confidential.
- I understand that the contents of the tapes or recordings can only be discussed with the researcher.
- I will not keep any copies of the transcripts nor allow third parties access to them.

Transcriber’s signature:

Transcriber’s name:

Transcriber’s Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....
.....
.....
.....

Date:

Project Supervisor’s Contact Details:

Dr John Bitchener

jbitchen@aut.ac.nz

Ph. 921 9999, ext. 7830

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7/2/14 (AUTEC Reference number 14/14)

Appendix L - Ethics Approval from AUTECH



7 February 2014

John Bitchener

Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear John

Ethics Application: **14/14 An investigation into the dynamic nature of the willingness to communicate (WTC) of Iranian migrant students of English in New Zealand.**

Thank you for submitting your application for ethical review. I am pleased to confirm that the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTECH) has approved your ethics application for three years until 3 February 2017.

AUTECH wishes to commend you and the researcher on the overall quality of the application. As part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTECH:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 3 February 2017;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 3 February 2017 or on completion of the project;

It is a condition of approval that AUTECH is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTECH approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to obtain this. If your research is undertaken within a jurisdiction outside New Zealand, you will need to make the arrangements necessary to meet the legal and ethical requirements that apply within their.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, we ask that you use the application number and study title in all correspondence with us. If you have any enquiries about this application, or anything else, please do contact us at ethics@aut.ac.nz.

All the very best with your research,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K O'Connor', written in a cursive style.

Kate O'Connor

Executive Secretary

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Denise Cameron

Appendix M - Data Analysis Template

Student name:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Microsystem</p> <p>(Students' attitudes, beliefs, behaviour – cognitive, affective, linguistic; classroom environment; teaching methods; tasks; that influence their classroom WTC)</p> | <p><i>Factors affecting present English learning experience in NZ class (RQ1, RQ3)</i></p> |
| <p>Mesosystem</p> <p>(Students' past experience, external factors (including student) and their activities outside the classroom that influence their WTC)</p> | <p><i>Past English learning experience in Iran (RQ1, RQ2, RQ4)</i></p> <p><i>Past English learning experience in NZ (RQ1, RQ3, RQ4)</i></p> |
| <p>Exosystem</p> <p>(Curriculum design; course assessment; external factors (not including student) that influence their WTC)</p> | <p><i>Curriculum in Iran (RQ1, RQ2, RQ4)</i></p> <p><i>Curriculum in NZ (RQ1, RQ3, RQ4, RQ4)</i></p> |
| <p>Macrosystem</p> <p>(The social, educational and cultural systems of NZ and Iran that influence their WTC)</p> | <p><i>Culture and society of Iran (RQ1, RQ4)</i></p> <p><i>Culture and society of NZ (RQ1, RQ4)</i></p> |
| <p>Changes in WTC from Iran to NZ</p> | <p><i>RQ2</i></p> |
| <p>Changes in WTC from S1 to S2 in NZ</p> | <p><i>RQ3</i></p> |

Appendix N - Individual Student Findings Framework & Example of Coding Process

Student name: Abraham

Table N.1 *Student findings framework* (completed)

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>CODES Q1 & 2 = Student Questionnaire O1 & 2 = Observation S = Stimulated Recall TJA1 = Teacher Ja Interview (S1) TFI2= Teacher F Interview (S2) I1 & 2 = Student Interview TFQ = Teacher F Questionnaire (S2)</p> | |
| <p>Microsystem (Students' attitudes, beliefs, behaviour – cognitive, affective, linguistic; classroom environment; teaching methods; tasks; that influence their present classroom WTC)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher/relations with teacher Q1 & 2: q2 I1: 132,138,142,148-150 O1 & 2 S6 TJA1: 26, 36, 38, 66 I2:16, 2:52, 2:62 TFI2: 14 TFQ: q2 • Texts/Topics I1:62, 64 O1 & 2 S29 I2:2, 4, 2: 8-10, 2:16-18, 2:62 • Class activities (groups, pairs etc.)/cooperation with classmates (also vs Iranians) Q1 & 2: q5, q6, q7 I1:122, 1:124-130, 1:154-158 O1 (22.27 superstition) & 2 S30-45 TJA1: 4, 14, 26, 68-72 I2:22, 2:52 TFI2: 4, 6, 10, 16, 18, 32, 34 • Self-perceived competence (cf classmates, + teacher's view & results) I1:22, 1:24, 1:144 S53 TJA1: 40 (speaking, writing), 50-52 (actual results) I2:12, 14, 2:20, 2:40, 42 Cf TFI2 (vocab, gen knowledge): 32 Results: S2, 2013: ESE S1, 2014: IEAS S2, 2014: AE1 (Pass – Merit Speaking & Reading) • Self-esteem (cf classmates) I1:132-136 I2:44 • Confidence (e.g., asks questions)/leadership Q1 & 2: q1, q3, q4 O1 & 2 S6 TJA1: 18, 24-26, 36 I2:36, 38, 2:44 TFQ (remark) TFI2: 4, 6, 10, 19-22, 32 • Anxiety (re T corrections/questions/speaking) embarrassment vs relaxed |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>Q1 & 2: q1, q4 I1:138-142, 1:146-152 O1 & 2 S11-15 TJAI: 36, 40, 64 (refugee) I2:34, 2:44, 2:46, 48, 2:65 TFI2: 26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration/Anger/UnWTC I2:68 • Motivation I1:120 O1 & 2 S23-29, 30 TJAI: 46 I2:6, 2:16, 2:20 TFI2: 10, 12 • Personality (incl. intelligence) I1:132 O1 & 2 TJAI: 4, 22, 38 I2:23-30, 2:44 TFQ (remark S2) TFI2: 6, 14 |
| <p>Mesosystem</p> <p>(Students' past experience, external factors (including student) and their activities outside the classroom that influence their WTC)</p> | <p>IRAN <i>Past English learning experience in Iran</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher behaviour/relations with teacher Q1: q2 I1:28, 1:41, 42, 1:58, 1:60, 1:80-84, 1:94, 1:104-110, 1:114 • Class activities (groups, pairs etc.)/cooperation with classmates Q1: q5-7 I1:96, 1:118 • Self-perceived competence (cf classmates) I1:100, 1:116 • Self-esteem (cf classmates) I1:114, 1:116 • Confidence Q1: q3, q4 • Anxiety (re T corrections/questions) Q1: q1 I1:104-114 • Motivation I1:78 • Personality I1:92 • Educational background/class TJAI: 24, 58-64 • Family influence I1:28, 1:58 • Type of school (public/private) I1:30-40, 1:106-110, 1:168,170,172 • Years of learning English/school levels I1: 28-72 • Texts, methods, pronunciation (BE or AE), native speakers? I1:50, 1:54, 1:60-68, 1:160,164-176 • University English in Iran I1:76 • Overall WTC in Iran I1: 100-102, 180 • Importance of English in Iran (to student) I1:180 <p>NZ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of English in NZ (to student) I1:2 |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>S29 I2:6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past English learning experience in NZ (before AUT) I1:4, 1:6, 1:8 I2:42 • Activities/contact with English speakers/Farsi speakers/ self-perceived competence (in community), problems communicating in community I1:10, 1:12, 1:14-18, I1:216-222 TJAI: 6, 66 I2:32, 2:42, 2:70-80, 2: 88-96 (problem) • Suggestions for improved contact with native speakers I1:216-222 • External factors (family issues, refugee/religion etc) I1:72, 1:120, 128 TJAI: 6, 22, 24, 47-49 I2:32, 42 • Future Goals I1:72, 1:120 S48-53 TJAI: 46, 54 I2:98,100 • WTC in class compared with outside class in NZ I1:210-212 I2:32, 2:82-96 |
| <p>Exosystem</p> <p>(Curriculum design; course assessment; external factors (not including student) that influence their WTC)</p> | <p>Curriculum in Iran</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of school (public/private) I1:30-40, 1:106-110 • Years of learning English/school levels I1: 28-72, 38 • Texts (incl. censorship of western culture), methods, pronunciation (BE or AE), native speakers? I1: 38, 50, 54, 60-68, 80-86, 160, 164-176 TJI: 22, 30 • University English I1:76 • Status of English (second or third lang vs Arabic – religious reasons) I1:80-86 • Past vs Now in IRAN EFL I1:28-72 • Learning English in Iran vs NZ I1:62, 96, 160, 164 <p>Curriculum in NZ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texts/topics methods I1:62 I2:2, 4, 8-10 S29 • Teacher's view of WTC importance TJAI: 56, 68 TFI2: 36 |
| <p>Macrosystem</p> <p>(The social, educational and cultural systems of NZ and Iran that influence their WTC)</p> | <p>Iran</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of Iranians & country I1: 180-191 TJAI: 30, 32 • Non-English speaking environment I1: 180 • Access to English outside school (books, TV, satellite, DVDs) I1: 192-194 • Status of English (second or third lang vs Arabic – religious reasons) I1:80-86 • Importance of English in Iran (past → now) – migration (economic & refugees) I1:180-190, 192-210 <p>NZ</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of NZers (incl culture) I1:218 • English-speaking environment Q1 I1:2 I2: 32, 70, 80-82, 88 |
| Changes in WTC from Iran to NZ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difference in WTC Iran → NZ Q1 (q B3 & 4 - remark) I1:178,180 |
| Changes in WTC from S1 to S2 in NZ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difference in WTC within S1 TJAI: 36, 38 • Difference in WTC S1→ S2 Q2 (q B2&3 - remark) O1 vs O2 I2:32, 2:54, 56, 60, 62, 64 TFI2: 24-26 • Difference in WTC within S2 TFI: 24-26 • Overall WTC (S1 & S2) TJAI: 4 (S1 class), 56 TFQ (remarks S2) TFI2: 4 (S2 class) |

The themes were derived from the content analysis of the data. For example, in the first interview I conducted with Abraham he described his feelings about communicating with his teacher (see italicised section of excerpt below):

Denise: Ok, and are you worried about, I think you talked before that when you make a mistake, or when you talk you have 21 people listening to you, so does that make you feel a bit nervous or uncomfortable or it doesn't worry you? (I1:145)

Abraham: Yeh, it's not too important, they don't know about English and I know I don't know about English, *but sometimes I can't explain my question for teacher, it's big difficult, it's big problem because she don't understand me, I don't understand her, my..., but I need to ask her a question, you know, it's a problem.* (I1:148)

I then collated references to all the comments he made about his relationship with his teacher in the questionnaires (Q1, Q2), interviews (I1, I2), and stimulated recall (S), in addition to my observations of his classroom behaviour (O1, O2), and his teachers' questionnaires (TFQ) and interviews (TJAI, TFI2) (see Table N.2 below).

Table N.2 *Example of Coding a Theme*

| Theme | References to data sources |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Teacher/relations with teacher</i> | Q1 & 2: q2 I1: 132,138,142,148-150 O1 & 2 S6 TJA1: 26, 36, 38, 66 I2:16, 2:52, 2:62 TFI2: 14 TFQ: q2 |

Appendix O - Cross Case Analysis Chart

Participants & examples of RQ1 Themes – New Zealand – Microsystem

| Code name* | Teacher | Texts/topic | Class activities | SPCC | Self-esteem | Confidence | Anxiety | Key |
|-----------------|---|--|---|--|---------------------|--|---|--|
| Abraham (Mehdi) | Q1 & 2: q2 I1: 132,138,142,148-150 O1 & 2 S6 TJAI: 26, 36, 38, 66 I2:16, 2:52, 2:62 TFI2: 14 TFQ: q2 | I1:62, 64 O1 & 2 S29 I2:2, 4, 2:8-10, 2:16-18, 2:62 | Q1 & 2: q5, q6, q7 I1:122, 1:124-130, 1:154-158 O1 (22.27 superstition) & 2 S30-45 TJAI: 4, 14, 26, 68-72 I2:22, 2:52 TFI2: 4, 6, 10, 16, 18, 32, 34 | I1:22, 1:24, 1:144 S53 TJAI: 40 (speaking, writing), 50-52 (actual results) I2:12, 14, 2:20, 2:40, 42 Cf TFI2 (vocab, gen knowledge): 32 | I1:132-136 I2:44 | Q1 & 2: q1, q3, q4 O1 & 2 S6 TJAI: 18, 24-26, 36 I2:36, 38, 2:44 TFQ (remark) TFI2: 4, 6, 10, 19-22, 32 | Q1 & 2: q1, q4 I1:138-142, 1:146-152 O1 & 2 S11-15 TJAI: 36, 40, 64 (refugee) I2:34, 2:44, 2:46, 48, 2:65 TFI2: 26 | Q1 & 2 = St Quest O1 & 2 = Obs S = Stim Recall TJAI = Teacher Ja Int (S1) TFI2 = Teacher F Int (S2) I1 & 2 = St Int TFQ = Teacher F Quest (S2) |

Appendix P - Nested Ecosystems Figure

(interaction between layers/levels)

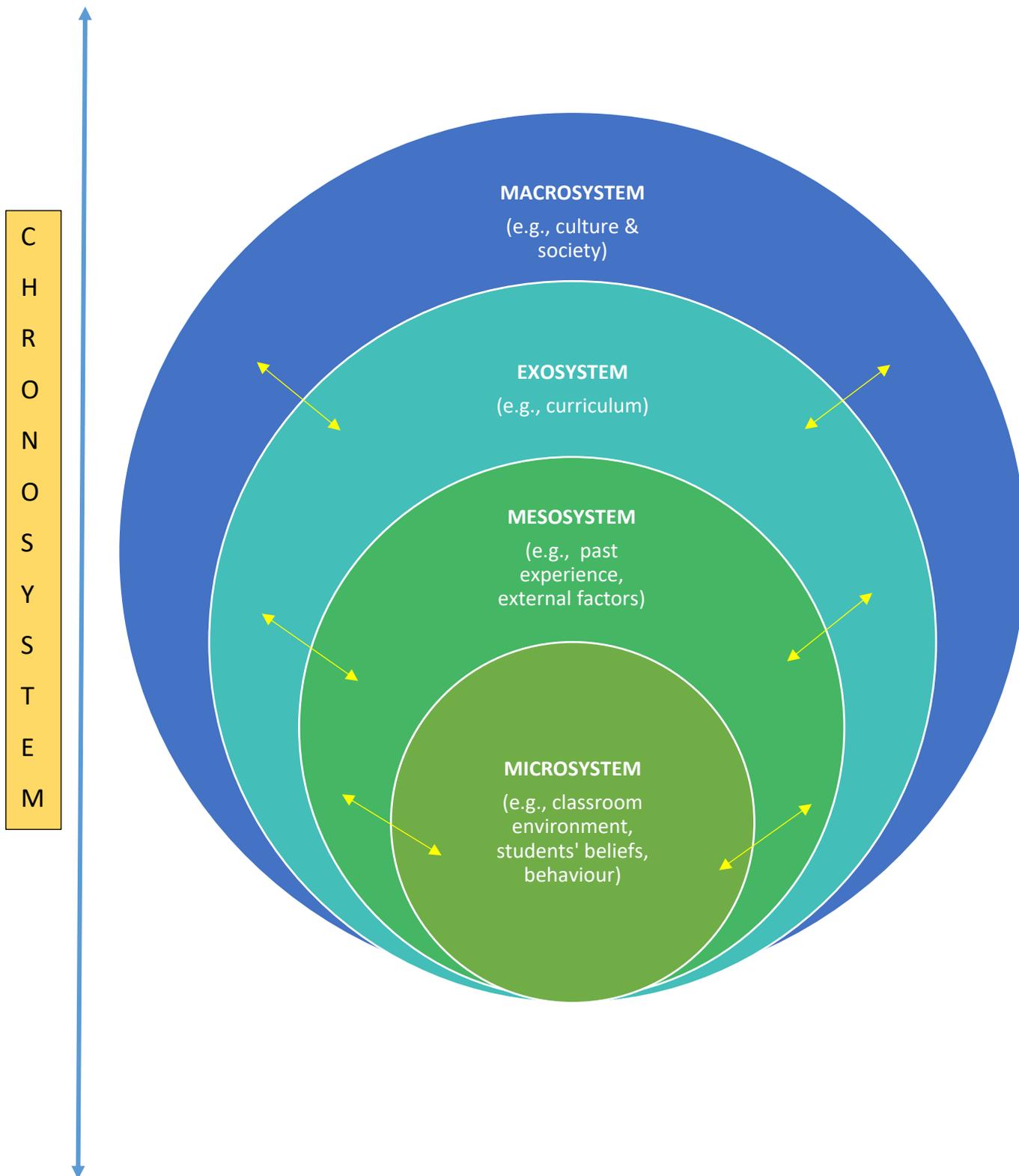


Figure P.1. *Nested ecosystems* (Adapted from Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Cao, 2009; van Lier, 2004 (p.209);Peng, 2012, 2014; Williams, Mercer, & Ryan, 2015)

Appendix Q - Individual Ecosystems Diagram

| Student | Levels of Ecosystem (main findings related to WTC) |
|----------------------|--|
| e.g., Abraham | Microsystem |
| | Mesosystem |
| | Exosystem |
| | Macrosystem |

Appendix R - Triangulation/Comparison of Data from Multiple Sources

Abraham's 'relationship to teacher'

| Abraham | My Observations | Teacher Joan (S1) | Teacher Fiona (S2) |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Questionnaire – Q2</p> <p>How often do you talk to the teacher before or after class?</p> <p>Iran & NZ S1 – Never</p> <p>NZ S2 – Usually</p> | <p>S1 Observation</p> <p>Abraham frequently communicated directly with the teacher (Joan), often unsolicited contributions.</p> | <p>Interview S1</p> <p><i>I found him interesting and I had to make sure that I didn't spend too much time, at times, with him (TJAI:26)</i></p> | <p>Interview S2</p> <p><i>He wasn't reluctant to [approach me] if he had a question to ask but... he didn't do that very often because he was aware that my time was precious (TFI:14)</i></p> |
| <p>Stimulated recall</p> <p>NZ S1 – <i>The first week I had a little bit problem with her (S6)</i></p> <p><i>Usually I was talking with her [Joan] in class about everything, not just about the course (S6)</i></p> | <p>S2</p> <p>Abraham still contributed to the class discussion with answers directed to the teacher but more on task. He argues with teacher (Flora) at one point about an answer.</p> | <p>Interview S1</p> <p><i>I think at the beginning we clashed ... so we had a frank and open discussion and sorted that out (TJAI:36)</i></p> | <p>Questionnaire</p> <p>How often does he talk to the teacher before or after class?</p> <p>S2- Usually</p> |
| <p>Interview 2</p> <p>NZ S2 – <i>This semester I'm really quiet, I think depend the teacher because last semester...</i></p> <p><i>usually we [Joan & I] talk together when students do something [else] in the class (I2:62)</i></p> | | | |

Appendix S - Letter of Support 1
(from Iranian community representative)

Copy of email from Mr Shahzad Ghahreman:

Dear Denise,

I am very excited about the research you are undertaking which looks at an important aspect of learning English by Iranian students here in AUT. I am confident that this study is of great value and will help future AUT students with English as a second language to have better learning outcomes.

I have read the summary of the thesis, examples of the type of the questions, and also the questionnaire and, as a member of the Iranian Community and the past president of the Iranian Association of New Zealand, I believe it is essential research which is also culturally sensitive and will be greatly valued by the Iranian community here in NZ.

Kind regards,

Shahzad Ghahreman

*Shahzad Ghahreman, Liaison Librarian, T: +64 9 9219999 extn:8670, M: +64 21 2625 826,
AUT University, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ*

Appendix T - Letter of Support 2 (from Iranian PhD student/English teacher)

To Whom It May Concern

On the request of Denise, I am writing this letter to express my ideas regarding her thesis (*An investigation into the dynamic nature of the willingness to communicate (WTC) Iranian migrant learners of English in New Zealand*) in terms of ethical issues.

I and Denise met on January 15th, 2014 to discuss her thesis project from the point of view of ethical issues. Denise had already sent her interview questions to me to get my perspective about them, so I already had some information about her study. In our meeting, I gave some feedback regarding the questionnaire and the letter of invitation to avoid ethical problems. After discussing the project with her, I as an Iranian found the project is culturally appropriate for Iranian community. The meeting revealed that in her project she is very careful regarding respecting the values, beliefs and norms of Iranian participants in her project.

I have remained a lecturer at one of the Iranian Universities- Islamic Azad University of Behbahan and English teacher and manager of Roshan language school for some years. During my stay there, I would often encounter questions from students' parents about the reason why their children did not like to speak in English although they had spent many years studying English at school and language school. They would say that their children could read and comprehend the English text very well, and they had enough knowledge about grammar, but they faced problems in speaking in English. Similar queries were also raised by some English teachers, as their students would not like to participate in communication with them or speaking activity in class. I believe that these are very common questions for many parents and teachers in different places in Iran. Thus, I believe Iranian migrant English background is formed in Iran and so they could have some problems in communication in the context of NZ. There are many Iranian students in New Zealand both at schools and universities. I am sure, Denise's research findings would go a long way in advising teachers and lecturers about how to help Iranian migrants in NZ in their willingness to communicate.

Likewise, Denise's research can pave way for other researchers in the field to continue the other aspects of willingness to communicate for Iranian community in the future.

Many thanks

Saeed Roshan (PhD Applicant in Languages)

Appendix U - Tables for Chapter 4 (WTC factors)

Table U.1 *Levels of WTC in relation to teacher in Iran*

| Participant | Response to Q2: Talk to your teacher before or after class | | | |
|-------------|--|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | Never willing | Sometimes willing | Usually willing | Always Willing |
| Abraham | ✓ | | | |
| Azadeh | | ✓ | | |
| Ramin | | ✓ | | |
| Shirin | | | ✓ | |
| Golnaz | | | ✓ | |
| Tina | | | ✓ | |
| Neda | | ✓ | | |
| Sima | | ✓ | | |
| Parinaz | | ✓ | | |
| Marjan | | | ✓ | |

Table U.2 *Levels of WTC in group and pair work in Iran*

| Participant | Q5 Participate in pair discussions | Q6 Participate in group discussions | Q7 Help others answer a question |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Abraham | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> |
| Azadeh | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> |
| Ramin | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> |
| Shirin | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> |
| Golnaz | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> |
| Tina | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> |
| Neda | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> |
| Sima | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Usually</i> |
| Parinaz | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> |
| Marjan | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> |

Table U.3 Levels of participants' WTC and confidence in Iran (in Questionnaire 1)

| Participant | Q1 Give an answer when the teacher asks a question | Q3 Ask a question in class | Q4 Present your own opinions in class | Total |
|-------------|---|-------------------------------|---|-------|
| Marjan | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | 9 |
| Shirin | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 8 |
| Neda | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 8 |
| Golnaz | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 6 |
| Abraham | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 5 |
| Azadeh | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 5 |
| Ramin | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | 5 |
| Tina | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | 4 |
| Sima | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | 4 |
| Parinaz | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Never</i> | 2 |

Never = 0; Sometimes = 1; Usually = 2; Always = 3

Table U.4 Levels of WTC in relation to teachers in NZ (and Iran)

| Participant | Response to Q2: Talk to your teacher before or after class | | | |
|-------------|--|---------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| | <i>Iran</i> | Semester 1 NZ | Semester 2 NZ | NZ Teachers' evaluations |
| Abraham | <i>Never</i> | Always | Usually | Usually |
| Azadeh | <i>Sometimes</i> | Sometimes | Usually | Always/Always/Always |
| Ramin | <i>Sometimes</i> | Sometimes | Always | Always/Always/Always |
| Shirin | <i>Usually</i> | Usually | Sometimes | Always/Always |
| Golnaz | <i>Usually</i> | Usually | Usually | Usually/Always/Usually |
| Tina | <i>Usually</i> | Usually | (not completed) | Usually/Always |
| Neda | <i>Sometimes</i> | Sometimes | (not completed) | Always/Usually |
| Sima | <i>Sometimes</i> | Usually | (not completed) | Always |
| Parinaz | <i>Sometimes</i> | Sometimes | (not completed) | Always/Always/Never |
| Marjan | <i>Usually</i> | Usually | (not completed) | Always/Never |

Table U.5 Levels of WTC in group and pair work in NZ in S1 (from Questionnaire 1)

| Participant | Q5 Participate in pair discussions | Q6 Participate in group discussions | Q7 Help others answer a question |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Abraham | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> |
| Azadeh | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> |
| Ramin | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> |
| Shirin | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> |
| Golnaz | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> |
| Tina | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> |
| Neda | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> |
| Sima | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> |
| Parinaz | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> |
| Marjan | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> |

Green = more than Iran; Purple = less than Iran
(c.f. Table U.4)

Table U.6 Levels of WTC in group and pair work in NZ in S2 (from Questionnaire 2)

| Participant | Q5 Participate in pair discussions | Q6 Participate in group discussions | Q7 Help others answer a question |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Abraham | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Never</i> |
| Azadeh | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> |
| Ramin | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> |
| Shirin | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Never</i> |
| Golnaz | <i>N/A</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> |
| Tina | <i>N/A</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> |
| Neda | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> |
| Sima | (not completed) | (not completed) | (not completed) |
| Parinaz | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> |
| Marjan | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> |

Blue = teacher's appraisal

Table U.7 Participants' results from their academic records

| Participant | Semester and Year | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | S1 2014 | S2 2014 | S1 2015 | S2 2015 | S1 2016 |
| Abraham | IEAS: Pass | AE1: Pass | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Azadeh | AE1: Pass | AE2: Pass (Merit for Speaking) | AE3: Pass | EAS: Pass (B+ for Oral) | N/A |
| Ramin | AE1: Pass | AE2: Pass (3/4) | AE3: Pass | EAS: Pass (B for Oral) | N/A |
| Shirin | AE1: Pass | AE2: Pass | AE3: Pass | N/A | N/A |
| Golnaz | AE1: Pass | AE2: Pass | AE3: Pass | EAS: Pass (B+ for Oral) | Diploma: B- av. |
| Tina | AE1: Pass | AE2: Pass | AE3: Pass | EAS: Pass (B+ for Oral) | Diploma: C av. |
| Neda | IAE: Pass | AE1: Pass | AE2: Pass (Merit for Reading, Writing, Listening) | AE3: Pass | EAS: Pass (C+ for Oral) |
| Sima | N/A | N/A | ESE: Pass | IAE: Pass (Merit for Speaking) | N/A |
| Parinaz | N/A | ILN5: Pass | ILN6: Pass | ILN6: Pass | N/A |
| Marjan | N/A | N/A | ILN6: Pass | ILN6: Pass | ILN6: Pass |

Table U.8 Levels of participants' WTC and confidence in Semester 1 in their NZ classroom (from Questionnaire 1)

| Participant | Q1 Give an answer when the teacher asks a question | Q3 Ask a question in class | Q4 Present your own opinions in class | Total |
|-------------|---|-------------------------------|--|-------|
| Shirin | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | 8 |
| Marjan | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | 8 |
| Abraham | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 7 |
| Golnaz | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 7 |
| Sima | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 7 |
| Azadeh | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 6 |
| Ramin | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | 5 |
| Tina | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | 5 |
| Neda | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | 4 |
| Parinaz | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Never</i> | 2 |

Green = more than Iran; Purple = less than Iran; Never = 0; Sometimes = 1; Usually = 2; Always = 3

Table U.9 Levels of participants' WTC and confidence in Semester 2 in their NZ classroom
(from Questionnaire 2)

| Participant | Q1 Give an answer when the teacher asks a question | Q3 Ask a question in class | Q4 Present your own opinions in class | Total |
|-------------|---|----------------------------------|---|-------|
| Ramin | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | 9 |
| Azadeh | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 8 |
| Abraham | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 7 |
| Shirin | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Never</i> | 2 |
| Marjan | <i>Always*</i> | <i>Always*</i> | <i>Always*</i> | 9* |
| Tina | <i>Always*</i> | <i>Always*</i> | <i>Always*</i> | 9* |
| Neda | <i>Always*</i> | <i>Always*</i> | <i>Usually*</i> | 8* |
| Parinaz | <i>Always*</i> | <i>Usually*</i> | <i>Usually*</i> | 7* |
| Golnaz | <i>Sometimes*</i> | <i>Usually*</i> | <i>Usually*</i> | 5* |
| Sima | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

*Teachers' evaluations; Yellow = more than S1; Red = less than S1;

Never = 0; Sometimes = 1; Usually = 2; Always = 3

Appendix V - Tables of quotations for Chapter 4 (WTC factors)

Table V.1 Comments on teachers in Iran

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|--|
| Azadeh | <i>Az: ...they push very like, like a slave, we have to learn it and very like, not easy, not relaxed you know, very hard, I think that's good you push (I1:40).</i> |
| Ramin | <i>R: ... if I want to give example in AUT University, I got very different, different, very, very different between New Zealand and Iran my country because, because with teachers staff's patient. You are more patient than collectivist cultures, more patient (I1:116).</i> |
| Shirin | <i>D: So, what do you think made her a really good teacher? Sh: When she was spoken about the teacher, the English, she was telling us, I love English and I love learning English and teaching people and also she was speaking English with her children and her husband. (I1:22-24)</i> |
| Sima | <i>Si: ...teacher was good, book was good but students not necessary to learn English (I1:134).</i> |
| Marjan | <i>M: ... I'm very happy, I'm feel very comfortable because you know all of the things, it depends on your teacher in the class. He or she is the person that make the class friendly, comfortable, you know what I mean, so I feel very comfortable. (I1:90)</i> |

Table V.2 Comments on teaching methodology in Iran

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|---|
| Golnaz | <i>G: English it's, they just taught us about like some basic grammar and not very, I don't know how to explain it. D: Not a lot of talking or...? G: No, no, just for the grammar and know how to use some vocabulary in the gaps and how to use 'she' or 'he' in some situation. That was basic of grammar. Wasn't like very good to speak and... (I1:44-46) D: ...so did they test you on your speaking or just your reading and writing? G: In reading and writing, not speaking. (I1:69-70)</i> |
| Tina | <i>D: Okay and what about speaking, did you do much speaking in your Iranian classes? T: No unfortunately. No, when I think about it, was more grammar. (I1:59-60) T: As I mentioned we are not talking, so it was mostly grammar ... (I1:106)</i> |
| Neda | <i>D: And what about speaking, when you were at high school, how was your speaking in English, were you able to speak easily or well?</i> |

| | |
|---------|--|
| | <i>N: No, no. In high school we don't, we don't speak English, just learn about grammar and make a sentence or write a little report. (I1:75-76)</i> |
| Sima | <i>Si: Iran, I learnt in the university but in Iran grammar, more grammar, learn more grammar, not speaking. (I1:4)</i> |
| Parinaz | <i>P: ... all of my, our teachers is Iranian and they teach me, they teach our grammars and we haven't speak a lot, a little but we have a lot of grammars. (I1:38)</i> |
| Marjan | <i>D: And did you have speaking tests when you were in Iran? M: No, just grammar and spelling test, that sort of things. No speaking. (I1:75-76)</i> |

Table V.3 Comments on private schools in Iran

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|---|
| Marjan | <i>D: So did you feel confident at the time about your speaking? M: Yes, yes because ... I went to the extra class so I feel very happy. (I1:57-58)</i> |
| Tina | <i>T: ... more fun and drawing and talking about learning, sing a song, I mean name of fruit, some things interesting. Not just grammar. (I1:90)</i> |
| Neda | <i>N: In my private school my teacher is make a very entertaining the class like showing movie or make a group and talk together and she said, "You have to ask from me, you have, if you have a question you haven't out of class", before I ask a question. D: Okay so she encouraged you to speak in class? N: Yes, yes. (I1:107-110)</i> |

Table V.4 Comments on groupwork in Iran

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|--|
| Abraham | <i>Ab: Yes, and I actually the group work in Iran, it's very less, usually students do something in the class, just for self, it's not group work. (I1:96)</i> |
| Ramin | <i>D: And so it was just the teacher teaching? R: Just teacher, yes, just teacher, English time. (I1:66)</i> |
| Shirin | <i>D: Ok and in your classroom did you work sometimes in pairs and in groups, or was it really just as a whole class? Sh: No, not in a group. (I1:64)</i> |

| | |
|--------|---|
| Golnaz | <i>D: And when you were in your Iranian class, did you ever have a chance to work in groups or pairs or anything? G: No, no. (I1:107-108)</i> |
| Tina | <i>D: So you didn't really talk to your other classmates that much? T: Just I remember yes we did that but not that much. (I1:65-66)</i> |
| Marjan | <i>M: Iran you mean? No, just teacher and the class, we don't do anything in group, no we don't. (I1:80)</i> |
| Azadeh | <i>Az: Yes, yeh, we had like a small group made up, two or three and sometimes we were, like a pair, two people and sometimes like teacher and student both talking. (I1:96) (in a private school)</i> |
| Neda | <i>N: In my private school my teacher is make a very entertaining the class, like showing movie or make a group and talk together. (I1:92)</i> |

Table V.5 Participants' comments on teachers' corrections in Iran

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|--|
| Azadeh | <i>D: What about when the teacher corrected your English, did you feel that was good or bad? A: No absolutely is good, when she correct my answer, that's why I learn more, never get sad or something like that, no, I'm so happy. (I1:85-86)</i> |
| Ramin | <i>R: Yes, always teacher corrected my wrong, my mistake, I was happy, yes. (I1:54)</i> |
| Shirin | <i>D: If she corrected your English, if she told you you'd made a mistake or something like that? Sh: I was happy. (I1:51-52)</i> |
| Golnaz | <i>D: You felt quite confident okay and did it worry you when the teacher corrected you? G: No. (I1:99-100)</i> |
| Neda | <i>D: And what happens when the teacher corrected you, were you okay about that? N: Yes, yes. (I1:115-116)</i> |
| Marjan | <i>D: Oh that's good. And when you were in Iran were you worried about the teacher correcting you or the teacher asking you questions, do you remember, when you were at high school? M: You mean if I ask me solve some exercise or something like that you mean, no, no. D: You felt quite happy with it. M: Yeah we were happy about that. (I1:69-72)</i> |

Table V.6 Participants' comments on motivation in Iran

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|---|
| Neda | <p><i>N: Because I was think this language is very difficult and it's, it doesn't interest for me but after university I like to learn English. (I1:70)</i></p> <p><i>N: Because I think then I want to use the computer or something like that I have to learn English because all of thing related to English. (I1:74)</i></p> <p><i>N: ... I really like to [learn] English in my country but I was very busy because of my work but when I know I want to come here, I compulsory to learn some English. (I1:221-222)</i></p> |
| Azadeh | <p><i>Az: ... that's why when I was child I like it to learn English, yes it was important, I don't know why but I like it to learn. (I1:56)</i></p> |
| Golnaz | <p><i>G: ... always, honestly I like it English because I thought it was like a fun and was very different than other subjects. (I1:78)</i></p> |
| Marjan | <p><i>M: Yes, because you know English is the language that I really like it. I don't, I am not going to learn it because I am have to do it. I like it to learn English. (I2:58)</i></p> |
| Shirin | <p><i>Sh: For some of them the class it was boring. I - the friend of mine she told always at that time she told me, why we learn English because we live here and our language is Farsi and we watch every programme is Farsi but I was telling her, here we are young, maybe in future we wanna go somewhere or you wanna watch the news or some movie. You should learn another language. (I1: 32)</i></p> |

Table V.7 Participants' comments on teachers in NZ

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|---|
| Ramin | <p><i>R: ...when I got problem with any organisation or StudyLink, whatever and when I asked to teachers that this is my problem, I got right answer and with short way, with short way, and it was so helpful for me. (I2:118)</i></p> |
| Shirin | <p><i>Sh: I saw lovely teachers, how they help us, not me, all of us, all the students here they have a really really hard time to catch [communicate with] to the people here and they can't, [but] they want to speak English. (I1:76)</i></p> <p><i>Sh: [there was] one step between me and the teacher [and] I don't push myself to go to them. (I2:48)</i></p> |
| Neda | <p><i>N: Last semester our teacher was [...], and I couldn't ask anything from her because I think she is very tough and she said, "Oh you have to understand one times", and when one time I</i></p> |

| | |
|--------|---|
| | <p>ask her a question and she said, “No you have to understand, I can’t explain to you”. (12:96)</p> <p>N: ... But this semester [...] and [...] are very good teacher. They said, “You have to question. You have to ask about something you couldn’t understand”. (12:98)</p> |
| Marjan | <p>M: Biggest difference, if I wanna say the most things, one of, one of the different is their accent and here the teacher, because their own language, because their English is their native language, is the mother tongue and they can, they very successful to learn English to the other people... But when my native teacher talk to us you feel that she is from here and she talks very frequently and use the word that the most people use it here. You know what, that’s the different. (11:112)</p> |
| Ramin | <p>R: All of them has their own rule. (12:112)</p> |

Table V.8 Participants’ comments on texts, topics, methods in NZ

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|--|
| Marjan | <p>M: On Monday we usually talk about our weekend. But sometimes the teacher gives us some subjects and let us talk to each other about our idea for a few minutes yes. (12:2)</p> |
| Shirin | <p>Sh: Ok, you know at this time we study like, last semester we was talking too much together and discuss, but this semester no. (12:16)</p> |
| Neda | <p>N: ... last semester I think, thought my English wasn’t good but this semester my teacher learning about, teaching about some grammar it’s very useful for me because I can use in the society. (12:8)</p> |
| Ramin | <p>R: ... we have some Samoan, Tonga’s girls and who was born in New Zealand but yes we have native speakers in our class. (13:56)</p> <p>R: Yes, always I talking, I find five minutes, six minutes extra then go and sit with them and talking with about about small topics and I am happy with it, yes. (13: 64)</p> |
| Tina | <p>T: ... We have some native students and I more rely on them [I’m thinking] they know better than me, so I try to keep quiet and listen. (12:80)</p> |

Table V.9 Participants' comments on pair and groupwork in NZ in S1 & 2 &3

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|--|
| Marjan | <i>M: All of these sort of things I like to speak. Usually we have a group, four or three, we are in group and we talk to each other. I'm happy, it doesn't matter which way all of them I'm happy. (I1:109-110)</i> |
| Shirin | <i>Sh: ...When we working like group, it's good, it's fun, we can speak to each other but if teacher teach us and like she teach and ask the students it's more helpful for us. (I1:92)</i> <i>Sh: Ah sometime and sometime when we want to explain and we don't know, it's easier to ask in our language and then if they know they explain it to English and if they don't know, they tell me in my language Farsi. (S:22)</i> <i>Sh: Ok, you know at this time we study, like, last semester we was talking too much together and discuss, but this semester, no. (I2:16)</i> |
| Golnaz | <i>G: ... I like to be separate from them [other Iranians] but they are, they like to be with me and I have no choice.</i> <i>D: So you would feel bad if you were unfriendly?</i> <i>G: Yeah, yeah. Because it is three years that we are friends. (S2:60-62)</i> <i>D: So you don't have so much opportunity to speak English to anyone anymore?</i> <i>G: No. If we choose someone else specially New Zealanders, it is better to communicate together but when we are same language always we talk in like Iranian language and... (I3:20)</i> |

Table V.10 Participants' SPCC in Semester 1 in their NZ classroom

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|--|
| Azadeh | <i>Az: I can't speak like one hundred per cent right... but is no problem, I can explain what I want to say to teacher. (I1:114)</i> |
| Ramin | <i>R: Good, yes, good, yes yes yes. (I1:5-6)</i> |
| Shirin | <i>Sh: Now, I don't know, maybe my friend or family they can tell me but I feel really really good and day-by-day I feel better than before... it's a little bit hard for me. (I1:3-4)</i> |
| Golnaz | <i>G: ...when I came here, honestly I didn't know everything too much but now... (I1:12)</i> |
| Tina | <i>T: I think yes. I'm happy about it. (I1:174)</i> |
| Neda | <i>N: Yes it's improved... (I1:164-166)</i> |
| Marjan | <i>M: Yes, yes, absolutely, absolutely I feel happy. (I1:86)</i> |

Table V.11 Participants' SPCC in Semester 2 in their NZ classroom

| Feelings about SPCC | Participant | Comment |
|---------------------|-------------|--|
| Positive | Azadeh | <i>Now I'm really happy with my [speaking], because I can understand better than last S[emester] or last year. (Q2: remark)</i> |
| | Ramin | <i>I have [concentrated] on my speaking and I got more [knowledge] about speaking English. (Q2: remark)</i> |
| | Marjan | <i>M: ...I feel that I am okay you know, now I am complete. (I2:140)</i> |
| Ambivalent | Golnaz | <i>G: Yeah but this course is a little bit hard and I have to struggle too much yeah and because I have an aim and I have to do yeah. (I2:6)</i> <i>G: ... when I have a practice, I don't have any stress and I always do it excellent. (I2:45-46)</i> |
| | Tina | <i>T: Yes I think getting better. Sometimes even I don't know what's going on in class, it's challenging I think this semester. (I2:10)</i> |
| | Neda | <i>N: ... last semester I think, thought my English wasn't good but this semester...I think it's good. (I2:8)</i> <i>N: I think no because I don't have enough time for learning English at home... (I2:16)</i> |
| | Parinaz | <i>P: Yeah I think a little bit better, yeah I think so. (I2:23)</i> <i>P: Yeah, yeah I worried. When the learning English is going too hard, I was so ... going to confused. (I2:109)</i> |
| Negative | Abraham | <i>Ab: Yes, but sometimes it really make me tired, really tired and sometimes ... it's like, I couldn't understand anything, my mind is gone, just too much information ... (I2:20)</i> |
| | Shirin | <i>Sh: Actually this course is really really harder than another course... maybe I don't continue next semester because I can't achieve and I work hard, I study hard and when I come here and do the exam I don't have a nice result... (I2:4)</i> |
| | Sima | <i>Si: This time not shy, not shy but I am very worried about my speaking. I'm, I try to do best but I am not successful. (I2:48)</i> |

Table V.12 Participants' SPCC in Semester 3 in their NZ classroom

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|--|
| Azadeh | <i>Az: Actually my speaking is getting better. (I3:16)</i> <i>Az: ...when I want to talk, I have a some mistake in the talking, grammar or I can't found the word, of course, a little maybe I get sad but you know I just keep talking. (I3:84)</i> |

| | |
|--------|--|
| | <i>Az: Like many student are really better than me because actually this semester we have a few student who they born here, of course their speaking is really much better than me, like a native. (I3:56)</i> |
| Ramin | <i>R: ... this course I understanding about more, about English language and I got more vocabulary or phrases and some rule, grammar, yes. (I3:28)</i> <i>R: I think not big different but I think there are differences between English speaking between students. Some can speak fluently, some speaking middle and some need to improve their speaking, English speaking, or listening, as well writing, as well yes. (I3:54)</i> |
| Golnaz | <i>Golnaz: Not now cause I don't have too much communication with others and I think my speaking is not really good. (I3:51-52)</i> |
| Tina | <i>Tina: Actually at the beginning was very difficult and I, I couldn't, I understand exactly what to do but now I think I'm getting better... (I3:2)</i> |

Table V.13 Participants' levels of confidence in Semester 1 & 2 & 3 in their NZ classrooms

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|---|
| Azadeh | <i>Az: ...when the teacher ask me some questions, if I already know the question, I hands up and say the question, always I was active same as now, ... that's my personality. (I1:76) (S1)</i> <i>A: ... I'm not quiet at all when I was a child until now, I'm a Mum now, ... I'm always full of energy, I like to answer to teacher's question or ask question when I don't know.... (I2:14) (S2)</i> |
| Shirin | <i>Sh: ... when you are confident with some person you can speak more and explain. (I2:48) (S2)</i> <i>Sh: ... always when I go somewhere, I'm the talker. (I2:86) (S2)</i> |
| Golnaz | <i>G: ... I think when we have a question in their mind it's better to ask it you know because it's good for us to know because when we go home we don't understand what teacher she say. (I1:30) (S1)</i> <i>D: Is that your usual personality in class or is that just specially in an English class?</i> <i>G: Not specially. I don't speak too much, you know, anytime yeah, yeah... (I2:61-62)</i> |
| Tina | <i>T: [I like] to be talkative and talk to others because it's not good to be quiet especially for learning English, is good to be talkative (I1:192). (S1)</i> <i>T: ...it's my personality when I don't know what's going on, I am not talking about this and so even when teacher asking us about feedback and about our opinion, I try to be quiet because I am more focus onto listen what she is talking about. (I2:70) (S2)</i> |
| Neda | <i>N: But this semester [Barbara and Penny] are very good teacher. They said, "You have to question. You have to ask about something you couldn't understand".</i> <i>D: And that makes a big difference to your confidence?</i> <i>N: Yeah. (I2:98-100) (S2)</i> |
| Marjan | <i>M: ... much more confidence to speak English after so long (I1:36) (S1)</i> <i>M: I feel that this semester I feel that I, I'm very comfortable in the class. I have more confidence and because I have the old classmates so and old and the same teacher, you feel better. (I2:74) (S2)</i> |

Table V.14 Participants' comments on feeling embarrassed in class in NZ

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|---|
| Abraham | <p>Ab: Sometimes it's very difficult because I think I think you know, because many people listen to your talking, you know it's very hard or if I talk wrong way or something, oh it's twenty-one people listen to you, haha.</p> <p>D: You feel a little bit uncomfortable?</p> <p>Ab: Yeh, uncomfortable. (I1:134-136)</p> |
| Azadeh | <p>Az: You mean if I make a mistake, they laugh?</p> <p>D: Yes.</p> <p>Az: Actually I don't like it you know ...I think it depend to student's personality, for example me, to be honest if someone make a mistake I never laugh because I don't like it, maybe she or he get embarrassed you know, if get nervous you know, I don't like it, but some people they do. (I2:30-32)</p> |
| Shirin | <p>D: And if the teacher asks you a question, are you comfortable about answering the question?</p> <p>Sh: Yeh, it's, it depend on the question she ask me, if the question I can't explain and I know some word to explain about that question it's good but sometime when I don't know, and especially when our classmate they laughing, sometime it happen</p> <p>D: Do they?</p> <p>Sh: Yes, you answer something wrong, they don't want embarrass you, just you know you say something and they laugh and sometime it was make me angry, and I tell them "why you laughing?", and sometime no. (I1:81-84)</p> |
| Sima | <p>Si: I think when I speak is wrong mistake, I have too much mistake and people are too tired about my English I think. (I1:76)</p> |
| Neda | <p>N: Yes it's improved but in the first semester I very shy for speak English because I was think my speak is very wrong and I said, "No I don't want to speak English", because maybe some people laugh, laughing to me but now I think wrong speaking is better than to not to speak to other people. (I1:166)</p> <p>N: ...Sometimes, because when somebody ask a question some classmate laughing to people, to classmate. I think it's the reason for somebody shy to ask a question, yeah. (I2:112)</p> |
| Parinaz | <p>P: ... sometimes I think I forgot to speak, I feel a little, a little feel ashamed, but I try to speak more because I needed speak English. (I2:77)</p> <p>P: Yeah of course, yeah I happy [to answer the teacher's questions]. At first time no, I was ashamed but now no, I know what answer and I answer to teacher and I'm happy about that. (I2:117)</p> <p>P: No, at first time yeah, at first time yeah I thought that, but not now. I think that other student same me. (I2:119)</p> |
| Tina | <p>T: No, because thankfully all my classmates they are not mocking each other when they do mistakes, no it's not that. (I2: 120)</p> <p>T: Actually it is quite embarrassing because it is a big class so yeah it is hard for me to ask question.</p> <p>D: Cause you feel there is a lot of people watching you or listening to you?</p> <p>T: Yes. (I3:47-50)</p> |

Table V.15 Teachers' comments on participants' anxiety levels in NZ (Abraham, Azadeh, Golnaz)

| Participant | Teacher | Comment |
|-------------|---------|--|
| Abraham | Joan | <p>J: ... there is anxiety around frustration and you know because he is a high functioning adult male and yet his language is, I suppose he feels he's got these barriers ... I think he was very anxious in the beginning... (TJA11:40)</p> <p>J: ...with [Abraham] with his asylum seeker background, refugee background, the anxiety levels can be higher (TJA11:64)</p> |
| Azadeh | Angela | <p>An: She did become a bit anxious at the end ...I did notice a certain degree of anxiety, not vast, just some. (TA11:32)</p> <p>An: I think [Azadeh] came across as being quite needy and asking a lot of questions for clarification that felt very sort of you know anxious and wanting clarification for kind of reassurance reasons. (TA12:8)</p> |
| Golnaz | Angela | <p>An: Now [Golnaz], well you see when I taught her [last time], she would freak out speaking in front of the class. (TA12:48)</p> <p>An: So it's like she's still a bit nervous there and at times it shows but mostly I would say she's overcome it. (TA12:50)</p> |

Table W.16 Teachers' comments on participants' anxiety levels in NZ (Parinaz, Neda, Shirin)

| Participant | Teacher | Comment |
|-------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Parinaz | Jenny (S1 & 2 Teacher) | <p>D: ... So you would describe her as perhaps a bit more anxious than some of the students?</p> <p>G: Yes, yes.</p> <p>D: Or nervous?</p> <p>G: Yes, yes. (TJE12:39-42)</p> |
| Neda | Barbara (S1 & 2 teacher) | <p>B: I think she's anxious to do well, how anxious is that? I can think of more anxious students. She has a natural anxiety about doing well as a student I think. If you are a motivated student who wants to do well and worries about your mark, which she does, then I think she is probably normally anxious.</p> <p>D: So this is specifically sort of related to learning anxiety.</p> <p>B: Yes.</p> <p>D: But in your conversations with her outside the class, which may have been on other topics, would you have described her as anxious?</p> <p>B: This semester she has been very anxious. It's been very difficult for her and she has been very anxious... (TBI:26-30)</p> <p>B: ...She, last semester she was a good student. She was anxious about passing and getting a mark and all that kind of thing but I wouldn't call her abnormally so. But this semester I do feel that these quite major issues that are going on for her... (TBI:32)</p> |

| | | |
|--------|-------------------------------|--|
| | Penny (S2 teacher) | <i>Pe: No I mean she wasn't a particularly laid back [student] either but she didn't strike me as being very worried or stressed about things. (TKNI:24)</i> |
| Shirin | Fiona (S1 teacher) | <i>F: ...she had this vulnerable side ... you could tell that she was more nervous than most students ... it is interesting because that doesn't come across in the classroom. (TFI1:32)</i> |
| | Angela (S2 teacher) | <i>An: ...I don't know if she is worried about something and sometimes she is concentrating and sometimes she isn't... D: ... so you think probably then she did have certain times when she was quite anxious ... An: Yes I'd say so. D: But you wouldn't necessarily think it was the classroom, it might have been something else. An: Personal, yes, I would think so, just yes, you know but without speaking Persian I can't be sure, I'm just guessing. (TAI1:60-64)</i> |

Table V.17 Participants' comments on their motivation and goals in NZ

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|--|
| Azadeh | <i>Az: I like to learn, that's my goal. (I1:100)</i> |
| Ramin | <i>R: I have to improve my English language as soon as possible and first, then after that I believe myself I can achieve my other goal in New Zealand. (I1:70) R: I got yeah more motivated feeling to continue and finish this course because I decided that next semester if I get this course successfully then finished then I will start to study some subject next year. (I3:4)</i> |
| Golnaz | <i>G: ...we have to push ourselves to go and I have too much you know motivate to go through it and gain our goals... (I2:40) G: I think when we have a goal in our life we can, when we have an aim we go to AUT and keep our studying and yeah... (I3:66)</i> |
| Tina | <i>T: Yes, I think I really like to learn and keep going yeah. (I2:16)</i> |
| Neda | <i>N: Yes I very like to learn English. (I1:160) N: Because I want to connect to people. I want to speak to all of people and make a friend for me and I want to learn their culture. (I1:162)</i> |
| Sima | <i>Si: One of my goals is to learn English. And this can help me to learn English well. I need to speak English and I love to speak English. (Q1: remark) Si: ...now I need and I like to speak English because I want to live in New Zealand... (I1:48)</i> |
| Parinaz | <i>P: Yeah this semester is better. After my job I feel very better. (I2:39)</i> |
| Marjan | <i>M: Yes, yes I'm much more, you know sometimes the, my younger classmates said to me you're much more better than us. I said to them, because I'm older than you and I already know my aim. I wanna learn English but you are not that much serious about that. (I1:82) M: Yes, because you know English is the language that I really like it. I don't, I am not going to learn it because I am have to do it. I like it to learn English. (I2:58)</i> |
| Abraham | <i>Ab: I think yes, I think yes but sometimes my feel is very tired... (I1:120)</i> |

| | |
|--------|--|
| | <p>Ab: ...sometimes I'm thinking about ok, my English, I don't want to study about academic English because I don't want study after graduate in English class, to study about I don't know, bachelor or something, I got my bachelor... (12:6)</p> |
| Shirin | <p>Sh: I can't tell you how much, every day, I, you know, because every day I feel better than day before... (1:66)</p> <p>Sh: Actually this course is really really harder than another course and now I feel really tired because when you can't accept a thing and you know it's make you confusing and you can't, you know you don't have motivation to continue and sometimes I was, last week I was feeling, no maybe I don't continue next semester because I can't achieve... (12:4)</p> |

Table V.18 Comments on WTC inside vs outside the classroom in NZ

| Participant | Comment |
|-------------|--|
| Azadeh | <p>Az: Ha-ha, it's a hard decision, maybe both are comfortable</p> <p>D: So you don't think there is much difference?</p> <p>Az: Yeh yeh, but actually I think in classroom I have talk like in right grammar maybe, you know</p> <p>D: So you try harder maybe?</p> <p>A: Yeh, try harder to right structure, right grammar, but outside, for example, maybe I go to the supermarket they know of course English is my second language maybe they are comfortable but in class I try speak like good grammar with good word pronounce or something. (12:84-88)</p> <p>From a later interview:</p> <p>Az: To be honest for me I think it's equal. (13:136)</p> |
| Shirin | <p>Sh: All the time, all the time was, I'm thinking about, I don't use the 'past' on 'future' and I have to speak correctly. Most of the time I'm like that, but in AUT it's more complicated for me. When I'm out, if something happen, it's natural and I know everywhere and first I go, if I feel I can't speak really good I tell them my English is not very well, that's why they help me and speak really slowly. (12:114)</p> |
| Golnaz | <p>G: They are same but if in our class I was only Iranian people I think it was very good for me to speak too much English you know because we always when we sat behind some of my friends like Arezoo, we talk Farsi. (12:204)</p> |
| Abraham | <p>Ab: I like talking outside the class but it's in the class for me is very comfortable. (12:82)</p> |
| Ramin | <p>R: I think must be the same, I feel little bit different, when I am at class I have more confidence, maybe caused by teacher, ... but not too much different. (12:90)</p> |
| Sima | <p>Si: In class.</p> <p>D: You feel more confident?</p> <p>Si: Yes.</p> <p>D: Why is that?</p> <p>Si: Because classmate, my classmate the same as me and they understand what I say, what I talk to them ... (12:192-196)</p> |
| Parinaz | <p>P: In class.</p> <p>D: You feel more confident?</p> <p>P: Because outside is very better than me and I think confident is confident in my class. (12:201-203)</p> |
| Marjan | <p>M: ... actually the pass [past] all these years I didn't have any opportunity to practise my English and that's the problem and here as well. The English class, the only place that I can practise English, you know what I mean. (11:30)</p> |

Table W.4 Shirin's WTC scores

| Questions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Total Score |
|----------------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| Overall WTC in Iran | | | | | | | | |
| Shirin | Always | Usually | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Always | Always | 17 |
| S1 2014 (AE1) | | | | | | | | |
| Shirin | Usually | Usually | Always | Always | Always | Always | Always | 19 |
| <i>Teacher F</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 19 |
| S2 2014 (AE2) | | | | | | | | |
| Shirin | Sometimes | Sometimes | Sometimes | Never | Sometimes | Sometimes | Never | 5 |
| <i>Teacher A</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 15 |

Table W.5 Golnaz's WTC scores

| Questions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Total Score |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| Overall WTC in Iran | | | | | | | | |
| Golnaz | Usually | Usually | Usually | Usually | Always | Always | Always | 17 |
| S1 2015 (AE3) | | | | | | | | |
| Golnaz | Always | Usually | Usually | Usually | Always | Always | Always | 18 |
| <i>Teacher D</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 18 |
| S2 2015 (EAS) | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Teacher A</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>N/A</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | 11/18 |

Table W.6 Tina's WTC scores

| Questions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Total Score |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Overall WTC in Iran | | | | | | | | |
| Tina | Sometimes | Usually | Usually | Sometimes | Usually | Usually | Usually | 12 |
| S1 2015 (AE3) | | | | | | | | |
| Tina | Usually | Usually | Usually | Sometimes | Usually | Usually | Usually | 13 |
| <i>Teacher D</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | 17 |
| S2 2015 (EAS) | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Teacher A</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>N/A</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | 15/18 |

Table W.7 *Neda's WTC scores*

| Questions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Total Score |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|
| Overall WTC in Iran | | | | | | | | |
| Neda | Always | Sometimes | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Usually | Usually | 14 |
| S1 2015 (AE2) | | | | | | | | |
| Neda | Usually | Sometimes | Sometimes | Sometimes | Sometimes | Usually | Sometimes | 14 |
| <i>Teacher B</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | 16 |
| S2 2015 (AE3) | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Teacher P</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | 16 |

Table W.8 *Sima's WTC scores*

| Questions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Total Score |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Overall WTC in Iran | | | | | | | | |
| Sima | Sometimes | Sometimes | Usually | Sometimes | Usually | Sometimes | Usually | 10 |
| S1 2015 (ESE) | | | | | | | | |
| Sima | Usually | Usually | Always | Usually | Always | Usually | Always | 17 |
| <i>Teacher K</i> | <i>Always</i> | 21 |

Table W.9 *Parinaz's WTC scores*

| Questions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Total Score |
|----------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| Overall WTC in Iran | | | | | | | | |
| Parinaz | Sometimes | Sometimes | Sometimes | Never | Usually | Always | Sometimes | 9 |
| S1 2015 (ILN6) | | | | | | | | |
| Parinaz | Sometimes | Sometimes | Sometimes | Never | Usually | Always | Sometimes | 9 |
| <i>Teacher G</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | 19 |
| <i>Teacher S</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Never</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Never</i> | 7 |
| S2 2015 (ILN6) | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Teacher G</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Usually</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Usually</i> | 18 |

Table W.10 *Marjan's WTC scores*

| Questions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Total Score |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|
| Overall WTC in Iran | | | | | | | | |
| Marjan | Always | Usually | Always | Always | Always | Always | Always | 20 |
| S1 2015 (ILN6) | | | | | | | | |
| Marjan | Usually | Usually | Always | Always | Always | Always | Always | 19 |
| <i>Teacher G</i> | <i>Always</i> | 21 |
| <i>Teacher S</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Never</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Always</i> | <i>Sometimes</i> | 16 |
| S2 2015 (ILN6) | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Teacher G</i> | <i>Always</i> | 21 |

Table W.11 *Participants' Levels of WTC*

| | Levels of WTC | Participants |
|--------------|---------------|---|
| Iran | Low | Abraham, Parinaz, Sima |
| | Medium | Azadeh, Ramin, Shirin, Golnaz, Tina, Neda |
| | High | Marjan |
| NZ S1 | Low | Parinaz |
| | Medium | Abraham, Azadeh, Ramin, Tina, Neda, Sima |
| | High | Marjan |
| NZ S2 | Low | Abraham, Shirin |
| | Medium | Golnaz, Tina, <i>Neda</i> |
| | High | Ramin, Azadeh, <i>Marjan, Sima, Parinaz</i> |

**Teachers' estimates*

Low = < 10/21

Medium = 11-17/21

High = 18-21/21

Table W.12 *Classes and levels of student participants in NZ*

| IELTS levels (approx.) | Class levels | Students |
|------------------------|---|---|
| N/A | ILN6 = Intensive Literacy & Numeracy (1 year course) | Parinaz (S1 & 2); Marjan (S1 & 2) |
| N/A | ESE = Employment Skills English | Sima (S1) |
| 4.0 Exit | IAE = Introduction to Academic English | Abraham (S1); Sima (S2) |
| 4.5 Exit | AE1 = Academic English 1 | Azadeh (S1); Ramin (S1); Shirin (S1); Abraham (S2) |
| 5.0 Exit | AE2 = Academic English 2 | Neda (S1); Azadeh (S2); Ramin (S2); Shirin (S2) |
| 5.5 Exit | AE3 = Academic English 3 | Golnaz (S1); Tina (S1); Neda (S2) |
| 6.0 Exit | EAS = English for Academic Study | Golnaz (S2); Tina (S2); Azadeh (S3); Ramin (S3); |
| 6.5 Exit | DipEL – Diploma in English Language | Golnaz (S3); Tina (S3) |

The first six of these classes were pre-university level, while EAS formed part of a first semester undergraduate course or served as an English language requirement for other undergraduate courses at the university. Marjan, Parinaz, and Sima were in lower level classes which focussed primarily on community or work-related English, whereas the rest of the students were in classes with an academic focus, although this was at a basic level in the Introduction to Academic English course. The focus in the academic classes was on the four skills, Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing, which they studied in separate papers, but my observations were in their Speaking classes as their oral WTC was the focus of my investigation. The highest-level class, which was attended by Tina and Golnaz, the DipEL, was no longer an English language course but still included an academic communication component. It provided a contrasting context in which to determine the level of WTC these students now felt in an undergraduate university course. It is important to note that all these classes contained a mixture of nationalities with between 1-6 Iranian students in each of the participants' classes.

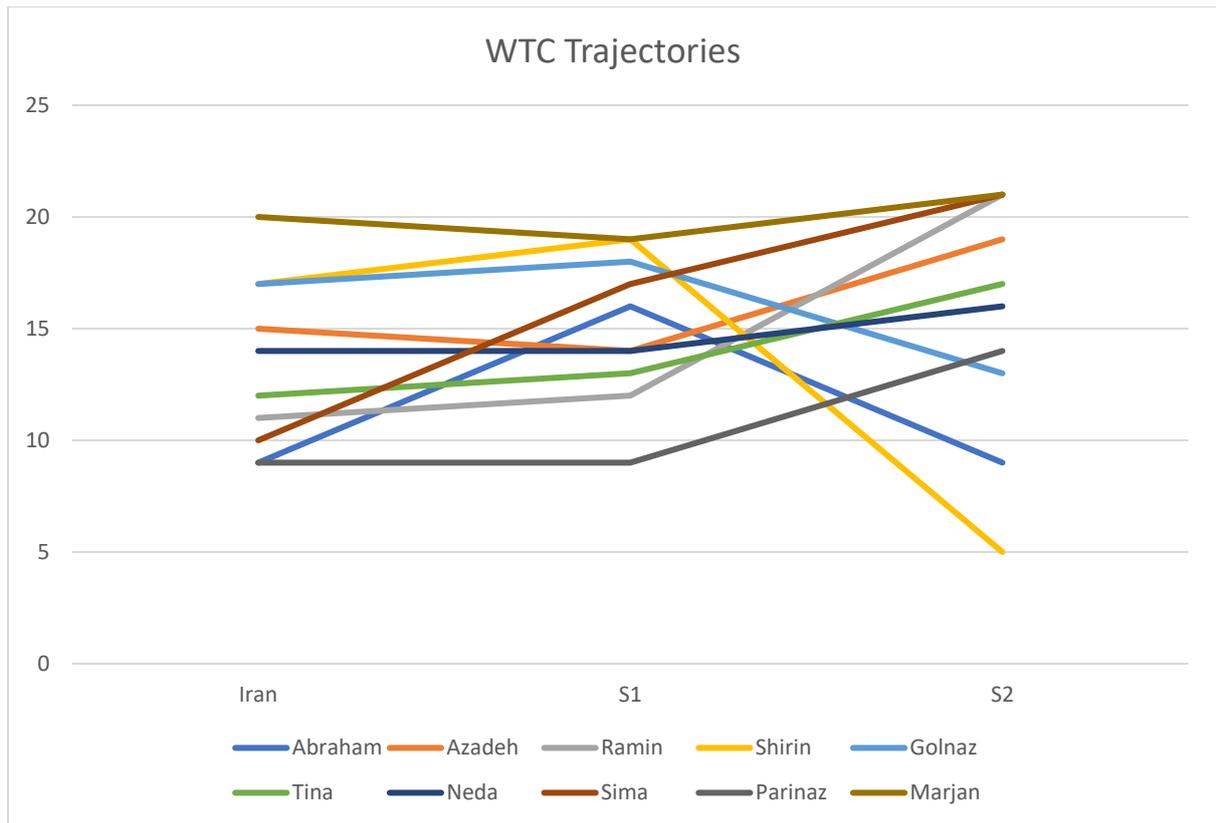


Figure W.1. *Participants' WTC trajectories in Iran and NZ*
 (based on data from Chapter 5, Table 5.2)

Appendix X - Tables of Participants' & Teachers' Views of SPCC for Chapter 4

Semester 1

| Abraham (Semester 1) | |
|--|--|
| Topic | Comment |
| Abraham's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i> | <i>Ab: ...my reading is ok, listening is ok, I'm not sure about the speaking because you know I don't understand I'm talking right or no (I1:24)</i> <i>Ab: ...actually I'm not very happy about my English... (S:53)</i> |
| Abraham's self-comparison with other classmates <i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i> | <i>Ab: ...some of them can talking very clearly... some like my Chinese classmate she's working in New Zealand but she can't talking in English, it's very difficult for her. (I1:144)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Abraham's SPCC &/or ability | <i>J: ... he feels that having been here for two years he is still not as good as he thinks he should be... (TJA1:40)</i> <i>J: ...he passed reading easily and speaking... (TJA1:52)</i> |

| Azadeh (Semester 1) | |
|---|---|
| Topic | Comment |
| Azadeh's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i> | <i>Az: I think like 50%. (I1:7-8)</i> <i>Az: I can't speak like one hundred per cent right... but is no problem, I can explain what I want to say to teacher. (I1:114)</i> |
| Azadeh's self-comparison with other classmates <i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i> | <i>Az: Not all everybody same, some of them maybe high, some of them low, yeh, not everybody, but about myself I'm happy, yes, I'm happy with that. (I1:120)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Azadeh's SPCC &/or ability | <i>F: ...they are husband and wife and their language levels are slightly different, one's weaker [Ramin], one's stronger [Azadeh]... (TFI:58)</i> |

| Ramin (Semester 1) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Ramin's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i> | <i>R: Good, yes, good, yes yes yes. (I1:5-6)</i> <i>R: ...I think speaking the best. (I1:16)</i> |
| Ramin's self-comparison with other classmates <i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i> | <i>R: Some of them speak English as well as me, some of them no, you know, different level. (I1:88)</i> |

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| Teacher's comments about Ramin's SPCC &/or ability | <p><i>F: ...they are husband and wife and their language levels are slightly different, one's weaker [Ramin], one's stronger [Azadeh]... (TFI:58)</i></p> <p><i>F: ... he achieved quite satisfactorily... (TFI:74)</i></p> <p><i>F: ...his speaking skills...he's very able... (TFI:78)</i></p> |
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| Shirin (Semester 1) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| <p>Shirin's SPCC</p> <p><i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i></p> | <p><i>Sh: Now, I don't know, maybe my friend or family they can tell me but I feel really really good and day-by-day I feel better than before... it's a little bit hard for me. (I1:3-4)</i></p> <p><i>Sh: I think the reading and speaking, it's at the same level, but the writing no, it's lower than that... (I1:6)</i></p> |
| <p>Shirin's self-comparison with other classmates</p> <p><i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i></p> | <p><i>Sh: Some of them yeh, some of them they are better than me and some of them no, when I see some student better than me I like to study hard and I [work] to same level with them and then I see some of the students they are not good and I feel you know, I proud of myself, and I say no you are good and you study hard, yeh. (I1:88)</i></p> |
| Teacher's comments about Shirin's SPCC &/or ability | <p><i>D: Ok, and in the end did she pass all her papers?</i></p> <p><i>F: Yes, she did. (TFI:45-46)</i></p> |

| Golnaz (Semester 1) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| <p>Golnaz's SPCC</p> <p><i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i></p> | <p><i>G: ...when I came here, honestly I didn't know everything too much but now... (I1:12)</i></p> <p><i>G: I think I'm better but when I continued for English for two next semester and get my diploma I think it's very better for me because when I get diploma I [can] go to university and get a subject. (I1:130)</i></p> |
| <p>Golnaz's self-comparison with other classmates</p> <p><i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i></p> | <p><i>G: Yeah some of them are good in English. (I1:152)</i></p> |
| Teacher's comments about Golnaz's SPCC &/or ability | <p><i>Di: Zahra was always willing to give an answer to the teacher's question although she was not always correct. (TDI: q7)</i></p> <p><i>Di: She was a very eager student despite not being a fast learner and sometimes making slow progress. (TDI: q11)</i></p> |

| Tina (Semester 1) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| <p>Tina's SPCC</p> <p><i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i></p> | <p><i>T: I think yes. I'm happy about it. (I1:174)</i></p> <p><i>D: And what about speaking?</i></p> |

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| | <i>T: Sometimes I hear some things but I can't use it in my regular and in conversation. That's why I'm thinking, I think my listening is better. (I1:177-178)</i> |
| Tina's self-comparison with other classmates <i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i> | <i>T: Some of them are good and some of them are, I mean, not very good but I don't mind them, a mixture. (I1:226)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Tina's SPCC &/or ability | <i>She appeared to have more everyday Kiwi vocab than some of the others. (TDI: q4)</i> <i>There were students in the class who were more able in reading and writing than [Tina] and [Golnaz] but found it more difficult to speak. (TDI: q11)</i> |

| Neda (Semester 1) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Neda's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i> | <i>N: Yes. I'm very interested about that.</i> <i>D: ...now you've been here for three semesters, do you think your speaking has improved in that time?</i> <i>N: Yes it's improved... (I1:164-166)</i> |
| Neda's self-comparison with other classmates <i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i> | <i>N: Chinese people English is, are good but they didn't speak English, just writing and grammar is very good.</i> <i>D: Okay is that because they're shy or they can't speak?</i> <i>N: I think yes because of shy yes. (I1:191-194)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Neda's SPCC &/or ability | <i>B: ...she is an excellent student and driven and dedicated and everything like that... (TBI:12)</i> |

| Sima (Semester 1) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Sima's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i> | <i>S: I think when I speak is wrong mistake, I have too much mistake and people tired about my English I think. (I1:76)</i> <i>S: No, I don't know. (I1:144)</i> |
| Sima's self-comparison with other classmates <i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i> | <i>S: Somebody yes. Yes somebody.</i> <i>D: Some not so good?</i> <i>S: Yeah.</i> <i>D: Okay and you don't worry about them laughing at you when you make mistakes?</i> <i>S: No, because they speak like me. (I1:170-174)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Sima's SPCC &/or ability | <i>K: ...I think that she, she was willing to ask questions about her learning and to sort of try out things like these alternative words for vocab like volunteering and those sorts of things she, she wasn't, I don't say she wasn't, she didn't appear to be afraid of making a mistake.</i> <i>D: Is that in contrast to some of the other students?</i> |

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| | <i>K: In contrast to some of the other students who I can think of some from other nationalities... who were more confident with their writing but orally would not make a peep in class unless they were directly asked. (TKM:48-50)</i> |
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| Parinaz (Semester 1) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Parinaz's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i> | <i>P: ...I think it's easy language.</i> <i>D: You don't find it difficult? It's not difficult for you?</i> <i>P: No. A little but I try it for more learning.</i> <i>D: And is speaking difficult or reading or writing, which one is most difficult?</i> <i>P: Speaking for me little difficult. When I want to speaking, I confuse and I can't find words and a little difficult. (I1:50-54)</i> <i>D: And how did you do? Did you get good marks [in Iran]?</i> <i>P: No, that times no but now is good for me [in NZ]. (I1:59-60)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Parinaz's SPCC &/or ability | <i>J: Well of the four of them I would say [Parinaz] was definitely the lower of the four and there wasn't a huge gap. Their reading and writing was a little bit below their oral skills but not a huge gap. (TJ11:81)</i> <i>S: She's able student, she's a strong, but you need to ask her. (TS1:48)</i> <i>S: ...just during the last or during the, it was end of semester when I class I asked a student, she was more comfortable to answer, but at the beginning I think she was not happy to answer question although I know that she knew the answer. (TS1:52)</i> |

| Marjan (Semester 1) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Marjan's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i> | <i>D: And do you feel you're making good progress?</i> <i>M: Yes, yes, absolutely, absolutely I feel happy.</i> <i>D: And if you think about reading, writing, speaking, listening, what do you think is your best area?</i> <i>A: My listening is my best area after that reading is okay because sometimes, most of the time I made a mistake putting s or you know some things like that, not that much, I don't have a big problem in writing but my favourite part is listening and speaking, that's my favourite. (I1:85-88)</i> |
| Marjan's self-comparison with other classmates <i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i> | <i>M: ...But you know right now I feel little bit better. I'm much more better in this class because I feel I am much more better than rest of the class. I know so many things that they don't, they don't know actually... (I1:60)</i> |

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| | <i>M: ...you know sometimes the, my younger classmates said to me you're much more better than us. I said to them, "because I'm older than you and I already know my aim. I wanna learn English but you are not that much serious about that". (I1:82)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Marjan's SPCC &/or ability | <i>[Marjan's] English was the highest of any of the students in the class, so she was very confident to participate and communicate in any situation. (TJQ1: remark)</i> <i>J: ... But I was always very, I was aware of the fact that she needed to be challenged possibly more than the others and that always affected the way I arranged the groups for the students, so I didn't put her in groups with the lower levels... (TJ1:37)</i> <i>S: I think her speaking and her confident was more than the other students. (TSI:38)</i> |

Semester 2

| Abraham (Semester 2) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Abraham's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i> | <i>D: So what about your speaking this semester, have you felt your speaking has improved or?</i> <i>Ab: Not really, no, no, they my lecturer this semester they focus about writing more than speaking, we have oral presentation next week, I think so yeh, but it's not really useful for like, practice about the speaking... (I2:13-14)</i> <i>Ab: Yes, but sometimes it really make me tired, really tired and sometimes end of time, two or three times I had, it's like, I couldn't understand anything, my mind is gone, just too much information ... (I2:20)</i> |
| Abraham's self-comparison with other classmates <i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i> | <i>Ab: Sometimes students, my classmates, who speak more than me in, out of class, when they talking, I think oh, he or she talking very better than me, but I don't know.</i> <i>D: Does that worry you?</i> <i>Ab: A little bit, a little bit, in the class I'm not worried in the class, but sometimes when I connect with other people outside the class I worry, oh why my English is not very perfect after two years, something like this. (I2:40-42)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Abraham's SPCC &/or ability | <i>F: ...the participation in any discussion was good and along with that was his ability, he just questioned if he didn't understand something and he had an interest in the language so that he would share definitions and ideas because his vocab was pretty good and better than some others, his spelling was atrocious, but his knowledge was really good. (TFI:32)</i> |

| Azadeh (Semester 2) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Azadeh's SPCC Question: How good do you think you are at learning English? | <i>Now I'm really happy with my [speaking], because I can understand better than last S[emester] or last year. (Q2: remark)</i> |
| Azadeh's self-comparison with other classmates Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you? | <i>Az: Well it depends because you know student from different country, that is different level you know, some student speak like for example they are from Iraq, speak better than me, some people maybe same country or different country you know, I'm better than, you know, it depends, I think I'm middle. (I2:28)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Azadeh's SPCC &/or ability | <i>A: ...she is the more able grammatically and so on, she is the more able of the two [Azadeh and Ramin]. (TAI1:14)</i> <i>A: ...I think she just has a better understanding of the language [than Ramin]. (TJAI1:52)</i> |

| Ramin (Semester 2) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Ramin's SPCC Question: How good do you think you are at learning English? | <i>I have [concentrated] on my speaking and I got more [knowledge] about speaking English. (Q2: remark)</i> <i>R: ...I can understand people and what teacher say at class and classmate as well... (I2:6)</i> |
| Ramin's self-comparison with other classmates Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you? | <i>R: Yes, some of students speaking better than me, some of can't speak.</i> <i>D: So would you say you are somewhere in the middle?</i> <i>R: Middle, yes. (I2:25-28)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Ramin's SPCC &/or ability | <i>A: Pair, class, any situation, he is a very confident person, a very outgoing person, very sort of solid in his confidence. However, his ability did not match his confidence, I'd say he is grammatically quite weak but because of his willingness to communicate it actually doesn't matter because he can get his message across quite successfully. (TJAI1:12)</i> <i>A: ...she [Azadeh] is the more able of the two. (TJAI1:14)</i> |

| Shirin (Semester 2) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Shirin's SPCC Question: How good do you think you are at learning English? | <i>Sh: Actually this course is really really harder than another course... maybe I don't continue next semester because I can't achieve and I work hard, I</i> |

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| | <i>study hard and when I come here and do the exam I don't have a nice result... (I2:4)</i> |
| Shirin's self-comparison with other classmates <i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i> | <i>Sh: Yes, some of them and some of them no, they are speaking, I feel I speak better than them. (I2:38)</i> <i>Sh: ...I try to say something and it was wrong, you know, sometime my classmate or someone, "Oh really how you don't find this right, oh you are on level 2, Academic 2?" (I2:74)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Shirin's SPCC &/or ability | <i>A: Now she's an interesting case because she was very, wasn't constant, I'd say both the others kept a certain level of constancy, she was very up and down and she seemed to be actually at, heading for a fail at a very low level but then all of a sudden she went from, like I'm thinking in the reading paper, she went from not passing to merit, almost off the scale, almost double... (TAI1:54)</i> |

| Golnaz (Semester 2) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Golnaz's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i> | <i>G: Yeah but this course is a little bit hard and I have to struggle too much yeah and because I have an aim and I have to do yeah. (I2:6)</i> <i>D: So if you think now about being in that class, do you feel more confident about your speaking than you did one semester ago?</i> <i>G: Yes because when we have a practice I think it's easy and we can focus and for me when I have a practice, I don't have any stress and I always do it excellent. (I2:45-46)</i> |
| Golnaz's self-comparison with other classmates <i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i> | <i>G: Some of them yeah.</i> <i>D: Does that worry you?</i> <i>G: No because when I see them, I have to push myself to improve my English yeah, yeah and I think when I see they are talking very well I think about myself, why I can't do much more than them and I struggle and yeah...</i> <i>D: So it's a kind of goal or challenge for you?</i> <i>G: Yeah. (I2:74-78)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Golnaz's SPCC &/or ability | <i>A: Now Zahra, well you see when I taught her [in AE2] she would freak out speaking in front of the class and find it very difficult to actually complete a six minute or seven minute speech so I think she's actually gained a lot in confidence...She actually got a B+ overall. (TAI2:48)</i> <i>D: Okay and she participated well in the group situation? she was...?</i> <i>A: Yeah she got an A, A+ for that. And for her, well I mean the PowerPoint is not really willingness to communicate but she got an A minus for that. So she did fall down in that answering questions bit. But</i> |

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| | <i>otherwise she's performing sort of at an A minus level. So I mean that's huge. I was actually quite pleased with that. (TAI2:55-56)</i> |
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| Tina (Semester 2) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Tina's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i> | <i>T: Yes I think getting better. Sometimes even I don't know what's going on in class, it's challenging I think this semester. I have to focus on what, I mean, teachers are saying and I try to work it out "Oh what are they talking about?"", so it's quite challenging this semester. (I2:10)</i> <i>T: Yes I am so happy, I am just thinking "Oh that's good they prepare us for university". It sort of give me hope I am getting better, ... also I'm getting ready for university. I'm so happy about that. (I2:116)</i> |
| Tina's self-comparison with other classmates <i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i> | <i>T: I think our level is high level now. Sometimes I don't know what they talking about so I think I'm not willing that much to talk in the specific topic they're talking. (I2:114)</i> |
| Teacher's comments about Tina's SPCC &/or ability | <i>C: [Tina] didn't attend as regularly. I'm not quite sure what issues she had but yeah nice mature student, capable, very friendly certainly with [Ramin] and with [Azadeh]. She was nice. She answered questions. (THI:10)</i> <i>A: [Tina] came on really well and was a very solid kind of a student. You know what I mean. Yeah I think that she's been quite hesitant in her delivery and so that she was actually in the B+ category rather than the A category. (TAI2:58)</i> <i>A: Yeah well see she wasn't as talkative as [Ramin] and [Azadeh], who were noticeably you know the stars. On the group work aspect she got an A minus and on the asking and answering questions she got an A so I think the thing is that she, I guess her solidity is because she's understanding and you know she's able to ask intelligently and answer intelligently because she understands, yeah. (TAI2:60)</i> |

| Neda (Semester 2) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| Neda's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i> | <i>N: ...I think my English is better than before and I can improve my language. (I2:2)</i> <i>N: ... last semester I think, thought my English wasn't good but this semester...I think it's good. (I2:8)</i> <i>D: Do you think you are quite good at learning English?</i> |

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| | <p><i>N: I think no because I don't have enough time for learning English at home... (I2:16)</i></p> <p><i>N: ... I am very, I shy to speak to another people because I think, "Oh my God, it wasn't my language, doesn't good and it might be bad for speaking to another people". (I2:18)</i></p> |
| <p>Neda's self-comparison with other classmates</p> <p><i>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</i></p> | <p><i>N: Our classmate? No, I think they are easily better than me. (I2:56)</i></p> <p><i>N: Because some people speak, speaking a lot but if you ask from my teacher I always quiet in the class. (I2:60)</i></p> <p><i>N: Yes, I am Achieve but I am not happy for that, no because some people about half, half class, half our classmate were Fail but I can achieve but I am not happy about that.</i></p> <p><i>D: No. Why not?</i></p> <p><i>N: Last semester I was Merit for more than four, about four paper but I very try to be a good student because it is good for my future, I can speak very well, I can find a job and something like this. But if I can't achieve my paper very good, I think it's not good for me. (I2:88-90)</i></p> |
| <p>Teacher's comments about Neda's SPCC &/or ability</p> | <p><i>N: For a first semester I was in the intermediate four [ESE], I was very bad for a language and I remember Beverley, for Beverley be my teacher and she said, "Your language is very bad" and...</i></p> <p><i>D: Really?</i></p> <p><i>N: Yes, because you know me and my husband were same class, classmates and my language was very bad and my husband his language was good. Beverley said, "Your husband have to help you for change the technique for learning language". And he said to me, "You have to do like this", and I practise like that, it's very good. (I2:160-164)</i></p> <p><i>N: ...my teacher say, "Your writing is better than your speaking", and I think it's true yeah. (I2:32)</i></p> <p><i>D: And how did you find Nafiseh in that group presentation, sorry not presentation, group discussion. Did she do okay in that particular assessment?</i></p> <p><i>P: She did fine. She actually had quite a lot to say. She was certainly one of the better ones in that group discussion. (TKNI:31-32)</i></p> <p><i>D: And how was her oral presentation, the other assessment?</i></p> <p><i>P: It was, as much as I can recall, there were so many. I think it was actually pretty good. (TKNI:39-40)</i></p> |

| Sima (Semester 2) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| <p>Sima's SPCC Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</p> | <p>S: This time not shy, not shy but I am very worried about my speaking. I'm, I try to do best but I am not successful. (I2:48) S: Because my problem is my problems because nobody speak in house speak with me. (I2:50)</p> |
| <p>Sima's self-comparison with other classmates Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</p> | <p>S: They say my English is better, they say, but I am not agree with they... but this two or three people speaking good, yes. D: So there are different levels in the class are there? S: Not very different. Not very different. Same. (I2:82-84) S: ... my classmate the same as me and they understand what I say, what I talk to them... (I2:196)</p> |
| <p>Teacher's comments about Sima's SPCC &/or ability</p> | <p>G: ... And she passed speaking with Merit. (TJAI2:21) G: ... to get Merit they have to speak longer, they have to have understanding of it in depth, understanding, they have to show a very rich and wide range of vocabulary. They have to express an opinion. They have to be able to respond to questions and start the discussion and she did all of that very well. (TJAI2:25) G: ... So I think she's always been motivated and she works hard and her speaking has improved because there were times when I found her pronunciation really difficult to understand and that in the first semester in particular and that occurred less and less in the second semester. (TJAI2:34)</p> |

| Parinaz (Semester 2) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| <p>Parinaz's SPCC Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</p> | <p>D: That's good, OK. Do you feel your speaking has got better than last semester? P: Yeah I think a little bit better, yeah I think so. (I2:22-23) P: Yeah, yeah I worried. When the learning English is going too hard I was so ... going to confused. D: And do you find it hard at the moment? P: Yeah. D: It's quite a challenge is it? P: Yeah, challenge, yeah. But is good. Is challenge for me for myself. (I2:109-113)</p> |
| <p>Parinaz's self-comparison with other classmates Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</p> | <p>D: Oh good, OK. You feel in the class that you can say what you need to say okay? Do you have trouble trying to find the words or ...? P: Yeah, when I want to make a sentences I have problem and I think well if I say this word, maybe is not good, is a stupid sentence. But and after other</p> |

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| | <p>students say that my word oh think I, why I say that word yeah.</p> <p>D: So do they help you the other students sometimes?</p> <p>P: Yeah the other students help together... (I2:42-45)</p> <p>D: And are you worried about the other students if they are going to laugh at you or criticise you?</p> <p>P: No, at first time yeah, at first time yeah I thought that, but not now. I think that other student same me. (I2:118-119)</p> |
| Teacher's comments about Parinaz's SPCC &/or ability | <p>J: She's always she's the least confident of the three and well she's the least able to the three also English level wise. She's always willing to communicate when asked but she's far less likely to volunteer answers or contribute voluntarily compared to the other two. (TJ12:38)</p> |

| Marjan (Semester 2) | |
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| Topic | Comment |
| <p>Marjan's SPCC</p> <p>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</p> | <p>M: ...I still enjoy and I still, I think that it's very useful for my English, to improve my English... (I2:48)</p> <p>M: ...I feel that I am okay you know, now I am complete. I am good for the daily speech not for the science things. (I2:140)</p> |
| <p>Marjan's self-comparison with other classmates</p> <p>Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you?</p> | <p>M: ...you know sometimes when you be in the group that the English is a little bit better than other than they can make sentences, they can ask, it's better. You know, sometimes I mean the group that they can't make any sentences, they can't do anything, you know. I should be a person that all of the time asks them and encourage them to speak with me and yeah make some sentence... (I2:18)</p> |
| Teacher's comments about Marjan's SPCC &/or ability | <p>G: ... she's an ideal student because she communicates willingly at any time but she is aware of the fact without me having ever had to say it to her that her English is better than the majority of the students in the class and so she doesn't dominate. (TJ12:10)</p> <p>G: ...usually for her sake I will put her in a group with able, with students of a similar well higher English level but there are times when you just say okay you want them to talk at the table because you don't want to spend hours re-arranging them all and when she's talking to students who are much lower level she's just fantastic with them. (TJ12:16)</p> <p>P: Yeah most of the time [Marjan] is more talking, more than us more than other classmate because I think she's speaking very fast and she knows a lot of word and hard word. Yeah [Marjan] most of the time she's speaking more in class in group. (Parinaz S:14)</p> |

Semester 3

| Azadeh (Semester 3) | |
|--|--|
| Topic | Comment |
| Azadeh's SPCC Question: How good do you think you are at learning English? | Az: Yeah, yeah alright, everything is okay. (I3:10) Az: Actually my speaking is getting better. (I3:16) Az: I'm okay, I'm just worried about the assessment... (I3:44) Az: ...when I want to talk I have a some mistake in the talking, grammar or I can't found the word, of course, a little maybe I get sad but you know I just keep talking. (I3:84) |
| Azadeh's self-comparison with other classmates Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you? | Az: Like many student are really better than me because actually this semester we have a few student who they born here, of course their speaking is really much better than me, like a native. (I3:56) |
| Teacher's comments about Azadeh's SPCC &/or ability | Orally a very capable confident student. (TAQ2: remark) A: So she had quite a well-structured speech. Her pronunciation and grammar interfered with the delivery like I couldn't understand bits and pieces. But she'd obviously prepared it. It was just under seven minutes. I gave her a B minus and that would be the way, I mean it's nothing to do with willingness but you know the grammar and vocab, pronunciation, you know those aspects interfered with the clarity. (TAI2:20) A: ...[Tina]wasn't as talkative as [Ramin] and [Azadeh] who were noticeably you know the stars. (TAI2:60) A: Yeah but I think it's a mistake. But anyway, maybe [Azadeh] might pull it off but I think [Ramin] will be absolutely struggling in psychology. (TAI2:100) |

| Ramin (Semester 3) | |
|---|--|
| Topic | Comment |
| Ramin's SPCC Question: How good do you think you are at learning English? | R: I feel good, I feel good. D: You feel you have made some progress from last semester? R: Yes, yeah I feel that. (I3:8-10) R: ...oral I improve my speaking, speech... (I3:14) R: ... this course I understanding about more, about English language and I got more vocabulary or phrases and some rule, grammar, yes. (I3:28) |
| Ramin's self-comparison with other classmates Question: What about the other students in your class, do you think they speak English better than you or not as well as you? | R: I think not big different but I think there are differences between English speaking between students. Some can speak fluently, some speaking middle and some need to improve their speaking, English speaking, or listening, as well writing, as well yes. (I3:54) |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Teacher's comments about Ramin's SPCC &/or ability</p> | <p><i>C: ...He was quite pleased with the progress he made. (THI:6)</i></p> <p><i>C: ...I kind of felt he did improve in himself I think. (THI:44)</i></p> <p><i>D: He wants to do a degree in psychology.</i></p> <p><i>C: Well he won't get in from this anyway. (THI:63-64)</i></p> <p><i>A: ... He on the other hand went slowly and clearly no matter what and had good eye contact I've written here and you've interacted well with the audience during your speech. His problems with grammar and pronunciation did interfere and so that took him down to a B minus but there were aspects definitely in the A category. (TAI2:32)</i></p> <p><i>A: ...[Tina]wasn't as talkative as [Ramin] and [Azadeh] who were noticeably you know the stars. (TAI2:60)</i></p> <p><i>A: Yeah but I think it's a mistake. But anyway, maybe [Azadeh] might pull it off but I think [Ramin] will be absolutely struggling in psychology. (TAI2:100)</i></p> |
|--|--|

| Golnaz (Semester 3) | |
|--|--|
| Topic | Comment |
| <p>Golnaz's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i></p> | <p><i>D: ...But what about speaking are you sort of happy that you don't have so much opportunity to speak any more?</i></p> <p><i>G: Not now cause I don't have too much communication with others and I think my speaking is not really good. (I3:51-52)</i></p> <p><i>T: Oh yes she is doing well. (Tina I3:32)</i></p> |

| Tina (Semester 3) | |
|--|---|
| Topic | Comment |
| <p>Tina's SPCC <i>Question: How good do you think you are at learning English?</i></p> | <p><i>T: Actually at the beginning was very difficult and I, I couldn't, I understand exactly what to do but now I think I'm getting better... (I3:2)</i></p> |

Appendix Y - MacIntyre et al.'s Pyramid Model 1998

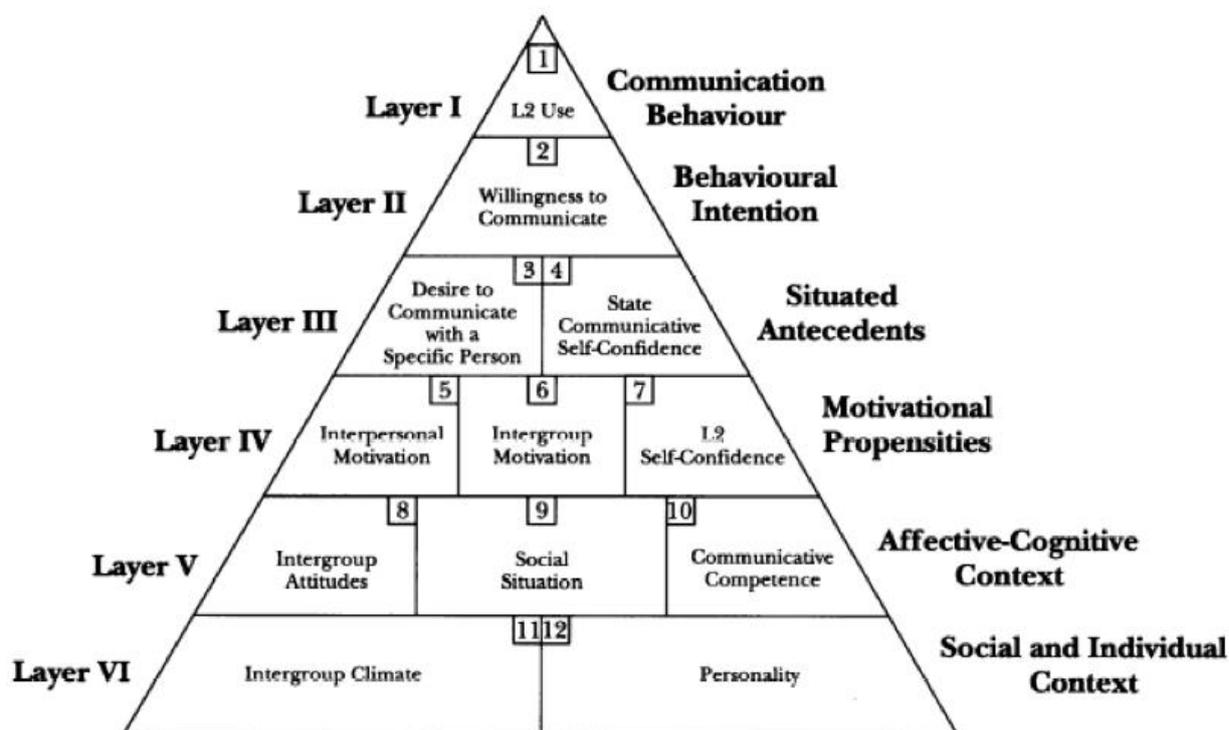


Figure Y.1 Heuristic model of variables influencing WTC

(MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, & Noel, 1998, p.547)

Appendix Z - Bibliography of Iranian Books & Movies

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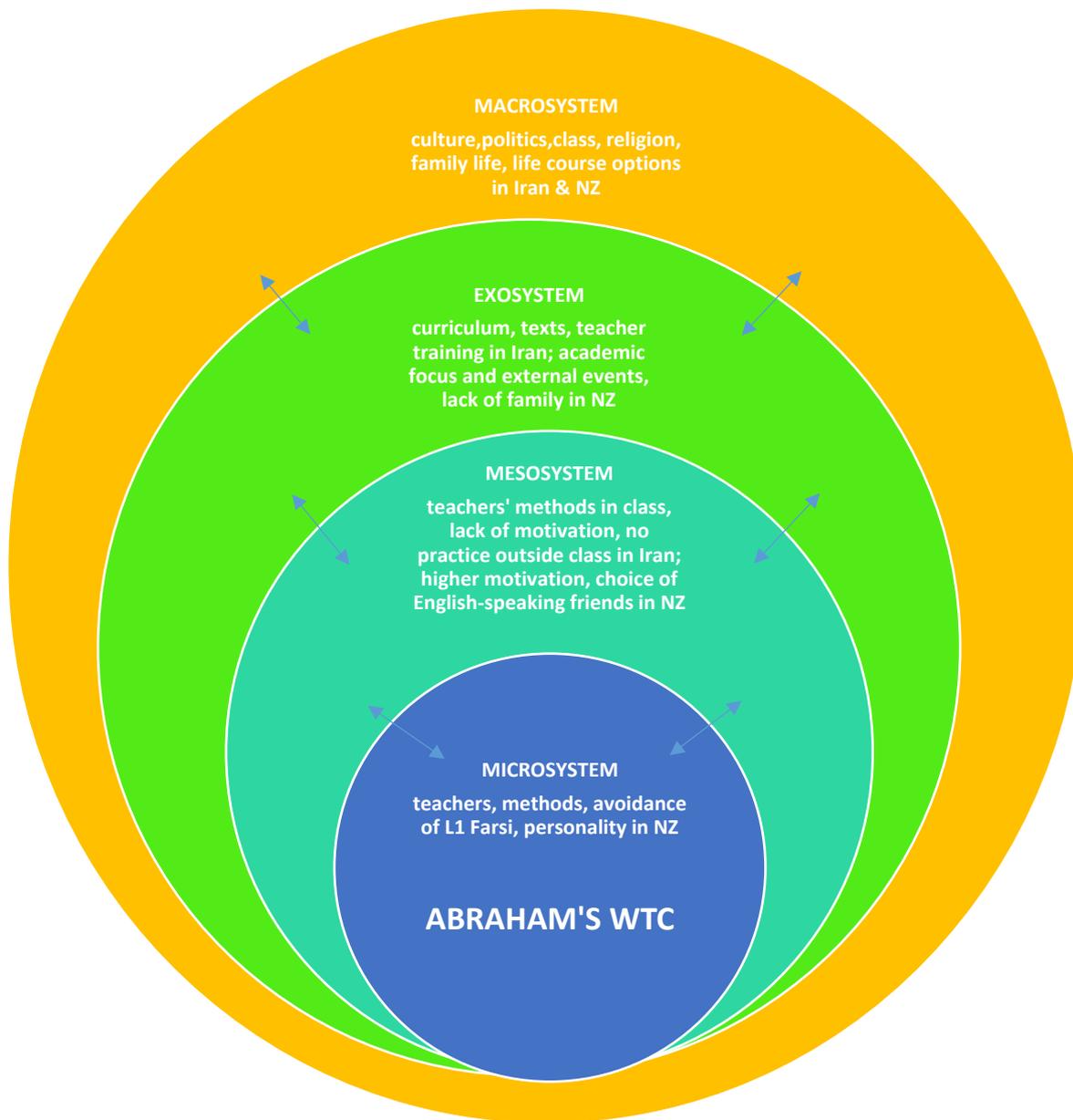
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Appendix AA - Abraham's Ecosystem Profile

(interaction between layers/levels)

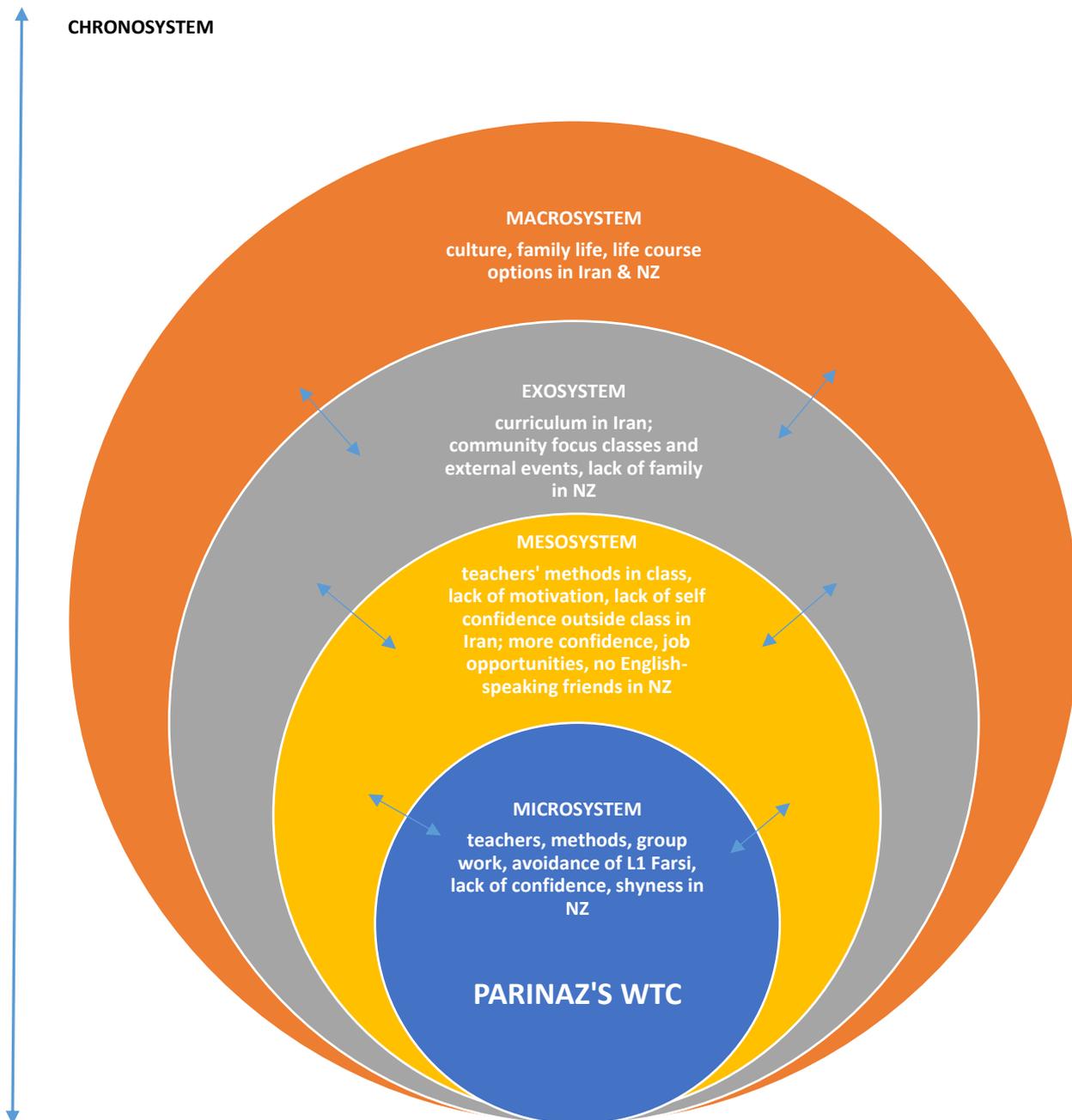
1979-2014
CHRONOSYSTEM



Appendix BB - Parinaz's Ecosystem Profile

(interaction between layers/levels ↕)

1982-2015
CHRONOSYSTEM



Appendix CC - Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi

Partnership: I made enquiries about the existence of an Iranian community group in Auckland, but as I was informed that no such group existed (although there had been one in the past), I arranged an initial consultation with two members of the participants' nationality group (Iranian). One was a longstanding New Zealand resident employed as a university librarian, while the other was a recent arrival who was a PhD student and English language teacher in Iran. I explained the design and purpose of the study and gave them a written summary of the procedures I would be following. I asked for feedback on the study's cultural appropriateness and its possible benefits for the Iranian community. They readily agreed to provide me with the necessary letters of support for my application to the university ethics committee (Appendices T & U).

As the invited student participants were fluent in English (their acceptance into their AUT class is based on an English level entry test), translation of research instruments into Farsi was not necessary unless specifically requested. Moreover, respect for the participants' cultural values and sensitivities was paramount. For example, no questions in the interviews or questionnaires were related to the circumstances of their migration to New Zealand. The consent of the learners was sought before the commencement of the research project and they were encouraged to ask questions of the researcher about any aspect of the process which they were unsure about.

Their participation in this study could have benefits for their future learning and teaching experiences. For example, through taking part in this study they could have their consciousness raised as to how and why they are learning English, and this ability to self-reflect is held to be a very important part of the learning process in current applied linguistic theory (Farrell, 2008).

If the student participants wished to read a report on completion of the project, they could indicate this on the consent form which they signed before the commencement of the study. Members of the Iranian community consulted as part of the ethics application process would also be sent a summary of the final report. Articles published as a result of the study could also be accessed by teachers and researchers in Iran.

As for the teachers who took part in interviews and completed questionnaires about their students' WTC, they would have their awareness heightened of these individuals' classroom WTC behaviour and the possible reasons for this. These teacher participants were assured that their teaching practices were not being evaluated while their students are being observed, and they were given the option on the Consent Form (Appendix J) to have access to the final report.

Participation: The principal role of the participants in this study was to share information. The participants in both the questionnaire completion and the interviews were asked to express their own views on the topic of Willingness to Communicate in English as an L2 and describe their English language learning experiences in Iran and NZ. Their answers may have influenced the path of the research as this is the nature of the qualitative research paradigm, but any revisions were made with respect for ethical principles. The participants in the interviews were given transcripts of their interviews to comment on and verify their accuracy. All the Iranian learners who agreed to participate in the study were invited to complete the questionnaires and take part in the interview process as the number was within a manageable range for the size of the study. Another concern relating to participation was the fact that other non-Iranian learners in these classes were excluded from the study. A justification or explanation for this was provided by the colleague who introduced this project to the classes. It was necessary to point out that this was to provide data for a research study, not a teaching opportunity that the non-participants were missing out on.

The teacher participants provided another source of data to supplement the students' information. All the teachers of the relevant classes were invited to participate.

Protection: The identities of the student and teacher participants were protected by the fact that the questionnaires were completed in their own time and the interviewees had their identities coded to maintain their confidentiality. All data were kept afterwards in locked cabinets in the researcher's office. All interviews took place in a private room in one of the university buildings. The learners and teachers were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time. The participants who volunteered to complete the questionnaires and the interviews were free to choose to answer any or none of the

questions submitted to them. The researcher was not involved in the teaching or assessment of the student participants. The cultural identity of the participants was respected and no questions relating to politics, religion, or their reasons for coming to NZ were included in the questionnaire or interview. Moreover, the researcher had no position of authority in the School of Language and Culture and therefore was a colleague of equal standing to the teacher participants. In the final report code names were used for the teacher and student participants and any data which could reveal their identity would not be included.