CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study deals with examining Moroccan, Iranian, and Indonesian non-native English speakers' willingness to communicate on the Clubhouse application based on the L2 WTC heuristic pyramid layers four to six which concern with Motivational Propensities, Affective-Cognitive Context, and Social and Individual Context.

This chapter presents a discussion of some issues related to the topics being studied. They are the background of the study, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, assumptions, and operational definitions.

1.1. Background of the Study

The willingness to communicate (so forth WTC) of English speakers varies depending on some factors. According to Dornyei et al (2010) in Valadi (2015), WTC is considered as the conscious condition to communicate in given choices and continues to be a discourse construct in determining the success or failure of communicating a second language. Since English is the most popular foreign language learned worldwide, many English experts and researchers conduct studies dealing with the WTC and English as a Foreign Language (so forth EFL) classrooms. Bernales (2016) believes that an EFL classroom needs to provoke the learners to communicate using the second language (so forth L2). He insists

that the more communicative competence the learners master, the higher achievement they obtain.

In line with Bernales' idea above, Astuti in Rihardini et al. (2021) agree that the successful teaching-learning process in the EFL classroom is determined by the learners' language achievement and ability through the interaction among them in the classroom. The reasons for dealing with those phenomena are approved by Chaudron in Rihardini et al. (2021) who quotes Allwright's idea about the crucial interaction in L2 during the teaching-learning process: (1) the structure of L2 can be discovered and applied only by communicating with each other using L2; (2) by communicating with each other, the learners receive a great opportunity to use L2 structure into their speech; (3) the degree of communication and its meaningfulness depends on the instructor and learners interaction. Riasati (2012) also agrees that an EFL classroom with a communicative approach increases the learners' WTC in English. The explanation above affirms that interaction and communication using L2 during the teaching-learning process is crucial as it provides the learners an opportunity to discover and enhance their communicative competence in L2. It supports McIntyre and Wang's (2021) idea that WTC is formed through the organized interaction among multiplex processes to prepare learners using L2 for their authentic communication. To gain this set, one of the steps is identifying the learners' WTC in L2 communication first as what concerns this study.

This study is based on McIntyre's heuristic pyramid model of WTC (1998). It comes with six layers with thirty different variables that may affect learners' WTC. McIntyre and Wang (2021) define that the three upper layers represent the influences of a direct, temporary, and specific situation; meanwhile, the three low

layers deal with the wider and distant influences. WTC is also closely intertwined with the advancement of technology particularly based on the L2 WTC heuristic pyramid layer four to six which deals with Motivational Propensities, Affective-Cognitive Context, and Social and Individual Context. These three influences are important because they relate to the learners' ability and the language groups across the communication contexts (McIntyre and Wang, 2021). Larsen-Freeman (2007) in McIntyre and Wang (2021) emphasizes the essential connection between communication and learning thus requiring the inseparable process of them. In short, WTC in English Language Teaching (ELT) and EFL classrooms is highly needed to create authentic communication.

In its development, WTC in EFL classrooms is lured in various ways. In this digital era, EFL classrooms are engaged in digital learning and communication due to advanced technology. Some factors affecting this phenomenon include simple usage, the huge amount of exposure, or real-life experience. Reinders in Lee & Lu (2021) claim that EFL learners are highly engaged in the technology thus creating an English environment outside the classroom.

Informal Digital Learning of English (so forth IDLE) becomes an attractive tool for practicing English outside formal education. In addition, IDLE is considered a self-learning method for language practicing through certain resources (i.e. social media, applications, websites, and software) and peripherals (i.e. computers, tablets, smartphones) as the independent context (Soyoof et al., 2021). Benson (2011) adds that IDLE is a part of Computer Assisted Language Learni (CALL) as it provides informal language learning practices and contexts.

The application that was used in this case study is Clubhouse. The Clubhouse is a popular platform social-media-like among young people during the COVID-19 outbreak. Zhu (2022) confirms that Clubhouse is the most popular application used to create communities (so-called clubs) and build intensive communication based on his study. The most popular clubs here are the clubs for practicing English. Many English native speakers or teachers create clubs and invite users to practice English here. Since it is an audio application without video, users worldwide, particularly EFL learners, feel more comfortable which affects their WTC. There are three roles in a club of Clubhouse: founder, moderator, and speaker. A founder is the one who establishes a club, a moderator is the one under the founder who moderates the live rooms and deals with the speakers daily, and a speaker is a person who comes to the live room to speak with the moderators about IELTS or casual topics. This study focuses on speakers because they are, nonetheless, EFL learners.

"Smart and Easy English" is one of the English clubs on the Clubhouse application. It is the second biggest English club which has 200.000 followers. Many people worldwide join as a member and practice English in its 24/7 live rooms. Besides its popularity, the club is chosen for this study because it always puts the replays on, so the speakers can check their improvement through the replays or recordings in live rooms. The replays are also beneficial for the researcher due to the recorded data. Particularly, Clubhouse was chosen because there has been no study yet about WTC in Clubhouse as an IDLE.

This study encounters several findings which confirmed that IDLE as a new-context English environment leads to many kinds of research. The research

conducted was focused on extramural English digital activities or IDLE and their relevance with WTC; therefore, the researcher used it as the study fundament. Firstly, Lee and Lu (2021) found that there was a relationship between the second language Motivational Self System of Dörnyei and the students' WTC in the classroom and the extramural digital setting, namely an appearing English communication channel mostly used by today's EFL learners. The study was conducted in a Chinese middle school and the findings showed that both in-class and out-of-class extramural digital settings which were set ideally would increase the young learners' WTC. However, the research was merely focused on the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) equipment in the school lab and used Dörnyei's Motivational Self System model.

Secondly, the research of Soyoof, et al. (2021), which aimed at the use of IDLE during the 1980-to-2019 time span, found that the IDLE literature brought up three benefits to the learners. They include the increasing importance of linguistic technical and cultural competence, the importance of digital skills for communication competence, and the importance of non-professional translation and interpretation for digital language learning. It also emphasized the significance of digital technology's role in future language learning. However, the use of the digital platform was limited to texting on the chat or caption feature on social media.

Thirdly, Kruk (2019) in his journal found that the virtual life of "Second Life" had established a certain WTC, language anxiety, boredom, as well as motivation within the sophisticated dynamic system. "Second Life" is a software that is downloadable on Windows or Mac that provides virtual life in a certain destination chosen by the users. Certain quests affected the output produced by the

users. They would feel monotonous, unpleasant, or not willing to communicate about the negative experience. Meanwhile, for a positive experience, they would feel excited, and available to discuss similar interests as well as comprehend the outcome. This study showed the fluctuated WTC, boredom, language anxiety, and motivation in a graph. However, the researcher did not refer to a heuristic pyramid of WTC which might be more helpful to solve the problem or practically to provide self-discovery.

There have been several studies conducted since the L2 WTC heuristic pyramid theory was discovered. The L2 WTC heuristic pyramid consists of six layers namely Communication Behavior (layer one), Behavioral Intention (layer two), Situated Antecedents (layer three), Motivational Propensities (layer four), Affective-Cognitive Context (layer five), and Social and Individual Context (layer six).

The previous studies stated here merely focused on layer four (Motivational Propensities) and layer five (Affective-Cognitive Context). Those layers show the intra-personal, interpersonal, social, and contextual variables. To be more speci: than the previous studies, this study added layer six as the broadest influences on communication relating to learners' personality and intergroup climate (Social and Individual Context). The variables usually occur and dynamically change depending on the communication context (McIntyre, 2020). It is what the instructors need to apply the best communicative approach to the EFL learners. This phenomenon becomes the first research gap of this study.

The second gap is this study responds to the previous studies conducted to derive the link between WTC and digital applications. Many of them did not

examine and compare non-native speakers' WTC on Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE). The third gap is there has not been any previous research on Clubhouse application dealing with WTC based on layer four to six of the heuristic pyramid (Motivational Propensities, Affective-Cognitive Context, and Social and Individual Context).

In line with the aforementioned research gaps, a case study entitled "Examining Moroccan, Iranian, and Indonesian Non-Native English Speakers' Willingness to Communicate on Clubhouse Application" is set out to contribute to the knowledge that the Clubhouse application can be used as one of the platforms that increase the EFL learners' WTC.

1.2. Statements of the Problem

The study seeks to identify the answers to the following three research questions to achieve the abovementioned objectives:

1. How is the Moroccan non-native English speakers' WTC of Smart and Easy English club on Clubhouse application based on layer four to six of the L2 WTC heuristic pyramid?

   1.1. What Motivational Propensities (layer four) are employed?

   1.2. What Affective Propensities (layer five) are employed?

   1.3. What Social and Individual Context (layer six) are employed?

2. How is the Iranian non-native English speakers' WTC of Smart and Easy English club on Clubhouse application based on layer four to six of the L2 WTC heuristic pyramid?

   2.1. What Motivational Propensities (layer four) are employed?

2.2.   What Affective Propensities (layer five) are employed?

2.3.   What Social and Individual Context (layer six) are employed?

3. How is the Iranian non-native English speakers' WTC of Smart and Easy English club on Clubhouse application based on layer four to six of the L2 WTC heuristic pyramid?

    3.1.   What Motivational Propensities (layer four) are employed?

    3.2.   What Affective Propensities (layer five) are employed?

    3.3.   What Social and Individual Context (layer six) are employed?

4. What are the similarities and differences among them?

1.3.   Objectives of the Study

This study poses four primary objectives as follows.

1. To investigate the Moroccan non-native English speakers' WTC of Smart and Easy English club on Clubhouse application based on layer four to six of the L2 WTC heuristic pyramid;

a. Motivational Propensities (layer four) employed;

b. Affective Propensities (layer five) employed;

c. Social and Individual Context (layer six) employed.

2. To investigate the Iranian non-native English speakers' WTC of Smart and Easy English club on Clubhouse application based on layer four to six of the L2 WTC heuristic pyramid;

a. Motivational Propensities (layer four) employed;

b. Affective Propensities (layer five) employed;

c. Social and Individual Context (layer six) employed.

3. To investigate the Indonesian English speakers' WTC of Smart and Easy English club on Clubhouse application based on layer four to six of the L2 WTC heuristic pyramid;

a. Motivational Propensities (layer four) employed;

b. Affective Propensities (layer five) employed;

c. Social and Individual Context (layer six) employed.

4. To describe the similarities and differences among non-native English speakers of Morocco, Iran, and Indonesia's WTC on Smart and Easy English Club of Clubhouse application as an IDLE based on layer four to six of the L2 WTC heuristic pyramid.

1.4. Significances of the Study

The results of the study are expected to be useful for English teachers, EFL learners, and future researchers. For the English teachers, it is expected that they can use the findings of this study to improve their teaching media by using IDLE to support the EFL learners' WTC, especially the Clubhouse application. For EFL learners, they can have a new point of view on using the right IDLE that supports their WTC, so they become active and fluent speakers or even moderators in the clubs. For future researchers, they hopefully can conduct more research on the other application dealing with other variables on the WTC model thus revealing new knowledge and contributing to English contextual learning through an IDLE.

1.5.   Scope and Limitation

This case study focused on the factors in layer four to six out of the six layers in the heuristic pyramid of WTC designed by McIntyre (1998). They are Motivational Propensities, Affective-Cognitive Context, and Social and Individual Context. These layers are chosen because they relate to the learners' ability and the language groups across the communication contexts (McIntyre and Wang, 2021). Larsen-Freeman (2007) in McIntyre and Wang (2021) emphasizes the essential connection between communication and learning thus requiring the inseparable process of them. Therefore, other factors outside the layers, such as culture or sociolinguistics, are not discussed in this study.

1.6.   Assumptions

According to Simon and Goes (2013), assumptions are supporting elements to conduct a study. It often relates to beliefs that cannot be proven but are necessary to conduct the study, for instance, the assumption of respondents' involvement and the research area situation. In this study, the assumptions are as follows (i) there is a significant connection between learners' language ability and communication in EFL language rooms (ii) the live rooms on Smart and Easy English keep running every day to take the situational data of the native and non-native speakers (iii) the participants answer the survey questionnaire and in-depth interview questions factually and truthfully due to the utilization of the consent forms and the guarantee that their responses are kept secure and confidential.

1.7. Operational Definitions

The operational definitions of the terms in the title are necessary to avoid misconceptions between the researcher and the readers. The terms defined operationally are non-native English speakers, WTC, and Clubhouse application.

1.7.1. Non-native English Speakers

Adkin's idea in Al-Houti, S. K., & Aldaihani, S. M. (2020) defines that a non-native speaker is one whose mother tongue is not English.

The non-native speakers involved in this study are from the major countries, they are from Morocco, Iran, and Indonesia based on their agreement on the consent form. They are chosen because they come with homogeneity in receiving English as a foreign language in their country. They also have high WTC to practice English in Clubhouse as seen from their regular participation in the public rooms for almost a year. At certain times, they act as a speaker and a moderator (interlocutors) in the community system which is beneficial to be explored related to this study.

1.7.2. WTC (Willingness to Communicate)

MacIntyre et al. (2002) in MacIntyre, P. D., & Wang, L. (2021) define WTC as a state of willingness to engage in discourse at specific times with specific persons using L2. WTC used in this study refers to the layers of the L2 heuristic pyramid designed by McIntyre, specifically layer four to six. The layers are chosen because they deal with the community or intergroup relations which are matched to the club phenomenon on the Clubhouse application. Layer four deals with factors in Motivational Propensities, layer five covers the factors dealing with Affective and Cognitive Context, and layer six comes with factors related to Social and Individual Context.

1.7.3. Clubhouse Application

The Clubhouse is an Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) used in this study. It is a social application that brings a voice-mediated platform launched in March 2020. Zhu (2022) confirms that Clubhouse is the most popular application used to create communities and build intensive communication based on his study. Clubhouse comes with supporting features to enable non-native English speakers to practice and gain motivation among the EFL learners. It is used internationally which means acknowledging non-native English speakers about other English accents and interacting with each other to discuss about certain topic. In this study, the club researched is "Smart and Easy English" which is one of the English clubs with free rooms.