DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL FOR ENHANCING STUDENTS’ WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE AND PERFORMANCE IN COLLEGES, CHINA

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The learner’s willingness to communicate is one of the essential elements in learning and implementing foreign languages effectively. The researchers are eager to develop a new intercultural instruction model to enhance non-English major college students’ intercultural...
communicative willingness in English classrooms in China. A mixed methodology approach that combined qualitative analysis and quantitative analysis was utilized to analyze data from a questionnaire, the new intercultural teaching model, in-depth interviews, and productive tasks such as speaking tasks and writing tasks. There were 98 Chinese students participating in this research in the academic year 2019–2020. The results revealed that after the development and implementation of the new intercultural teaching model, the students showed progress in their willingness to communicate, their satisfaction with the results of the in-depth interviews, and their high performance in those productive tasks. On this basis, this research presents how to develop and implement an instructional model effectively to enhance the students’ intercultural communicative willingness and productive performance.

Keywords: willingness to communicate (WTC); instructional model; productive tasks

Introduction

Shen & Byfield (2018) noted that English language education has been given a new status as an international language due to the rapid increase in the population of its learners. Moreover, the significance of intercultural communicative competence has been increasingly recognized, and more value has been placed on its cultivation and education. Chinese President Xi Jinping proceeded with the collaboration proposal of pursuing the "New Silk Road Economic Belt" and the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road" sequentially in 2013 to rebuild a community of economic cooperation that can be achieved based on cultural tolerance building between different nations.

Douglas & Rosvold (2018) indicated that, according to the findings from their research, intercultural competence cultivation can contribute to the effectiveness of foreign language education. Clearly, under the current constructivist English language educational theory, students should be able to practice communication in the foreign language. It has already been considered that effective language teaching should provide students’ communicative competence. While the traditional teaching methods for foreign languages, which overly emphasize linguistic teaching and ignore cultural learning, cannot satisfy the new learning demands, In short, the integration of intercultural education is imminent and irresistible.

Although there are numerous studies of instructional approaches to the effectiveness of English language education, few have stressed students’ communicative competence cultivation (Shen & Byfield, 2018).

Furthermore, Li (2016) noted that one of the major reasons that caused the students to fail in intercultural communication was a lack of intercultural knowledge. The main reasons for this phenomenon are the following two factors:

1) Most Chinese students overly focus on grammatical structure during language learning due to the stereotype of traditional language education, and they have few opportunities to communicate with others by using English outside of the classroom (Li, 2016; Cheng, 2019).

2) There were not sufficient teaching periods for intercultural learning due to curriculum priorities. In addition, teachers have no idea how to involve intercultural learning factors appropriately and authentically in class because they lack adequate professional training (Gonen & Saglam, 2012).
The prerequisite for improving communicative skills is the willingness to communicate, which should be prioritized. However, many previous relevant studies found that most Chinese students prefer to keep silent in English classes rather than express themselves in English. As can be seen from the studies, Chinese students were unwilling to be involved in learning activities, and they seldom volunteered answers. (Jackson, 2002; Liu, 2002).

MacIntyre et al. (1998) proposed the theory of willingness to communicate, which contains two major factors:
1) social and psychological factors;
2) personality and linguistics.

The concept is commonly regarded as the most classic conceptualization since whether an individual is willing to socialize with others by using the language they have acquired or not is characterized by their willingness to communicate.

Therefore, to improve this phenomenon, this research aims to develop an intercultural teaching model to enhance the intercultural communicative willingness of Chinese students who do not take an English major as well as their productive speaking and writing skills. This study aimed to investigate the results of the intercultural teaching model implementation on two main aspects:
- the effects on the students’ improvement in willingness to communicate and their competence in productive tasks, including speaking and writing skills,
- the students’ satisfaction with the intercultural teaching model.

**Literature review**

**Willingness to communicate**

MacIntyre et al. (1998) gave the definition of willingness to communicate (WTC) as a state of readiness to use a discourse at a particular time in a specific context.

Later, Kang (2005) described WTC as the degree of willingness to actively use the language in specific situations depending on the topic, interlocution, context, and personal potential.

Based on his research findings, Yashima (2002) considered that WTC is a vital component that can impact the foreign language acquisition process. Since communicative competence must be based on the willingness cultivated, language instructors should offer as many practice chances as possible for students to cultivate their social confidence by using the foreign language to communicate with others.

In China, Peng (2014) investigated WTC factors in an English education, applying a qualitative method to analyze the results from the interviews and students’ diaries. Communication can be interpreted as indicating that students’ willingness to communicate is impacted by their intercultural competence. She further stated that students’ linguistics, cognitive, affective, and existing intercultural awareness should be included in their willingness to communicate.

However, Kang (2005) also found that many second language students cannot take advantage of the chances to implement the target language both in the classroom and in real-life situations.

Xie (2011) pointed out that the lack of opportunity for students to practice their communicative skills was typical of traditional English curriculum design in China. In short,
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a variety of instructional approaches should be implemented during normal learning processes to improve students’ intercultural communicative willingness.

Recently, Hashimoto (2020) indicated that students’ willingness to engage in intercultural communication affects their learning motivation of foreign languages. The higher the willingness to communicate, the more positive is the motivation, and the better is the effectiveness of language learning.

Thus, Lee & Lee (2020) confirm that intercultural integration can play a significant role in the communicative willingness cultivation process. In addition, when incorporating WTC into this study, the researcher reviewed a lot of research on willingness to communicate and found that most previous studies have focused on communicative aspects, i.e., speaking skills (Zarrinabadi & Tanbakooei, 2016; Zarrinabadi & Khodarahmi, 2017).

However, communication not only includes speaking but also the integration of listening, reading, translation, and writing as well. Therefore, Khajavy & Ghonsooly (2017) investigated willingness to read and reported that willingness to read motivation has a profound influence on students’ intercultural communication development by reading diverse cultural texts.

Moreover, Zarrinabadi (2021) proposed that listening, reading, translation, and writing should be integrated into the willingness to communicate exploration and illustrate how they influence each other to obtain a solid guideline for willingness to communicate enhancement. Consequently, the researcher created intercultural teaching materials with various productive tasks and activities (speaking, translation, and writing), which were implemented for 16 teaching weeks of English class.

**Intercultural teaching model adaptation**

Students’ satisfaction with English language learning has an impact on their performance in the implementation of the target language, i.e., communicative competence (Diaz et al., 2016). To explore effective instructional ways to improve the students’ communicative willingness based on intercultural learning, the researcher applied a task-based model to create a new instructional model for the improvement of willingness to communicate. To be more specific, the new instructional model integrated various productive tasks, including speaking tasks and writing tasks, into the learning process.

Willis (1996) developed task-based instruction, which refers to a kind of communicative teaching approach that has been widely applied in foreign language education. Further stated that task-based instruction involved students in analyzing and expressing their feelings and views in accordance with a variety of mental processes. The task-based model is adapted in the class and offers chances for the students to implement the language they have acquired within the given situation in order to foster their competence to actually apply the language in a practical context.

Hadi (2013) proposed that teachers’ perceptions of making use of the task-based instruction model were one of the most essential variables in efficient learning. It is considered a crucial link to bridge the gap between teachers and students so that the effectiveness of the teaching activities can be enhanced (Hadi, 2013).

Recently, Yildiz (2015) supported the idea that qualified academic learning activities are a significant instructional approach for an effective educational process.
Research methodology

Based on the research objectives, mixed methodology, which combines both qualitative analysis and quantitative analysis, was utilized to investigate and prove the effectiveness of the new intercultural teaching model on the students’ performances and intercultural communicative willingness improvement.

The implementation of the new intercultural teaching model was tested on 98 non-English major college students with various research instruments, i.e., the WTC questionnaire, the new intercultural teaching model, in-depth interviews, and productive tasks (speaking tasks and writing tasks), in the second semester of the academic year 2019–2020.

The target students were required to accomplish those productive tasks while learning the new intercultural teaching model to evaluate both their intercultural knowledge and learning efficiency and the improvement of their willingness to communicate.

Research instruments

Willingness to Communicate Questionnaire (WTC)

The researchers adapted the Willingness to Communicate Questionnaire (WTC) from the doctoral dissertation of Wattana (2013). Besides, the IOC and a pilot study were implemented to ensure the validity of the adaptation version at Cronbach’s alpha of 7.78.

The students were required to complete the WTC questionnaire before and after the class. The data were then compared to see the change in the WTC level. The adapted Willingness to Communicate Questionnaire consists of 15 items, and the data analysis criteria applied for inferential statistics are in Tab. 1.

Table 1 - Criteria Scale for the Willingness to Communicate (WTC)
(made by co-authors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpretation of students’ willingness to communicate in English</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Unwilling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.00 – 1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwilling</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.81 – 2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.61 – 3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.41 – 4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Willing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.21 – 5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The new intercultural teaching model

As mentioned above, the task-based model was applied for the adaptation of the new intercultural teaching model, which was implemented for 16 teaching weeks. The new intercultural teaching model comprises three main components.

The details of the teaching model can be found in Tab. 1.
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Table 2 - The implementation procedure of the new intercultural teaching model  
(made by co-authors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>CQS factors</th>
<th>WTC factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landmark</strong></td>
<td>-aware of the different landmarks; -expand information about some different landmarks -understand, respect and accept different local natural landscapes</td>
<td>Let’s get ready</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Preview</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Enjoy motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s read</td>
<td>Content-based &amp; Task-based</td>
<td>Reading strategies</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s do it</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Implement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s quiz</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Test &amp; Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Meta-cognition</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Festival</strong></td>
<td>-aware of the difference customs of holidays; -exchange information about different holidays; -communicate the different holidays appropriately and smoothly.</td>
<td>Let’s get ready</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Preview</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Enjoy motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s read</td>
<td>Content-based &amp; Task-based</td>
<td>Reading strategies</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s do it</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Role-play</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Implement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s quiz</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Test &amp; Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Meta-cognition</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wedding</strong></td>
<td>-aware of the difference customs of wedding; -exchange information about different weddings; -communicate the different weddings appropriately and smoothly.</td>
<td>Let’s get ready</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Preview</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Enjoy motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s read</td>
<td>Content-based &amp; Task-based</td>
<td>Reading strategies</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s do it</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Implement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s quiz</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Test &amp; Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Meta-cognition</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Body Language</strong></td>
<td>-aware of the difference body language; -exchange meanings of the body language; -communicate the different meanings of the body language appropriately and smoothly.</td>
<td>Let’s get ready</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Preview</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Enjoy motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s read</td>
<td>Content-based &amp; Task-based</td>
<td>Reading strategies</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s do it</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Role-play</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Implement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s quiz</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Test &amp; Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Meta-cognition</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food</strong></td>
<td>-aware of the different dietary habits; -exchange information about foods and dietary habits; -communicate the differences of the traditional foods, interesting dietary habits, and cooking methods appropriately and smoothly.</td>
<td>Let’s get ready</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Preview</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Enjoy motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s read</td>
<td>Content-based &amp; Task-based</td>
<td>Reading strategies</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s do it</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Implement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s quiz</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Test &amp; Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Meta-cognition</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small Talk</strong></td>
<td>-aware of the different way of language expressions; -expand information about the way of language expressions; -understand, respect, accept and implement the different methods appropriately and smoothly.</td>
<td>Let’s get ready</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Preview</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Enjoy motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s read</td>
<td>Content-based &amp; Task-based</td>
<td>Reading strategies</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s do it</td>
<td>Task-based</td>
<td>Role-play</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Implement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in Tab. 2, the new intercultural teaching model was designed and implemented based on the principles of intercultural intelligence and willingness to communicate. There are a variety of teaching activities integrated to support the teaching objectives on both intercultural intelligence and WTC. Meanwhile, the students’ intercultural intelligence and their willingness to communicate can be practiced and enhanced through those productive tasks. The more details of each teaching procedure are presented as follows:

- **Let’s Get Ready (pre-class)**
  Each unit begins with a Let’s Get Ready page, and the students are required to finish all tasks in this section before they attend the class. The relevant information on international cultures needs to be discussed within their study group according to the specific requirements. In the class, the instructor will lead the students to discuss and share their data and views together and let them get ready to be involved in the advanced cultural learning section.

- **Let’s Read (pre-class)**
  The section provides brief introductions to international cultures by using concise expressions with interesting and impressive cases so that the students can grasp the focused intercultural knowledge easily while their learning motivation on intercultural issues can be built. Furthermore, the students are required to finish this section before they attend the class. When the class starts, the students are asked to share their group opinions with other groups. The instructor will recap the key points for the students based on the group tasks. After that, the teacher inspires the students to be aware of their own cultures while comparing the similarities and differences between their home culture and other different cultures. Finally, they can apply the diverse cultural knowledge to further learning and communicating.

- **Let’s Do It (in class and after class)**
  In this section, the pragmatic intercultural competence of the students can be implemented in the given cultural situations by accomplishing a variety of productive tasks both in class and after class. Therefore, three speaking tasks, two translation tasks, and two writing tasks were integrated into the implementation of the new intercultural teaching model. The students can comprehensively explore their intercultural awareness, willingness to communicate, and intercultural competence based on such sufficient activities after the culture learning, while their linguistic skills can also be strengthened. The productive tasks are illustrated in detail as follows:
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The speaking task comprised three pair-work activities. The students were required to make up their own conversation in English based on the supplement on intercultural issues in Unit 2, Unit 4, and Unit 6, respectively. After that, they needed to practice conversation with their partners.

There are two activities in the writing task. After learning Unit 5 and Unit 7, the students were required to write two short essays related to the intercultural topic discussed in the class.

It is an effective way to evaluate the students’ intercultural competence since it provides an opportunity for the students to express their opinions, feelings, and attitudes toward the different cultures with sufficient thinking time.

All the procedures and the intercultural teaching model were evaluated for their validity and reliability by a pilot study and the expert opinion of three experts before the main data collection.

The in-depth interview

After teaching the new intercultural model, in-depth interviews were conducted with 10 randomly selected students to explore the students’ satisfaction with the developed teaching model. There are three questions in the interview developed by the researcher.

Before the interview, these questions were assessed by three experts and the researcher’s supervisor, and then a pilot study was conducted as an additional check on their validity and reliability. The in-depth interview questions are listed as follows:

What do you think about the new intercultural teaching model?
What benefits do you perceive as a result of implementing the new intercultural teaching model, and what obstacles or disadvantages do you perceive?
After the implementation of the new intercultural teaching model, are you eager to learn and communicate in English?

Results

Based on the findings derived from the research questions, the conclusions were drawn from two main components: the effects of the intercultural teaching model and students’ satisfaction.

The findings on the effects of the intercultural teaching model on: 1.1 the students’ intercultural communicative willingness improvement; and 1.2 their performances on productive tasks, including speaking tasks and writing tasks.

The function of the Willingness to Communicate Questionnaire is to explore whether the new intercultural teaching model played a significant role in the improvement of the students’ intercultural communicative willingness.

The findings are presented to compare the differences in WTC levels before and after the instruction.
**Findings and results from the analysis of questionnaires**

**From the WTC Questionnaire**

Table 3 - Comparison of students’ willingness to communicate between the pre- and post-survey
(made by co-authors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Willingness to communicate before the learning</th>
<th>Willingness to communicate after the learning</th>
<th>t-test</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communicate ideas / feelings / opinions in English,</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>Unwilling</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ask and answer questions in English,</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>Unwilling</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Read comments / feedback given in English,</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>Unwilling</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Use English to greet and bid farewell to your teachers,</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Use English to greet and bid farewell to your classmates,</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Use English to participate in pair or a group discussion in class,</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Volunteer to answer question in English in class,</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>Unwilling</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Do a role-play standing at your desk,</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>Unwilling</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Do a role-play in front of the class,</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>Unwilling</td>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sing a song in English,</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>Unwilling</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Communicate with teacher in English before and after class,</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Write an email in English to foreign friends,</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>Unwilling</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Use English to search information in internet,</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>3.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Take notes in English,</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>3.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Translate interesting information from Chinese to English,</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall Mean</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>Unwilling</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 3 vividly showed the improvement of the students’ willingness to communicate, with an average of 2.58, meaning “unwilling,” before the new intercultural teaching model implementation.
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However, after learning about the new intercultural teaching model, the students’ intercultural communicative willingness presented an improvement with a grand mean of 3.46 in the post-survey, meaning that the participants improved impressively from “unwilling” to “willing.” This showed that after the implementation of the new intercultural teaching model, the students’ perception, their communicative self-confidence, and their willingness to engage in intercultural communication showed a significant change in degree of progress.

Among these 15 items, the highest progress was on translation from Chinese to English (M = 3.92, SD = 0.85, t = -8.46). While the part on the role-play, such as standing in front of the class, was ranked the lowest (M = 3.02, SD = 1.21). Before the implementation of the new teaching model, the mean on this item was also ranked as the lowest mean score (M = 2.00, S.D. = 1.01). Students’ willingness to communicate with their teacher by using English before or after class had the smallest improvement (pre-M = 2.94, post-M = 3.18). In short, every item was reported with improvement from “unwilling” to “willing,” with only one interpreted at the same level as “neutral,” which was their willingness to communicate with their teacher as mentioned above.

Furthermore, as indicated in Tab. 2, the students’ willingness to communicate by using English after the new intercultural teaching model, as illustrated by the t-test, was significantly different from those before the new teaching model implementation. The t-value of 15 items identified that the significant value was 0.000, which was smaller than the 0.05 level of significance. Thus, there was a prominent improvement in the students’ willingness to engage in intercultural communication after implementing the new intercultural teaching model.

From productive tasks

In addition to the WTC questionnaire, there were two productive tasks, i.e., speaking tasks and writing tasks, involved in the instructional process to enhance the students’ willingness to communicate based on their intercultural competence cultivation. After the implementation, the students’ performances on speaking tasks and writing tasks are illustrated in Fig. 1 and 2, respectively.

![Figure 1 - Grade distribution of speaking tasks](made by co-authors)
As shown in Fig. 1, the students were able to perform these productive skills. The students’ performance on the translation skill was very satisfying, with an average score of 77.94%. Also, the students performed their writing skills relatively well, with an average of 67.39%.

The grades of the speaking tasks, however, were the lowest, with an average percentage of only 42.25%.

Though the students’ willingness to communicate was promoted after the learning, the implementation period of the new intercultural teaching model was limited; therefore, the researcher strongly believed that the students’ speaking competence could be improved if the new intercultural teaching model could be continuously implemented.

Findings and results of the in-depth interview with students

The analysis of the in-depth interview on students’ satisfaction with the intercultural teaching model, focusing on their intercultural communicative willingness to improve, can provide more information about how the participants acquired relevant intercultural knowledge by learning the new intercultural teaching model. The analysis criteria were adapted according to the categories of the Cultural Intelligence Scale Questionnaire to resolve the theme of content analysis. There were 10 students randomly selected from each group to attend interviews after learning about the new intercultural teaching model.

To conduct an interpretation of the students’ interviews, the researcher created a taxonomy criterion for the content analysis (Tab. 4). It shows that the total frequency of the key words amounted to 231 times, and the percentage was 100%. Obviously, the most frequent description was the Motivation Category of the new intercultural teaching material implementation, with the highest frequency of 87 times, or 39.66%.

The second frequent description was the meta-cognition category, with a frequency of 58 times, or 25.11%. The next two categories with high frequencies and percentages included the cognition category with a frequency of 44 times, or 19.05%, and the behavior category with a frequency of 42 times, or 18.18%, respectively.

The students’ interpretation of the in-depth interview proves that the new intercultural teaching model secured a high level of satisfaction among the students since it effectively improved their willingness to interculturally communicate.
Table 4 - Frequency and percentage of the students’ satisfaction with the implementation of the new intercultural teaching model

(made by co-authors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meta-cognition</td>
<td>Conscious</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adjust</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Check</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Obtain</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rules</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Enjoy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>Know</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implement</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>231</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most students reported that the new teaching model was beneficial to their willingness to communicate improvement. After learning about the new intercultural teaching model, many students stated that they felt more confident in the intercultural communicative situation. “I feel more confident in intercultural communication than ever” (Student J). “The intercultural social confidence has been increased for sure.” (Student I) “We can easily read without too many obstacles; therefore, our learning confidence in the English language has increased more than ever.” (Student E).

Before the use of the new intercultural teaching model, the students were unwilling to engage in intercultural communication since they had no idea how to do it or what an appropriate way to communicate was.

However, after the new intercultural teaching model had been implemented, there was a significant change: “I confessed that my willingness to communicate with others by using English has improved.”(Student A). “Based on our growing understandings, we are more willing to have a conversation with others by using English.” (Student D). “After learning this new model, I am willing to communicate with others by using English.” (Student J).

The results of the in-depth interview identified that the new intercultural teaching model has revealed a high level of satisfaction among the target students. It can effectively support their intercultural knowledge learning, especially their willingness to communicate by using the English language.

There is a convergence of both quantitative and qualitative findings to confirm the importance and effectiveness of the developed intercultural teaching model.

**Discussion**

The research contributes to the proof of the profound findings on students’ willingness to communicate in English.
Yashima (2019) reemphasized that the promotion of the willingness to engage in intercultural communication can eliminate most obstacles to intercultural communication. Therefore, the new intercultural teaching model was adapted to provide a way to enhance the students’ willingness to communicate. It enlightens the model for the cultivation of intercultural communicative willingness by increasing the students’ intercultural awareness and knowledge.

The students’ willingness to communicate interculturally has been significantly motivated and improved. This can be seen in their attitudes towards using the English language to communicate, which have changed from “unwilling” to “willing” after learning about the new intercultural teaching model.

Meanwhile, their speaking and writing competencies also showed improvement through the productive tasks during the course.

However, the students’ performances in speaking were still poor, which can be explained by the following studies: one of the major reasons is the typical characteristics associated with EFL Chinese students in the English classroom, including their anxiety about using English in the language classroom and their unwillingness to communicate their foreign language (Liu & Jackson, 2008; Liu, 2017; Hong, 2018), relating to a high level of collectivism. Based on such a collectivist social background, individuals are more integrated into their communities and prefer to conform to their norms (Mann & Cheng, 2013; Thomas et al., 2016).

In addition, China is a country whose characteristics can be grouped as a strict hierarchical society. Therefore, these characteristics could influence students’ communicative willingness to use the target language. The interview data revealed that participants had good responses to classroom situational factors affecting their willingness to communicate, particularly learning contents, classroom atmosphere, and teaching materials. These findings prove the significance of cultural impact on WTC, which supports the findings by Peng (2014), Lee & Lee (2020), and Hashimato (2020).

Finally, as their intercultural communicative willingness increased, their passion to learn the English language also increased. They felt more self-confidence and less anxiety when they faced different cultural socialization. Moreover, the students’ learning confidence can be enhanced since they can understand the material by themselves.

In this way, intercultural awareness and language competence can be cultivated by such a motivating teaching procedure. The achievement of teaching tasks also contributes to communicative competence improvement (Dockrell et al., 2015; Jacobs & Fu, 2014). The researcher strongly believes that it would be an excellent start for further learning with the new intercultural teaching model to achieve the goal of effective language education.

**Conclusion**

In short, this study posits evidence that intercultural communicative willingness cultivation and enhancement is one of the essential factors for foreign language learning. Successful language acquisition is affected by enhancing learners’ intercultural willingness to communicate.

Moreover, the goal of language learning, which is the implementation of the language, can be achieved based on the promotion of communicative willingness.
The findings of both quantitative and qualitative data prove that the students have become more and more willing to socialize in English through the adapted instructional model.

This provides more insightful information that can affect the development of intercultural learning in an EFL setting. The greater the willingness to communicate, the greater the language learning motivation. The statement can be confirmed by the findings of this study and many previous studies. In conclusion, the implementation of language instruction can be made more appropriate and effective by enhancing intercultural understanding in communication.

In this way, language learning is not only for passing exams but also for making real communication and applying it in an authentic situation. Eventually, foreign language acquisition can positively serve communicative goals with different cultures in this present global era.

References


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