

# **Willingness to Communicate in L2 English Remote Language Learning: Dual Qualification Students' Perceptions**

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Master's Thesis

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### **Abstract**

This thesis investigated willingness to communicate (WTC) among dual qualification students learning English as a second language (ESL) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The aim of the present study was to discover how willing the learners were to communicate in remote English lessons, also in comparison with traditional classroom learning. Other key goals of the research were to investigate the perspectives of the learners on how their WTC in remote learning settings could be increased, and to examine how their WTC had changed over time during the pandemic.

The research data were collected via self-reported online survey, and it reached 47 dual qualification students in Proper Finland area. The study was conducted as a mixed-methods research, so both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered and analyzed.

According to the study results, the participants' average WTC scores for all the listed lesson activities were lower in remote learning settings compared to traditional classroom lessons. The result was statistically significant. The participants' general WTC in remote lessons was from low to moderate. The results suggested that the participants' views on how to increase their English WTC in remote lessons included, for example, working in small groups, others students' participation and activeness during remote lessons or, in other words, the action of other students in the group, and non-voluntariness in responding.

Approximately a third of the participants considered their WTC having at least somewhat changed during the years of the pandemic. There were both shifts to increased WTC and decreased WTC.

Further studies need to be conducted in WTC in remote learning settings to gain a deeper knowledge on WTC in modern online learning environments. More research ought to be conducted in larger study samples, utilizing mixed-methods research, for example.

**Key words:** English as a foreign language, remote learning, second language acquisition, willingness to communicate.

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## 1 Introduction

In this thesis, I will examine the phenomenon of *willingness to communicate* (WTC) in *second language* (L2) English in modern online language learning environments used in *remote learning*. WTC has been widely studied in the field of *second language acquisition* (SLA) for a few decades now, but the increased utilization of online learning software, tools and settings has provided a new, interesting dimension for WTC research. The situation in Finland during the COVID-19 pandemic was ideal for studying WTC in remote learning since *English as a foreign language* (EFL) teaching was conducted in online platforms due to COVID-19 in certain periods of the pandemic after its arousal in spring 2020. When the pandemic started and continued, learners and teachers needed to switch and adapt quickly to new regulations as the pandemic situation evolved and changed fast. Language learning and teaching in a remote learning setting in compulsory education is rather new in Finland. Therefore, it is important to study how WTC, which is a crucial element of SLA, manifests in remote learning. The key goals of this thesis were to study the learners' perspectives on their WTC in remote learning environments and to discover possible factors for increasing the students' WTC during remote classes. This thesis will investigate how WTC differs in online learning environments compared to traditional classroom settings. It is important to study this topic since distance education has become an important way of teaching and learning in EFL contexts in compulsory education and in upper secondary level education not only in Finland but also on a global level. Modern technology develops rapidly and allows us an ever-increasing amount of time and location independent communication and contact (Hurd 2007b, 243). It is therefore also likely and very possible that remote learning and teaching will keep increasing in Finland and elsewhere across the world. Though the pandemic forced people to come up with new solutions for working, learning, and studying, the positive potential of online environments has thus been discovered and utilized further. There seem to be both positive and negative effects regarding remote learning and presumably not all of them have yet been discovered. Hence, gaining a deeper knowledge of WTC in online remote language learning environments – and finding out how it differs from traditional classroom settings and why – can help us improve remote learning and teaching methods in the future and increase the learners' willingness to communicate.

WTC is a key concept of L2 communication, and it is one of the individual learner differences in SLA. Some individuals seize the emerging possibilities for communication while others do

not: “when presented with an opportunity to use their second language (L2), some people choose to speak up and others remain silent” (MacIntyre 2007, 564). Many factors affect a learner’s L2 WTC and for instance various individual, social, and linguistic factors need to be considered (ibid.). According to MacIntyre (2007, 564), WTC integrates “psychological, linguistic, educational, and communicative approaches to L2 research that typically have been independent of each other”. WTC is closely related to other *individual differences*, particularly *language anxiety* and *motivation*. Language anxiety is an individual factor in language learning that shows as worry and negative feelings and reactions regarding learning or using an L2 (MacIntyre 2007, 565). Both language anxiety and motivation affect individual learner’s WTC. Previous research on language learners’ affective side has focused on traditional classroom contexts rather than distance learning environments (Hurd 2007b, 244). Thus, there is an apparent need for further research on L2 English remote learning.

This thesis looked at L2 English WTC of dual qualification students in online remote learning environments in Proper Finland area. In the Finnish education system, dual qualification, or double degree, means that students study and complete two degrees of upper secondary education, matriculation examination and vocational examination, simultaneously. WTC in online learning environments has not yet been studied much, if at all, in Finland. However, studies on WTC in traditional classroom settings or outside the classroom have been conducted in Finland, for instance. To provide an example, Kostainen (2015, 6) studied the influence of classroom context on upper secondary students’ WTC and, therefore, her study was somewhat similar to the present study and the current results are compared to hers at several points. According to her, the number of WTC studies in the Finnish EFL classroom context is low, even though “there definitely are learners who are very competent in the foreign language, but are not willing to use it, or are willing to use it only in some specific situations” (ibid.). Hence, there seem to be gaps in the research field of SLA studying WTC in the Finnish EFL learning context – especially in remote learning settings. In addition, studying dual qualification students is not very common, since usually studies focus on either upper secondary students or students in vocational education, not on the students that combine both studies. To my knowledge, studies on dual qualification students’ WTC in remote learning setting have not yet been conducted. Therefore, both the group of participants in this study and this particular study setting are rather unique.

This thesis aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How willing to communicate are this group of L2 English learners in remote learning? How do the learners react to the difference between remote learning and traditional classroom learning, and does it influence their WTC in the lessons?
2. What are the learners' perspectives on how their willingness to communicate in remote learning could be increased?
3. How has remote learning affected the students' WTC over the years during the pandemic?

In my thesis, I will first introduce the key terms and theoretical background of WTC in section 2. Section 3 focuses on remote learning and its theoretical framework. Then, the methodology of the present study as well as its participants will be introduced in section 4, followed by the results in section 5. The results will be discussed in section 6. Finally, in section 7, I will present my conclusions and make suggestions for further research.



## 2 Willingness to communicate

In this section, I will introduce the relevant terms and previous research regarding individual differences in L2 learning, willingness to communicate, and remote language learning. I will present the definitions for each phenomenon and shed light on earlier studies on the topic.

### 2.1 Individual differences in L2 learning

Language learners are not the same – there are multiple differences among language learners that make each individual a unique learner. Even though humans are born with an innate capability of learning languages, no individuals are the same regarding their language acquisition qualities. SLA can be used as an umbrella term for both language acquisition and learning: in short, acquisition describes a process, in which language is learned unconsciously or implicitly, whereas learning means conscious action and explicit learning (Pietilä and Lintunen 2014, 11–25). According to Pietilä and Lintunen (*ibid.*), the definitions of second language and *foreign language* (FL) are not unambiguous and they can be problematic: second language is usually used to refer to a language in a country, where it is widely used or it is an official language in the country, whereas foreign language often means a language which does not have an official position in the country. However, the term *target language* (TL) can be used to avoid the problems of distinguishing the terms L2 and FL. Pietilä and Lintunen (*ibid.*) also state that the term L2 can be used to describe the language being learned without taking it into consideration, whether it is learned a second language or a foreign language. Therefore, this thesis mainly utilizes the term L2, but FL and TL are also used for describing the Finnish context of learning English.

Learning an FL is easier for others and more difficult for others, and this is mainly caused by individual differences (Pietilä 2014, 36). Individual differences have an effect on how demanding learning a foreign language is, how fast the language is learned, and how proficient an individual can become in the TL (*ibid.*). *Individual differences* (IDs) are “characteristics or traits in respect of which individuals may be shown to differ from each other” (Dörnyei 2005, 1). The acquisition of the *first language* (L1) is rather similar to all people, but L2 acquisition varies greatly between individuals and the outcome of L2 learning can be anything between zero and near-nativeness, and that is significantly affected by individual differences in language acquisition and learning (Dörnyei 2005, 2). This means,

that individual differences affect, for instance, how fast or how well one can learn an L2 and what are the learning outcomes.

Individual differences have also been found to be important predictors of L2 learning success when no other SLA phenomena have been found to have such an impact (ibid.). These individual differences include characteristics or traits such as *language aptitude, motivation, personality, age, learning style* and *learning strategies* (Pietilä 2014, 36). According to Dörnyei (2005, 8), willingness to communicate (WTC) falls into the category of “other individual differences” along with anxiety, self-esteem, creativity, and learner beliefs. It needs to be remembered that IDs are not always stable over time and their dynamic aspect is important to keep in mind. For instance, one’s motivation might be different in different times, and one might change the utilized learning strategies. The research conducted on IDs has largely demonstrated the effect of affective factors, such as motivation, attitudes, and language anxiety on language proficiency or achievement (Yashima 2002, 54). When talking about WTC, the affective factors play a significant role. For instance, language anxiety and motivation are closely related to WTC. Individual differences are an important factor related to SLA and affect one’s language learning processes and outcomes. WTC is considered an ID and therefore, WTC and IDs are closely intertwined and need to be considered as linked phenomena in SLA.

Being aware of individual differences among L2 learners, language teachers can vary different teaching methods, utilize new strategies for instruction, and provide suitable feedback for each individual learner and therefore improve and aim for an ideal learning environment for different learners (Griffiths & Soruç 2020, 2). Acknowledging individual differences in L2 learners and capitalizing on their information on the topic, language teachers can therefore help individual learners to achieve their learning goals and build their L2 communication skills, for instance. Each L2 learner is different regarding their WTC, and the dynamic aspect of WTC needs to be taken into account: a learner’s WTC may change in different times, situations and environments. This thesis focused on WTC in remote language learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. WTC will be introduced in more detail in the next chapter.

## **2.2 Willingness to communicate**

It is often emphasized that the ultimate aim of foreign language classroom instruction is achieving communicative competence (Gregersen & MacIntyre 2014, 216). Nevertheless,

being a proficient target language speaker does not automatically mean that learners are *willing* to communicate in the foreign language; “Willing and able are two different things” (ibid.). The goal of instructional language teaching and learning should therefore be producing language learners that are actually willing to use the TL in authentic contexts and purposes (ibid.). The learners whose WTC is high, usually seek for opportunities to use the TL and therefore they are involved in more frequent communication which then in turn possibly leads to improved abilities for L2 communication (Mystkowska-Wiertelak 2017, x). However, not all L2 learners are equally willing to communicate in classroom or outside the classroom (ibid.). WTC is largely affected by other ID factors, including “communication anxiety”, “perceived communication competence” and “perceived behavioural control” (Ellis 2008, 697). According to Ellis (2008, 698), it seems like learners’ WTC depends on their personality and the level of intrinsic motivation regarding performance of specific activities in the classroom. When it comes to motivation, it needs to be considered that the motivation for L2 learning does not always show as WTC in among all motivated L2 learners: some might express their L2 motivation by silent study of the TL and its literature (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 553). This is one of the many reasons why it is always crucial to keep IDs in mind when examining any SLA phenomena. Understanding the phenomenon of WTC is crucial for language teachers so that they can set up guidelines for the language classroom and to execute activities that push the learners to use the language (Gregersen & MacIntyre 2014, 216). By being familiar with WTC and the factors influencing one’s L2 WTC, language teachers have more abilities to take into account different learners and consider the variation in teaching methods and by supporting and encouraging learners of various types.

There are both situational and more enduring factors that influence one’s WTC (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 546). MacIntyre et al. (1998, 546–547) presented a heuristic model of WTC, which allows us to examine the factors that possibly affect an individual’s L2 WTC. The L2 WTC model by MacIntyre et al. (1998) presents different linguistic, communicative, and social psychological factors that can affect one’s communicative behavior in L2 learning (Öz 2014, 1475). The heuristic L2 WTC model can be seen in Figure 1. The influencing factors are presented in the shape of a pyramid; the top of the pyramid (layer I) represents the moment when one is intending to communicate in the L2, and the different layers, I-VI, indicate six different categories of variables that affect one’s WTC (ibid.). At the top of the pyramid are the most immediate and situational influences of L2 WTC and moving towards the bottom of the pyramid, the influences become more stable and long-lasting (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 547).

MacIntyre et al. (1998, 546) divided the influencing variables to *enduring influences*, such as relations between groups, personality, and *situational influences*, which included willingness to speak to a particular person, and how much one knows about the topic, for instance. Therefore, the enduring influences are stable, long-lasting qualities of the individual or the environment that affect one's WTC regardless of the situation, whereas the situational influences are temporary and depend on the context of the prevailing conditions (ibid.).

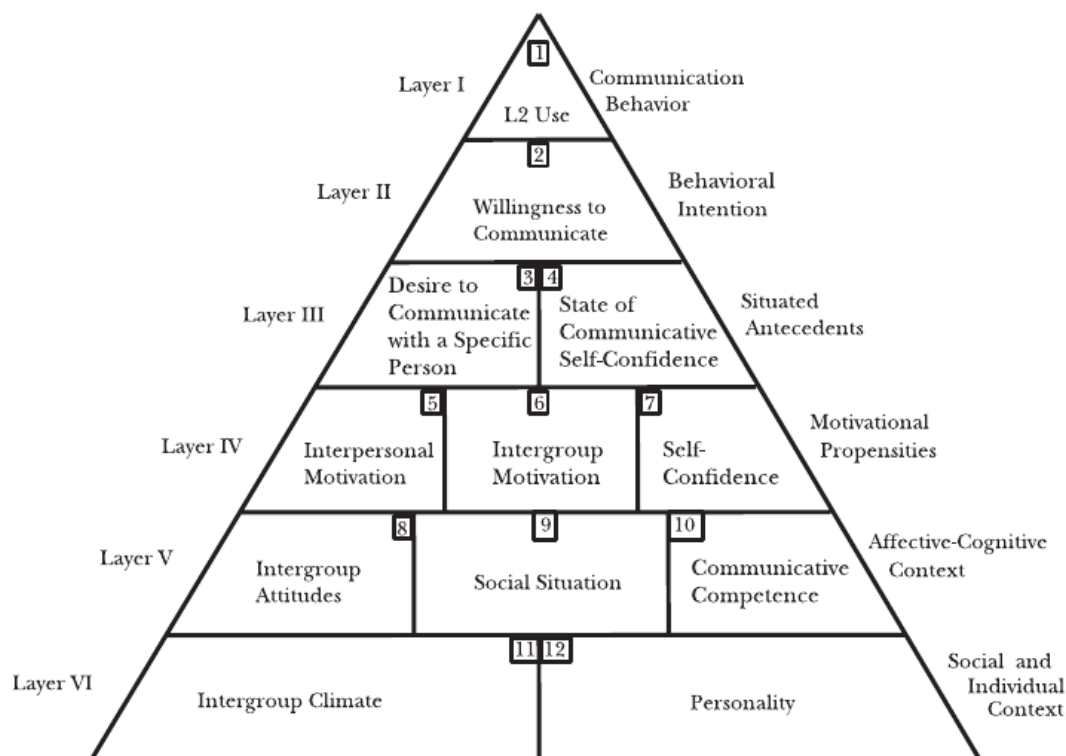


Figure 1: Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing WTC by MacIntyre et al. (1998)

In other words, the six categories of the heuristic model represent the two different groups of variables: layers I-III represent the situational influences and layers IV-VI represent the enduring influences (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 547). Layer I, *communication behavior*, consists of ‘L2 use’, which represents the actual use of L2. Layer II, *behavioral intention*, describes one’s willingness to communicate and it is “the readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person, using a L2” (ibid.). Layer III, *situated antecedents*, includes the “desire to communicate with a specific person” and “state of communicative self-confidence”. The situated antecedents are variables that change in different situations. For instance, one’s communicative self-confidence may be high or low in different contexts: if one is familiar with the topic that is being talked about, communicative self-confidence may be high in that

situation. However, when the topic is changed to something one is not familiar with, one's communicative self-confidence may decrease. The desire to communicate with a specific person varies in different situations, as well. It may depend on the group one is part of at the given moment, or one may want to communicate with someone sitting close to them, or a friend, for instance. Layer IV, *motivational propensities*, consists of “interpersonal motivation”, “intergroup motivation”, and “self-confidence”. According to Kostianen (2015, 15), interpersonal motivation ‘is about the motives “between individuals to communicate with each other, which can be, for instance, social roles in classroom, or interest in the opponent”, whereas intergroup motivation comprises of such motives between different groups. The L2 self-confidence, in turn, consists of one's communicative competence and how one perceives their own L2 skills, and previous experiences of L2 use (ibid.).

Layer V, *affective-cognitive context*, includes “intergroup attitudes”, “social situation”, and “communicative competence”. According to MacIntyre et al. (1998, 552), the influences in layer V are not as situation-specific as the upper layers and they include a greater deal of different communicative or other events than the previous layers. Intergroup attitudes are related to “adaptation to different cultural groups and, in particular, intergroup motivation” (ibid.). For instance, it means longing to be a part of the L2 community (ibid.). Intergroup attitudes also include the motivation to learn the L2: for example, enjoying learning the L2 and using it may increase the effort one puts into the L2 learning, according to MacIntyre et al. (1998, 552). Being motivated in learning the L2 may manifest in the form of WTC for some, but others may enjoy silent studying or reading (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 553). The final variable in the affective-cognitive context, social situation, comprises of five factors: “the participants, the setting, the purpose, the topic, and the channel of communication” (ibid.). For instance, the participant variables consist of the interlocutors' age, sex, social class, the relationship between them and the L2 proficiency level (ibid.). The setting, in turn, describes the time and place of communication, purpose means the aims of the communication, and the communication channel refers to the medium of the communication (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 553–554). In the present study, the focus is on remote learning settings, which offers an interesting point to look at when considering the setting and communication channel in layer V (social situation) in the pyramid model. Layer VI, *social and individual context*, comprises of “intergroup climate” and “personality”. This layer represents the most enduring factors, which means that one does not really have influence on these factors.

The pyramid model has been widely used in L2 WTC studies and it is amongst the most all-encompassing theoretical frameworks regarding variables that affect L2 WTC (Zarrinabadi 2019, 20). The model is versatile, and it shed light on the complex elements possibly affecting one's L2 WTC, including psychological, linguistic and communicational variables (ibid.).

The model by MacIntyre et al. is relevant to the present study as well, since it is a greatly used theoretical framework for L2 WTC and it has been utilized as the basis of L2 WTC questionnaires, too. The survey used in the current study utilized plenty of the elements from the pyramid model by MacIntyre et al. (1998).

WTC has been in the limelight of ID research in both L2 learning and teaching during the past three decades (Zarrinabadi 2019, 19). Yashima (2002, 62) conducted a study that investigated the influence of L2 proficiency, motivation or attitudes, communication confidence in L2, and international posture on L2 communication. Yashima utilized MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) pyramid model in his study. International posture was conceptualized as 'a general attitude toward the international community that influences English learning and communication among Japanese learners' (Yashima 2002, 62–63). According to Yashima's study results, there were both direct and indirect variables that affected L2 WTC. The direct variables were international posture and L2 communication confidence (Yashima 2002, 63). International posture had both a direct and an indirect influence on L2 WTC (ibid.). The direct influence of international posture included intergroup approach propensity, orientation towards intercultural friendships, interest in foreign affairs and interest in international work and activity possibilities (ibid.). International posture affected L2 WTC indirectly through having an effect on motivation, which then works as a predictor of proficiency and communication confidence in L2, according to Yashima (2002, 63). It affected motivation to learn the L2 and the L2 communication confidence (ibid.). To increase students' L2 English WTC, Yashima suggested that the EFL lessons ought to 1) enhance the learners' interest in different cultures as well as international affairs and activities, 2) reduce anxiety, and 3) increase the learners' L2 communication confidence (2002, 63). One of the questions the present study attempted to answer, was how to increase learners' WTC from the viewpoint of the learners themselves, and the results will be introduced and discussed later in sections 5 and 6.

According to Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2017, xvi), there has been plenty of L2 WTC research which has mainly concentrated on "identifying the antecedents of L2 WTC in large-scale studies, most of which have been conducted in either bi-ethnic communities or among collective cultures in Asia or targeted populations whose language proficiency has not been

very high". Mystkowska-Wiertelak states that far less studies have focused on identifying the factors that may lower the WTC of English learners in regularly occurring FL English lessons in which the learners are mostly monolingual (2017, xvi). In addition, they have the possibility to use their L1 as well and their out-of-class access to the TL is limited (ibid.). Therefore, more studies on real-class situations and shifts in situational WTC levels are needed, according to Mystkowska-Wiertelak (ibid.). In the present study, most participants are monolingual native speakers of Finnish and live in individualistic culture. The current study focuses on real-class situations and approaches the dynamic aspect of WTC by investigating how learner WTC shifts over time during the pandemic. Therefore, this study attempts to shed light on a myriad of aspects of WTC that recent studies have considered needed for further studies.

Given the fact that not only do trait-like factors influence one's WTC, but also situational factors play an important role in language learners' willingness to communicate, it is interesting to discover how remote learning settings may influence one's L2 English WTC. The remote learning settings set by the COVID-19 pandemic created a unique opportunity to study the situational remote learning context of L2 English, since the COVID restrictions that were placed due to the virus gave no other choice than to teach and learn in remote learning environments instead of traditional classroom education. It is possible that learners' WTC levels may differ in remote learning environments also in comparison with traditional classroom learning. This paper aimed to discover how willing to communicate the participants of the present study are in remote learning settings, also compared to classroom learning, what kind of factors affect the students' willingness to communicate in both remote learning and classroom learning, and how their WTC could possibly be enhanced from the point of view of students. Therefore, this thesis considers especially the layers I-V in the pyramid model important to the present study. Trait WTC and state WTC will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

### **2.3 Trait WTC and state WTC**

WTC of L2 learners consists of both situational factors as well as long-term patterns; the situational factors depend, for example, on the person the learner is communicating with and the time of the situation (Gregersen & MacIntyre 2014, 217). The long-term factors and the context-dependent fluctuating variables of WTC form a complex and interesting process together (ibid.). Trait-level WTC means that one's personality creates a basis for their general

tendency for communication, whereas state-level WTC manifests as one's fluctuating communicative behaviour in different situations and times (Zhang, Beckmann, and Beckmann 2018, 227). Öz (2014, 1473) studied the relationship between different personality traits and WTC in EFL learners in Turkey. Personality traits are placed in the "social and individual context" in the pyramid model by MacIntyre et al. (1998), which means that they are among the most enduring factors affecting WTC. In his study, Öz utilized the Big Five personality theory as a theoretical framework to personality (ibid.). The Big Five personality traits are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience (Öz 2014, 1474). According to Öz (ibid.), previous studies have indicated that personality traits influence L2 learning and communication. In his study, Öz (2014, 1476) utilized the finding of trait WTC being a factor that prepares the learner for the L2 communication setting, and state WTC being the variable that influences initiating communication in different situations. The results of his study suggested that extraversion, agreeableness, and openness to experience were personality traits that could significantly predict and set the psychological context for L2 WTC among learners (Öz 2014, 1473). According to Öz (2014, 1479), the study results suggest that extraversion and openness to experience, which manifest as "extraverted or sociable, talkative, person-oriented, and friendly as well as curious and creative" learners, predicted L2 WTC the most. Out of the Big Five personality traits, openness to experience, which shows as being "good-natured, trusting, helpful, and straightforward" also predicted a higher L2 WTC (Öz 2014, 1479–1480). The study by Öz reveals interesting results regarding trait WTC. In his study, gender and age, or other IDs than personality traits were not significantly linked with being willing or unwilling to communicate (Öz 2014, 1480).

According to Zhang, Beckmann, and Beckmann (2022, 504), the focus of WTC studies has recently been transferred to a more dynamic, state-like WTC from the previous trait-like and reasonably stable approach of WTC. Because of the risen interest in the dynamic and situational aspects of researching WTC, the methodology of WTC research has been shifted towards a more mixed-methods approach (Mystkowska-Wiertelak 2017, 21). This has allowed researchers to explore both stable behavioral tendencies and dynamic changes depending on the contextual variables (ibid.). Zhang, Beckmann, and Beckmann (2018, 227) state that previous WTC studies have mainly focused on trait-level WTC, which has left room for studying the dynamic nature of WTC and its state-level aspect. Trait-level WTC emphasizes the dispositional factors contributing to one's WTC, whereas state refers to how



one acts, thinks, and feels at a certain time (Zhang, Beckmann, and Beckmann 2018, 228). In other words, trait WTC focuses on IDs in an individual's general tendency for communication, while state WTC underlines observable momentary fluctuations in one's communication-related behaviour (ibid.). In recent years of WTC research, it has been recognized that the focus should be in the dynamic and situational aspects of WTC (Mystkowska-Wiertelak 2017, 21).

In the recent study conducted by Zhang, Beckmann, and Beckmann (2022, 504), they concentrated on state-like WTC and how it varies individually over time and investigated the reasons behind the variation. They were also interested in the stability of state-like WTC and discovering how individual variability possibly results in stable differences between individuals, and situation-specific antecedents increasing or decreasing state L2 WTC in classroom learning (ibid.). In their research, they utilized a high-density repeated measurement in a Chinese university student group during one semester and explained the variation in their state WTC (ibid.). According to Zhang, Beckmann, and Beckmann (2022, 505), only few studies have investigated the dynamic approach of WTC – the “within-person fluctuations” – over time. The few studies that have been done have not, however, quantified the degree of individual WTC variation (ibid.). The study conducted by Zhang, Beckmann, and Beckmann (2022, 505) also evaluates intrapersonal connections between WTC and the situation-specific antecedents of it: for instance, when students are supported more, their WTC becomes higher. According to Zhang, Beckmann, and Beckmann, earlier studies have concentrated on between-person relationships, such as students that get more support than other students, lean towards being more willing to communicate than the ones not receiving that kind of support (ibid.). Therefore, earlier research has not emphasized within-person fluctuations of WTC with time or the correlated variation of WTC and the situation-specific antecedents of it within individuals (ibid.). Their study also investigated how the individual variation in state-specific WTC predicts language learning performance (ibid.). As an example of this, students that show higher level of WTC in communicative tasks and find them interesting tend to accomplish the tasks better (ibid.).

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic offers an interesting and unique research setting on situational environment of English L2 WTC on remote classes. What is also fascinating, is to see how the prolonged pandemic has influenced English L2 learners' WTC compared to the beginning of the pandemic. The research setting of the present study emphasized both the situational and dynamic aspect of L2 English WTC in remote learning settings. The present

study was also conducted as a mixed-methods research to gain both quantitative and qualitative data on WTC. In this thesis, the focus was L2 WTC during remote English learning. The present study focused on the dynamic and contextual approach of WTC in remote learning of English. It also needs to be considered that in the research settings of the present study, the students participated in remote learning due to the COVID-19 situation, not voluntarily. Previous research on remote learning mostly focuses on voluntarily chosen distance learning opportunity rather than it being the only option.

## **2.4 Increasing L2 WTC**

One of the key research questions of the present study is about the learners' perspectives on how they feel their WTC in remote English L2 learning could possibly be increased. Previous studies have revealed factors that can increase L2 WTC. For instance, Yashima's study (2002) suggests that to increase WTC, the learner's language anxiety level should be lowered and their self-confidence in the TL should be enhanced. According to Baker and MacIntyre (2003, 72), previous positive experiences in L2 communication increase WTC, decrease anxiety, improve one's perceived competence, and may add one's motivation to take part in similar experiences in the future, too. In addition, Munezane (2015) studied the effects of visualization and goal setting in improving L2 English WTC among Japanese EFL learners. According to Munezane, it has been discovered that setting goals improves task performance by increasing the efforts, attention, and persistence of learners (2015, 178). In her study, Munezane had two treatment groups and one control group; both treatment groups attended lessons where the participants were able to visualize themselves being experts in their field discussing and providing solutions for global issues (Munezane 2015, 175). The other treatment group also utilized goal setting activities on every lesson regarding their speaking goals, whereas the third group being the control group, utilized neither visualization nor goal setting (*ibid.*). All three groups took part in lessons that included a similar number of communicative tasks (*ibid.*). The utilized data collection method was a questionnaire based on an unpublished questionnaire that measures WTC (Munezane 2015, 181). Every group filled in the questionnaire at the start of the research and at the end of it (*ibid.*). In addition to this, Munezane gathered data from a new cohort of students using the same methodology – therefore, she collected data during two academic years (*ibid.*).

Munezane's study results suggested that the visualization alone did not increase the participants' L2 WTC but visualization together with goal setting significantly increased the

L2 WTC in comparison with the visualization-only group and control group (2015, 175.). According to Munezane, it is up to teachers' pedagogical consideration to decide to utilize visualization and goal setting with their students (Munezane 2015, 188). The findings of her study suggest that enhancing students' long-term goals with their short-term goals can benefit their WTC, which is the precursor for actual initiation of communication (ibid.).

The effect of teacher on WTC has been studied by Zarrinabadi (2014). Zarrinabadi's (2014, 294) study results confirmed previous studies by suggesting that it increases WTC if students' interests and opinions are considered when choosing a topic, whereas an unfamiliar topic chosen by the teacher usually lowers WTC. It was also found that smiling, showing active responses and being supportive by, for instance, nodding, looking in the eye, saying "yes" or "good", and "thank you" after students finish talking, increase WTC (ibid.). According to Zarrinabadi, when the teacher wait time is longer, students participate more, and it also increases their communication tendency in the future (ibid.). Zarrinabadi also states that learners hesitating when speaking may be a way of having more time to hone their utterances rather than being a sign of unwillingness to communicate (ibid.). The study results suggested that delayed error correction increased WTC, whereas instant feedback on errors could stop the speech flow and disrupt delivering the message (Zarrinabadi 2014, 293). Teachers should delay their error correction to decrease anxiety in the learning environment, since instant error correction can make the learners feel insecure about possible future mistakes (ibid.).

A recent article by Lee, Abott, and Chen (75, 2020) focused on the effects of drama-based approaches in increasing the WTC of English learners. Lee, Abott, and Chen state that previous studies suggest that drama-based approaches help building up safe environments for learning, improve learners' confidence, motivation, and positive emotions, and therefore hold significant potential for increasing WTC of the learners despite being underused in English programs for academic purposes (ibid.). They reviewed literature on both WTC and drama-based approaches and concluded how dramatized role-plays can improve learners' WTC and consequently foster their academic and linguistic abilities as well (ibid.).

The present study focuses on L2 English WTC in remote learning settings and examines learners' views on how to increase WTC in remote lessons. The studies and articles presented above examine WTC in traditional, classroom learning settings and the procedures utilized or considered in them may not be applicable for remote learning and teaching as such.

Therefore, studies conducted precisely on remote learning are needed in order to gain important knowledge on how to increase learners' WTC in remote learning settings.

### 3 Remote learning

In this section, I will discuss remote learning and remote language learning. I will start by introducing remote learning in general, then move on to remote language learning, and finally discuss remote learning and WTC.

#### 3.1 Remote language learning

Distance language learning can be defined as an educational learning environment and activities planned for language learners who do not attend face-to-face language teaching (Kızıllı 2020, 3). Remote learning is a mode of distance learning, and it can be defined as attempting to create a face-to-face-like learning structure in an online environment using technology to “lead lessons, check that learning objectives have been met, and provide feedback on learning outcomes” (Daniela & Visvizi 2021, 22–23). This has been made possible by using, for example, software such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom. The definition of remote learning by Daniela & Visvizi (2021) is suitable for this thesis as well and it will be utilized to define remote learning as a learning environment in this paper.

In the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic many Finnish schools, as well as other schools globally, transitioned from traditional classrooms to conducting lessons using this kind of software. On a global level, pupils, students, and teachers worldwide had to quickly start adopting the new online learning and teaching environments for their classes. This was coined as *Emergency Remote Learning* (ERL), when the learners had to do an immediate transition from classrooms to remote learning (Tulaskar & Turunen 2021, 551). Due to the lack of time to prepare and plan for ERL, the transformation was not the same as usual online learning experiences that have been carefully planned (ibid.).

Learning languages at a distance is not the same as learning in a classroom setting. Sampson (2003, 104) states that distance learning serves mostly students who are not able to or do not wish to make use of traditional classroom teaching. He also says that motivation, self-discipline and learner’s independence are always necessary in all kinds of learning, and these are even more important in distance learning (Sampson 2003, 104). This is because in a distance learning setting, the students ought to be autonomous and they are mostly self-directed and not supervised (ibid.). Distance learning has its own special features and challenges (Hurd 2007b, 242); an aspect that needs to also be considered in the present study, is that at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the transition from classroom learning to

remote learning happened very quickly. Therefore, the situation and the quickly deployed remote learning setting was new both to teachers and students in Finland. The swift turn itself might have affected the teachers' and students' feelings and experiences of remote learning. In addition to the changes in education and learning, the pandemic may have caused significant changes in people's lives in other aspects, as well.

There are both benefits and drawbacks regarding remote learning. Possible significant advantages of remote learning include better access to education and sustainable development (Daniela & Visvizi, 2021, 24). Learners who have difficulties in accessing education because of different reasons such as living far away, socio-economic status or problems regarding their health, can take part in remote learning as long as they have the needed technology and reading skills (ibid.). Remote learning allows education to be accessible to wide audiences which promotes sustainable development (ibid.). Potential disadvantages to be considered regarding remote learning are, for example, the possible risk of remote learning creating a growing digital gap or social inequality in people with different income levels (Daniela & Visvizi, 2021, 24). According to Daniela and Visvizi (2021, 24) it may lead to only privileged groups or high-income countries having access to education and knowledge. Countries with a high income can invest in education, technology and knowledge whereas low- and middle-income countries have limited resources for educational development (ibid.). Another possible disadvantage of remote learning, in situations in which it is the only possibility, is the lack of social contact, creating and maintaining friendships and being in contact with others only remotely (Daniela & Visvizi, 2021, 24). This can lead to negative effects on people's psycho-emotional state and even mental health problems such as depression (ibid.). Especially learners in need of individual learning support might suffer in remote learning environments. According to Daniela & Visvizi (2021, 24), these learners are currently neglected to some degree in remote learning. For example, "the needs of major education actors are met first in response to the challenges posed by the crisis, and only then are vulnerable groups addressed", state Daniela & Visvizi (2021, 24).

There are various affective factors that have an impact on all learning, but the nature of distance learning might make the affective side of learning even more important (Hurd 2007b, 244). According to Hurd, this is "because of the mismatch between an inherently social discipline such as languages and a learning context which is characterized by remoteness, and because of the specific features of languages which make them more difficult to learn at a distance than other disciplines" (ibid.). Hurd also states that language anxiety and its negative

influences may rise in distance learning settings for instance due to the features that are characteristic to languages (2007a, 488). Firstly, languages are more difficult to learn at a distance than other disciplines, and secondly, language learning is fundamentally considered a social activity – and therefore, from this point of view, learning languages at a distance is not considered ideal. Thirdly, being isolated from the teacher and peers may hamper the teacher's ability to identify the learners in need of more guidance regarding their affective control (Hurd 2007a, 488). As in all kinds of teaching, educators and language teachers seek possibilities to improve the learning process of L2 learners. Since remote education is a rather new method of teaching and learning in Finnish schools, both in comprehensive school and upper secondary education, it is important to conduct studies on it to be able gain more in-depth insights of it. Teaching languages at a distance is a special field in distance education, given the previously mentioned social nature of languages and the specific features that make learning them more difficult than other disciplines (Hurd 2007b, 244). It is of great importance to gain knowledge of students' perceptions and experiences of remote language learning so that remote education can be improved in the future.

The present study was focused on L2 English WTC in upper secondary level education. According to the newest curriculum for Finnish upper secondary schools that was implemented in 2021, learning environments will be extended outside the learning institution with the help of information and communications technology (ICT) (National core curriculum of Finnish upper secondary schools 2019). Students will also be directed to capitalize digital learning environments, materials and tools for retrieval, processing and evaluation of information, as well as producing and sharing information. Also, the Finnish Matriculation Examination has gone under a process of digitalization since the year 2016, and in the spring of 2019, all the tests were taken digitally for the first time (Ylioppilastutkintolautakunta, 2021). In 2021, upper secondary education in Finland became free of charge for the new students starting their first upper secondary studies. This meant that also the materials and tools for studying became free, so the students who started their upper secondary studies in Finland in 2021 received, for instance, laptops for the time of their studies. Considering the principles of the newest curriculum and the globally ongoing and increasing digitalization, it is highly likely that digital learning environments, including remote teaching and learning, will become more commonplace in the coming years.

### 3.2 Remote learning and WTC

Currently, there seems to be a gap in the research field of WTC that deals with remote English L2 learning (in Finland). Few studies have been conducted on the L2 English WTC of learners in remote EFL learning environments yet. Therefore, it is important to study the students' perceptions and views of remote learning and explore tools to improve their engagements and willingness to communicate in L2 English remote learning. In the next section, I will explain how the data were gathered for the present study and introduce the sample of participants who took part in the research. According to Yashima's research results, the learners' anxiety should be decreased to improve their L2 communication confidence and their WTC (2002, 63). Language anxiety is a concept often considered to be closely intertwined with WTC. Language anxiety may occur in learners of all levels, for more advanced and proficient learners as well, which then in turn may influence one's WTC. Earlier research has consistently found that the two strongest predictors of unwillingness to communicate are a high level of foreign language anxiety (FLA) combined with low TL self-confidence (Gregersen & MacIntyre 2014, 221). Therefore, to increase WTC, the learner's anxiety level ought to be decreased and their TL self-confidence should be improved, as the results suggested in Yashima's study, too (2002).

Since all learners are different, some may enjoy remote learning settings while others prefer traditional classroom settings. For some, remote learning may feel comfortable while others might feel more anxious when learning at a distance, for instance because of the lack of the teacher's physical presence and support. Learning languages at a distance might potentially be the setting where affective problems occur the most severe (Hurd 2007a, 489). Previous FLA research has mainly studied anxiety in classroom settings, leaving room for investigating anxiety in distance learning (Hurd 2007a, 489). Hurd examined the nature of language anxiety in a distance French learning setting as well as the students' coping strategies to reduce anxiety (2007a, 487). She conducted a four-month research on L2 French learners at an open university in the United Kingdom. In the study, she also investigated the reasons why the students chose to learn at a distance rather than face-to-face. 64.5% of the participants stated that their reasons for distance learning were to be able to reconcile family life and work with studying, absence of proximity to educational institutions or having troubles with mobility (Hurd 2007a, 491). The rest of the participants (35.3%) seemed to have a positive attitude towards distance learning from the beginning and trusted that it had great advantages (*ibid.*). The key reasons for distance learning for the latter group were the opportunity to study at



one's own pace, the challenge, decreased stress, and one's fondness to study on their own (ibid.). In addition, "value for money, accessibility, flexibility, control over learning, and the quality of Open University materials" were named as reasons for distance learning (Hurd 2007a, 491–492). The results of the study suggested that anxiety has an effect on distance language learning, as it does on traditional classroom learning as well (Hurd 2007a, 499). 21% of the participants stated that distance learning caused them more anxiety compared to classroom learning, 27% felt that learning at a distance decreased their anxiety, and 51.7% of the students felt no difference in the level of their anxiety in distance learning setting (Hurd 2007a, 500). To my knowledge, few studies have yet been conducted on WTC and language anxiety in remote learning settings.

In Hurd's study (2007a), the participants had chosen to study remotely so they were voluntarily studying at a distance. The circumstances set by the COVID-19 pandemic did not leave room for freedom of choice in conducting or participating compulsory education or upper secondary education and, therefore, the circumstances of the present study are different than Hurd's. Like Yashima's study (2002), the present study also examined the participants' self-evaluated L2 proficiency, motivation and attitudes, communication confidence in English and their international posture, as well as other elements. In addition to the previously mentioned variables, the present study explored the students' own perceptions of increasing their WTC in remote learning of English. The results of the present study will be introduced in section 5 and discussed in section 6.

## 4 Methodology

Having introduced the previous research and theoretical framework of willingness to communicate and remote learning, I will move on to introduce the present study. The present study investigated the L2 English WTC in remote learning. The participants of the study consisted of 47 dual qualification students in Proper Finland area. The study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. How willing to communicate are this group of L2 English learners in remote learning? How do the learners react to the difference between remote learning and traditional classroom learning, and does it influence their WTC in the lessons?
2. What are the learners' perspectives on how their willingness to communicate in remote learning could be increased?
3. How has remote learning affected the students' WTC over the years during the pandemic?

I will start by presenting the methodology of the study followed by introducing the background data of the participants. The results of the study will be presented in section 5 and further discussed in section 6, followed by conclusions in section 7.

The present study examined the L2 WTC of dual qualification students. As a means of gathering data about the participants' WTC, the questionnaire's multiple-choice statements were divided into different categories of factors that may affect one's WTC. In addition, there was a set of questions related to attitudes and views on remote learning in general. The categories possibly affecting one's WTC were communication confidence, ought-to self and motivation, international posture – openness to experience, international posture – interest in international affairs, unplanned and planned in-class WTC versus unplanned and planned remote learning WTC, and WTC outside the classroom and practice-seeking WTC. According to the theoretical framework of L2 WTC, these factors influence one's WTC.

The present study was conducted as mixed methods research: it was a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. The voluntary participants took part in a Webropol-questionnaire created for specifically the present study to serve its purposes. The questionnaire comprised background information questions, multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions. The survey was based on WTC Inventory by Mystkowska-Wiertelak &

Pawlak 2017 and MacIntyre et al.'s Speaking outside class survey (2001) and their Finnish translations. Some of the survey items were modified to suit the purposes of the present study. For instance, some multiple-choice statements were slightly changed because of the research environment being remote learning instead of classroom learning. Not all the items in the original surveys were utilized to keep the answer time of the questionnaire short enough and to focus on the parts that were especially interesting for this research.

According to Dörnyei (2007, 45), the popularity of mixed methods research has increased, and this type of research has multiple strengths. The key strength of mixed research is the possibility to utilize the best parts of both methods and to combine them (Dörnyei 2007, 45). Mixed research also allows multi-level analysis of complex issues: it is possible to reach a deeper comprehension of a complex phenomenon by utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data (*ibid.*). Mixed methods research was suitable for the present study due to its combined features of both quantitative and qualitative aspects and therefore the strengths of both methods were utilizable in the study. The chosen method for data collection was the specifically made Webropol-questionnaire, which enabled the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. According to Dörnyei (2007, 101), the primary advantages regarding questionnaires include benefits such as them being rather easy to construct, their highly versatile and unique capability of collecting plenty of easily processible information time-efficiently (Dörnyei 2007, 102). The utilized questionnaire will be explained in more detail in section 4.4.

#### **4.1 Data collection**

The participants were informed about the ethical principles of the study both in oral and in written forms. They were told that participating the study is voluntary and they can discontinue their participation at any point of the data collection. It was emphasized that the data collection is anonymous and would not affect their grades and that participating the study is not linked to their degrees. The participants could read the privacy notice either printed on paper or linked on the research questionnaire. The guardians of minor students were informed about the study on the web interface, Wilma, utilized in the school. They guardians were also informed what to do whether they wished their child or dependant not to take part in the research. Both the guardians and students were informed about the topic, goals, methods, and ethics of the present study. Research permit was admitted by the school in advance.

The data were collected anonymously from four different groups of students of the school within a week in February 2022. All the students were dual qualification students. The data collection method was an online questionnaire and the students filled in the questionnaire during their lessons or at home. The participants were told the approximate fill-in time of the questionnaire and they were able to ask if anything in the questionnaire was unclear. To ensure as clear comprehension of the topic and questions as possible, the questionnaire was translated into Finnish for the participants. The participants responded in Finnish and their answers in the open-ended questions were later translated into English.

## **4.2 Data analysis**

The data collected via the questionnaire were transferred to Microsoft Excel for data analysis and evaluation. The data included both quantitative and qualitative material. The quantitative material comprised the numbers for the Likert-scale statements in the research survey, and the qualitative material consisted of the responses for the open-ended questions at the end of the questionnaire. The quantitative data were analyzed by calculating average scores and creating figures and tables to demonstrate the findings, whereas the qualitative data were first grouped to different main categories depending on the answer and then translated into English. Then, the number of answers in each main category was calculated to see the frequency of the answer types. For instance, in the open-ended question “What kind of factors do you think affect your willingness to communicate in English lessons in the classroom?”, the participants’ responses were categorized to different groups depending on what they had answered. To provide an example, ten participants mentioned atmosphere or class spirit, six participants mentioned the topic of the lesson, and six participants mentioned the physical presence in the classroom. By grouping the answers and calculating the frequencies of different responses, it was possible to calculate the factors that were mentioned most often. The answers in the open-ended questions will be introduced more in detail in sections 5.2-5.4.

## **4.3 Participants**

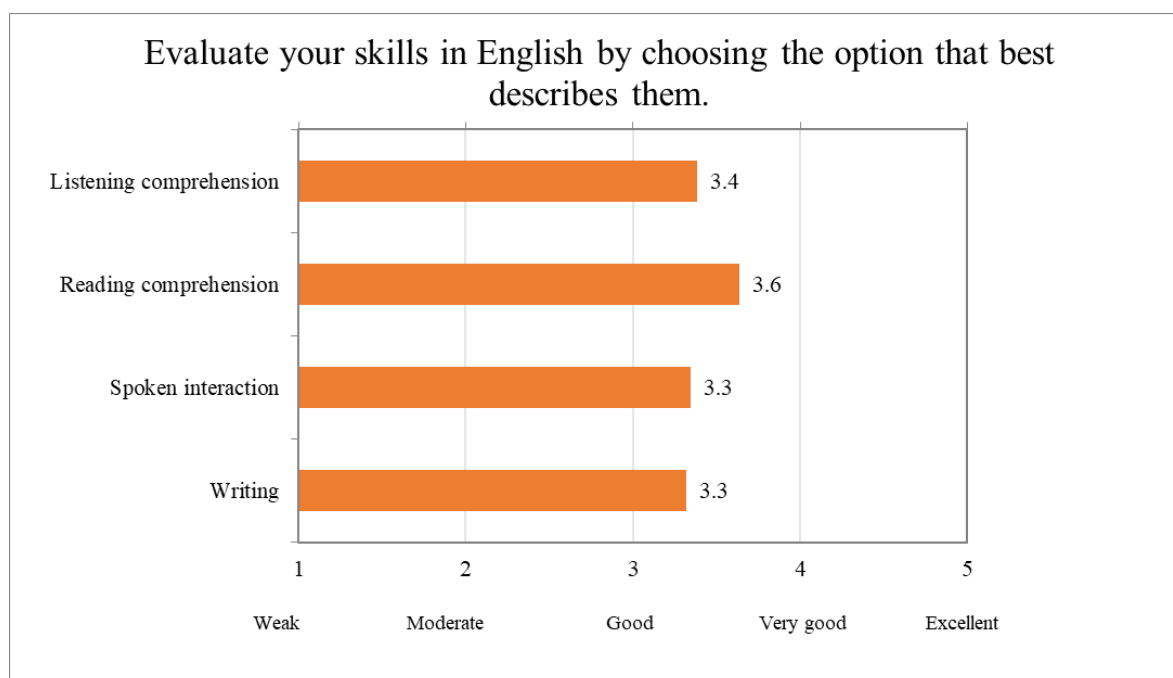
The participants were students of upper secondary education studying a dual examination in the Proper Finland area. There were 47 ( $n = 47$ ) participants in total. The ages of the participants varied from 16 to 20, 34.0% ( $n = 16$ ) were 16 years old, 29.8% ( $n = 14$ ) were 17, 27.7% ( $n = 13$ ) were 18, 6.4% ( $n = 3$ ) were 19 years old, and one participant ( $n = 1$ , 2.1%) was 20 years old. The average age was 17.13 years, the median age was 17 and mode was 16

years. The majority, 80.9% of the participants were female (n = 38), the minority, 19.1% being male (n = 9).

Only one participant's (2.1%) mother tongue was other than Finnish. Nine participants (19.15%) reported also other languages being spoken at their homes daily. Five of those participants' responses (10.6 %, n = 5) included English. Other languages mentioned were Swedish, Vietnamese, and Somali.

Two participants (4.26%) reported that they had spent more than a month outside Finland, whereas 95.74% (n = 47) of the participants had not. Five participants (10.64%) had taken part in earlier English-enriched education, attended an English nursery school or bilingual (English and Finnish) family day care. The other 42 participants (89.36%) had not done so. The participants of the study had started studying English at school at the ages of 6 to 10, the average age being 8.85, median 9 and mode 9.

The participants were asked to self-evaluate their English skills in *listening* and *reading comprehension*, *spoken interaction*, and *writing*. The average results of the self-evaluation regarding the different language components can be seen in Figure 2. One participant had left the evaluation for spoken interaction empty, so in total 46 participants responded to the spoken interaction-question. All 47 participants responded to the rest of the components. The average result for listening comprehension in the sample was 3.4, reading comprehension 3.6, spoken interaction 3.3, and writing 3.3. Therefore, the average results for each component were between 'good' and 'very good'. This suggests that the participants of the current study evaluated their English skills between 'good' and 'very good' on average and the highest average score was in reading comprehension (3.6). After that, the component evaluated the second highest on average was listening comprehension (3.4). Both spoken interaction and writing scored 3.3 on average.



*Figure 2 Self-evaluation averages of the participants' English skills*

More precise division of the participants' self-evaluation results can be seen in Table 1. The table shows the percentage of the participants and the number of responses for each evaluation option on all the four components.

	Weak	Moderate	Good	Very good	Excellent
Listening comprehension (n = 47)	4.26% n = 2	17.02% n = 8	25.53% n = 12	42.55% n = 20	10.64% n = 5
Reading comprehension (n = 47)	2.13% n = 1	8.51% n = 4	27.66% n = 13	46.81% n = 22	14.89% n = 7
Spoken interaction (n = 46)	0% n = 0	19.56% n = 9	36.96% n = 17	32.61% n = 15	10.87% n = 5
Writing (n = 47)	2.13% n = 1	14.89% n = 7	42.55% n = 20	29.79% n = 14	10.64% n = 5

*Table 1 Self-evaluation of the participants' English skills*

Figure 2 and Table 1 provide information about the participant's self-evaluated skills. On average, the participants considered their English skills rather good (3.3–3.6). This number is important to know, since the quantitative data regarding the participants' is presented in average scores, too. Therefore, it is good to know, what is the average level of the participants' English skills, to be able to reflect the WTC numbers to the English skills of the participants.

#### 4.4 The questionnaire

The utilized research method was a questionnaire (Appendix 1) conducted via the online survey tool Webropol. The questionnaire was based on a survey and its Finnish translations utilized in a research project by University of Turku, which combined Mystkowska-Wiertelak et al.'s (2017) 'WTC Inventory' questionnaire and MacIntyre et al.'s (2001) 'Speaking outside class' survey. The original WTC survey was altered to suit the needs of the present study. For instance, several original questions were deleted, and a set of questions related to remote learning and motivation were added. The deleted questions were decided because of, for instance, their repetitive nature: some questions seemed to examine similar issues and were therefore deleted. Additionally, five open-ended questions and an open comment section were added to gain qualitative material as well.

The data collection was anonymous and filling in the questionnaire took approximately 15-20 minutes for the participants. The questionnaire was divided in three different sections. The first section consisted of background information, followed by the second section which comprised multiple-choice questions, and lastly, the third section included five open-ended questions. The background information part consisted of questions about age, sex, mother tongue(s), possible longer than a month stays abroad, and possible prior participation in English-enriched daycare or education. Prior long stays abroad or participation in language immersion were asked because they may, for example, positively affect one's motivation to study the L2, and therefore influence one's WTC. According to Baker and MacIntyre (2003, 72) foreign language learners usually do not have much contact with the TL group and may therefore not feel strongly about needing to integrate with the TL group. Immersion students, however, might strive for better integration within the TL group and be more integratively motivated to reach a high level of L2 proficiency (*ibid.*). The participants were also asked to fill in the age in which they started studying English at school followed by a self-evaluation scale regarding their listening comprehension, reading comprehension, spoken interaction and writing skills in English. The answer options for the self-evaluation scale were 'weak', 'moderate', 'good', 'very good', and 'excellent'.

Following the background information part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to answer multiple-choice questions regarding remote learning and classroom learning of English, different situations about using English in class and outside of class and English in general. This part of the questionnaire produced quantitative information for the research. It

was clarified for the participants that the remote English classes meant classes that occur via Teams, for instance. The participants were asked to choose the best alternative to describe their experiences and opinions about the statements. There were 65 multiple-choice items in total. The answer options for the questions were:

“1 - Not at all true about me

2 - Very slightly true of me

3 - Slightly true of me

4 - Moderately true of me

5 - Very much true of me

6 - Extremely true about me”

The multiple-choice statements were grouped into different factors and sections by the topic of the questions. There were different sections to measure the participants’ views and experiences on remote learning, their communication confidence, ought-to self and motivation of learning English in general, international posture, openness to experience and interest in international affairs, unplanned and planned in-class WTC versus unplanned and planned remote learning WTC, and finally, WTC outside the classroom and practice-seeking WTC. The statements were grouped into different factors and named accordingly to make it clear and logical for the participants to fill in the survey. The names of the different factors were not visible for the participants in the questionnaire to minimize the possible effect of the names leading the participants’ answers. Table 2 provides the names of each factor followed by example statements for each of them.

Factor A: Remote learning	<i>“I am willing to answer the questions the teacher asks everybody during remote class (for example in Teams) using the microphone”</i>
Factor B: Communication confidence	<i>“I know I am able to give an oral presentation in English to the rest of the class”</i>



Factor C: International posture – openness to experience	<i>“I can imagine myself living abroad and having a discussion in English”</i>
Factor D: Motivation and ought-to self	<i>“Studying English is important to me in order to gain the approval of my peers/teachers/family/boss”</i>
Factor E: Unplanned and planned in-class WTC versus unplanned and planned remote learning WTC	<i>“I am willing to ask the teacher in English to repeat what he or she has said in class”</i> <i>“I am willing to ask the teacher in English to repeat what he or she has said during remote class (for example on Teams)”</i>
Factor F: International posture – interest in international affairs	<i>“I often read and watch the news, short films, memes about life/events in foreign countries”</i>
Factor G: WTC outside the classroom and practice-seeking WTC	<i>“I am willing to speak English in a group about my summer holidays outside the classroom”</i>

*Table 2 Studied factors related to WTC and example statements of them*

The final part of the questionnaire included five open-ended questions regarding the participants' views on whether they thought their willingness to communicate differed in remote learning compared to classroom learning and if it had changed during the pandemic. There were also open-ended questions about the possible factors that affected their WTC in remote classes and in classrooms. In the final open-ended question, the participants were asked to explain in what ways their WTC could be increased in remote English lessons, if any. The open-ended questions were:

1. Do you feel like your willingness to communicate in remote English lessons differs from classroom lessons? If yes, how?
2. Do you think your willingness to communicate in remote English lessons has changed during the COVID-19-pandemic, when you compare the first remote learning periods and the latest remote lessons? If yes, how?
3. What kind of factors do you think affect your willingness to communicate in remote English lessons?

4. What kind of factors do you think affect your willingness to communicate in English lessons in the classroom?
5. How could your willingness to communicate be increased in remote English lessons?

At the end of the survey, there was an open comment section for possible further comments about the research topic and the participants' experiences or views on it. The section of open-ended questions was created to gather qualitative information for the research purposes. Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered to achieve the needs of mixed-methods research. A few participants left open comments in addition to their responses in the questionnaire, and some of them will be introduced in the results section.

## 5 Results

In this section, I will explain the results of the present study and utilize figures and tables to present the key findings of the research. I will begin by introducing the results for WTC in L2 English remote learning and learners' views on differences between remote and classroom learning in section 5.1, followed by section 5.2, which focuses on comparing the factors affecting L2 WTC in remote lessons and in the classroom. In section 5.3 I explain the learners' perspectives on increasing their L2 English WTC in remote learning settings. Finally, in section 5.4, I will present the results of the dynamic approach of the study and shed light on whether the participants considered their WTC having changed over the years of the pandemic.

### 5.1 Willingness to communicate in L2 English remote learning and learners' views on differences between remote and classroom learning

In this section, I will present the results of the first research question, which aimed to investigate the L2 WTC of the participants in remote learning and compare their views on remote learning and traditional classroom learning, and to discover whether it potentially affects the participants' WTC.

#### 5.1.1 Factors influencing WTC

The first multiple-choice question set of the questionnaire included statements about remote learning and the students' views and perceptions on it. Thus, this group of questions included statements about remote learning in general, which may therefore not be directly related to WTC (such as "I enjoy remote learning"). I will start by introducing factor A: Remote learning, which comprised of 14 statements related to remote learning. The statements are presented in Figure 3, which shows the average answer of the participants in each statement. This allows us to examine the average results of the group. The explanations for each number of the scale are explained below the numbers, for instance: 1 = Not at all true about me, 2 = Very slightly true of me, and so on. After factor A: Remote learning, I will introduce the rest of the factors influencing WTC that were researched in the present study.

## 5.1.2 Factor A: Remote learning

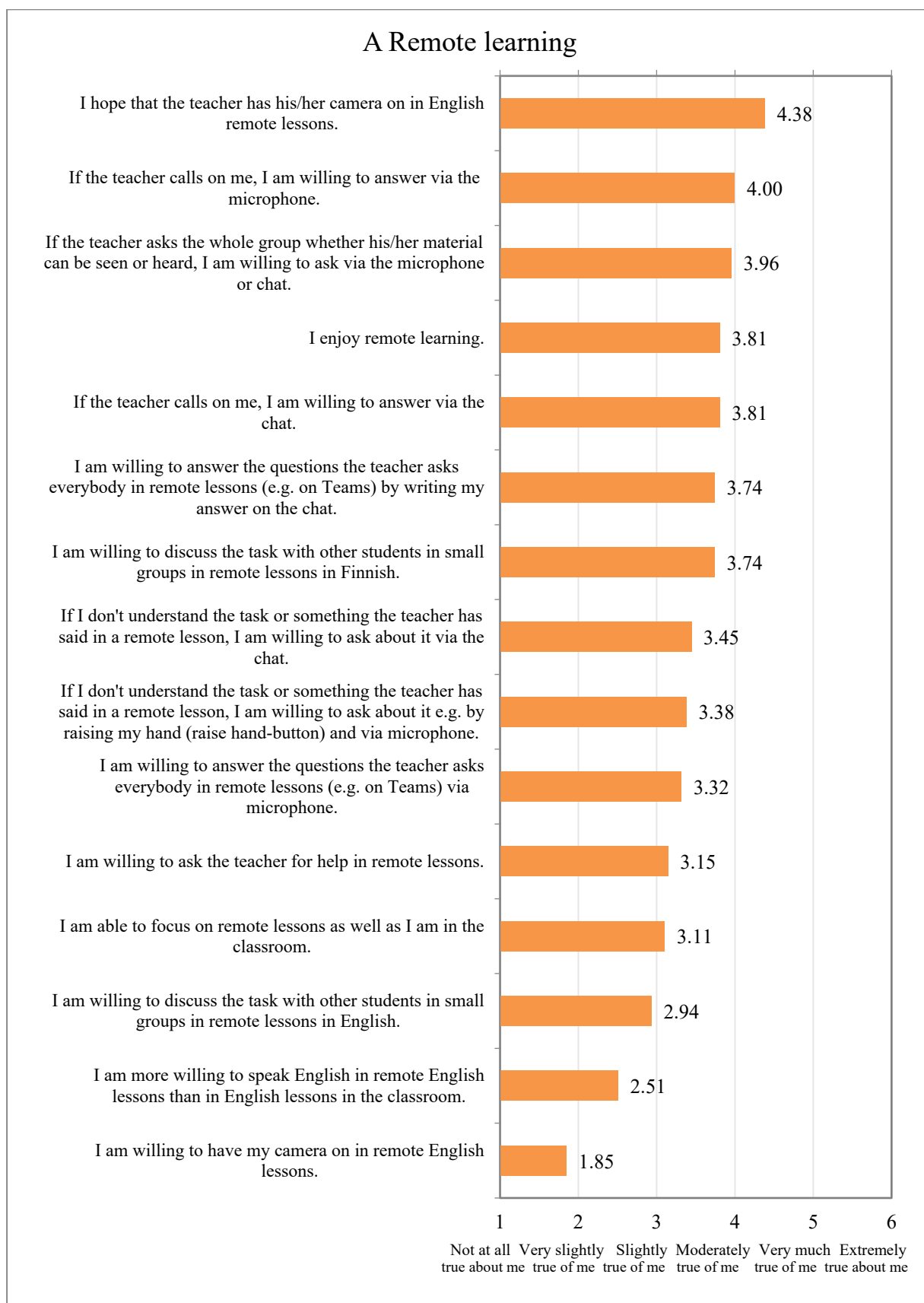


Figure 3 Average scores in remote learning

The statements about remote learning are presented in Figure 3 in the order from the highest scores to the lowest. The highest average score regarding remote learning statements was the wish that the teacher has their camera on in remote lessons (4.38). The score is rather high and it is set between “moderately true” and “very much true of me”. On average, the students were moderately willing (4) to answer via the microphone when being called on by the teacher. The average score, 4, for answering the teacher’s questions specifically asked from individual students, is rather high compared to some other statements in the remote learning category. The results suggest that the students were more willing to respond via the microphone than the chat (3.81). The difference is not large, since it is only 0.19. Therefore, it could be said that the students were quite as willing to respond to questions via the microphone and the chat.

The students were approximately moderately (3.96) willing to respond if the teacher asks whether the material can be seen or heard. This means, that on average, the students are quite willing to help the teacher in this aspect. Figure 2 also indicates that on average the students enjoy remote learning at least slightly or moderately, with the average score being 3.81. It is interesting, that this statement is among the four highest-scored statements, and it seems like the students liked remote learning, at least to some extent. The results suggested that the participants are somewhat more than slightly willing (3.32) to answer the questions the teacher asks everybody in remote lessons via microphone, and more willing (3.74) to answer via the chat. The difference is larger than when the students are asked questions individually.

According to the results, the students were more willing to discuss the given task in small groups in Finnish (3.74) than in English (2.94). The average willingness score is rather low in talking about the task in English, whereas willingness to discuss in Finnish was nearly one unit (0.80) higher. Additionally, the participants were slightly willing (3.38) to ask about the task or something the teacher has said for instance by utilizing the raise hand-button and the microphone if they do not understand. The average score for willingness to ask for the teacher’s help in a remote lesson is 3.15 (slightly true). The willingness to ask for help via the chat (3.45) is a little higher than asking for help via the microphone.

The statement about focusing better on remote lessons in comparison with traditional classroom lessons scored 3.11 on average, which suggests that the participants were able to concentrate slightly better in remote lessons. The possible reasons for this were not attempted to discover in the study. The participants’ average score for being more willing to speak

English in remote lessons than in the classroom was between “very slightly true” and “slightly true” (2.51). On average, the students in the study were not very willing to have their camera on in remote lessons (1.85). The score is between “not at all true about me” and “very slightly true of me”. On the contrary, they considered that the teacher having the camera on was important. It is an interesting observation that the students are not willing to have their own cameras on but they wish the teacher to do so. It would be interesting to investigate the effects of all the students having their cameras on and seeing whether it had an effect on their WTC.

The results of the remote learning section of the questionnaire suggest willingness to communicate in remote lessons was approximately ‘slightly’ willing to communicate to ‘moderately’ willing to communicate in every statement except discussing in English in breakout rooms. This suggests that the participants’ willingness to communicate in remote lessons was low to moderate.

The variation between individuals regarding the answer alternatives is presented in Table 3.

	1 - Not at all true about me	2 - Very slightly true of me	3 - Slightly true of me	4 - Moderately true of me	5 - Very much true of me	6 - Extremely true of me	No. of responses	Avg.	MED
I hope that the teacher has his/her camera on in English remote lessons.	n = 2 4.26%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 12 25.53%	n = 12 25.53%	47	4.38	5
If the teacher calls on me, I am willing to answer via the microphone.	n = 5 10.64%	n = 2 4.26%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 11 23.40%	n = 15 31.91%	n = 6 12.77%	47	4.00	4
If the teacher asks the whole group whether his/her material can be seen or heard, I am willing to ask via the microphone or chat.	n = 3 6.38%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 6 12.77%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 15 31.91%	n = 6 12.77%	47	3.96	4
I enjoy remote learning.	n = 3 6.38%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 16 34.04%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 5 10.64%	47	3.81	4
If the teacher calls on me, I am willing to answer via the chat.	n = 2 4.26%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 17 36.17%	n = 12 25.53%	n = 3 6.38%	47	3.81	4

	1 - Not at all true about me	2 - Very slightly true of me	3 - Slightly true of me	4 - Moderately true of me	5 - Very much true of me	6 - Extremely true of me	No. of responses	Avg.	MED
I am willing to answer the questions the teacher asks everybody in remote lessons (e.g. on Teams) by writing my answer on the chat.	n = 3 6.38%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 11 23.41%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 12 25.53%	n = 3 6.38%	47	3.74	4
I am willing to discuss the task with other students in small groups in remote lessons in Finnish.	n = 4 8.51%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 4 8.51%	47	3.74	4
If I don't understand the task or something the teacher has said in a remote lesson, I am willing to ask about it via the chat.	n = 6 12.77%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 12 25.53%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 3 6.38%	47	3.45	4
If I don't understand the task or something the teacher has said in a remote lesson, I am willing to ask about it e.g. by raising my hand (raise hand-button) and via microphone.	n = 7 14.89%	n = 6 12.77%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 11 23.40%	n = 1 2.13%	47	3.38	4
I am willing to answer the questions the teacher asks everybody in remote lessons (e.g. on Teams) via microphone.	n = 3 6.38%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 6 12.77%	n = 2 4.25%	47	3.32	3
I am willing to ask the teacher for help in remote lessons.	n = 8 17.02%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 2 4.25%	47	3.15	3
I am able to focus on remote lessons as well as I am in the classroom.	n = 11 23.40%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 4 8.51%	47	3.11	3
I am willing to discuss the task with other students in small groups in remote lessons in English.	n = 9 19.15%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 6 12.76%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 1 2.13%	47	2.94	3
Puhun englantia mieluummin englannin etätunnilla kuin englannin tunnilla luokassa.	n = 15 31.92%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 1 2.13%	47	2.51	2

	1 - Not at all true about me	2 - Very slightly true of me	3 - Slightly true of me	4 - Moderately true of me	5 - Very much true of me	6 - Extremely true of me	No. of responses	Avg.	MED
I am willing to have my camera on in remote English lessons.	n = 28 59.58%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 0 0%	47	1.85	1

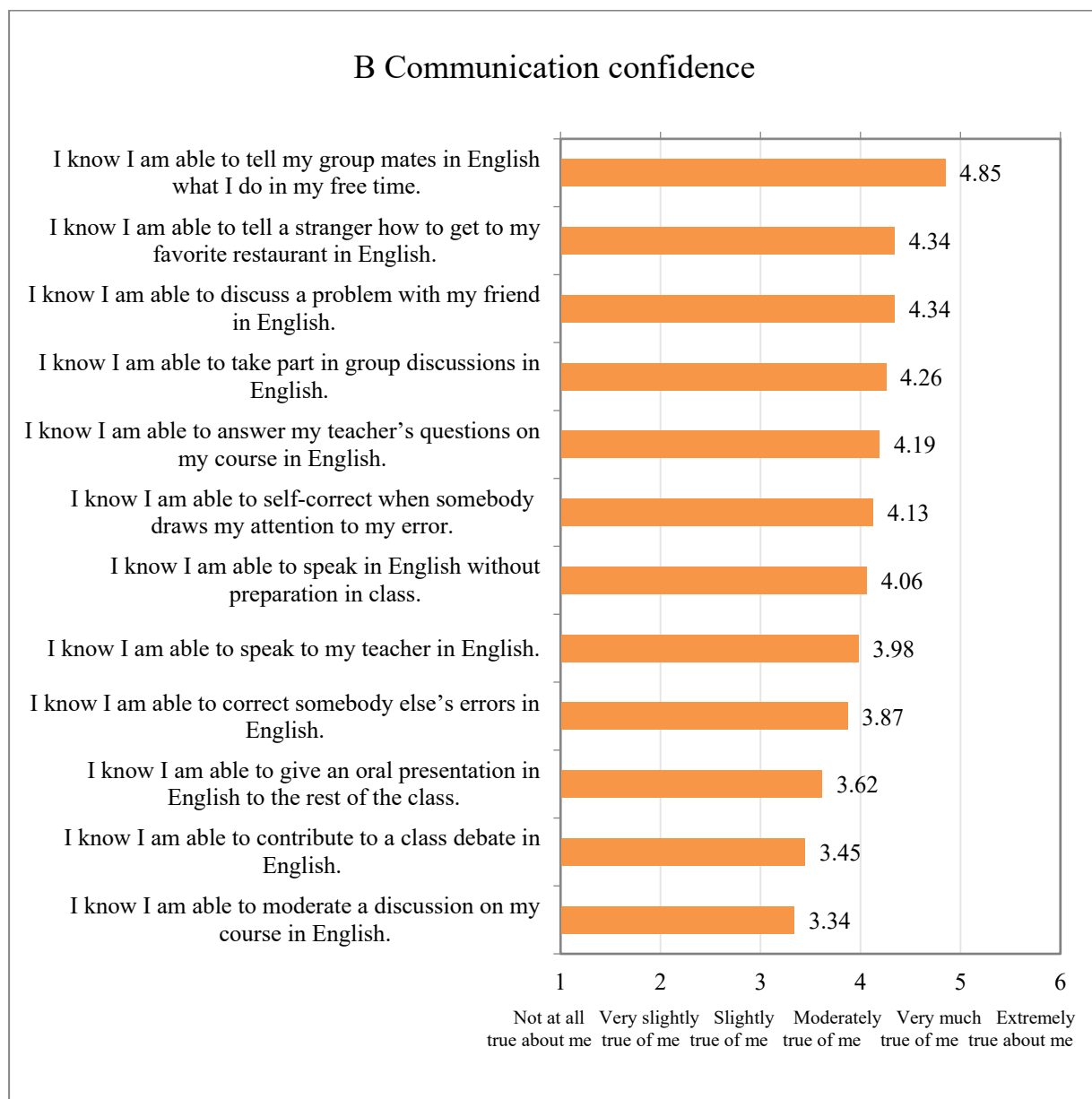
*Table 3 Individual variation in remote learning*

### 5.1.3 Factor B: Communication confidence

In the questionnaire, factor B included 12 statements regarding the participants' communication confidence. According to Yashima's study, L2 communication confidence affected WTC directly (2002, 63). Therefore, communication confidence was an important factor to be researched in the present study, too. The highest average confidence score was



4.85, which is rather close to the answer option number five, “very much true of me”. Figure 4 shows the activities in the order from the highest average confidence score to the lowest.



*Figure 4 Average scores in communication confidence*

The results suggest that on average the participants were most confident in telling their group mates what they do in their free time (4.85), followed by being able to tell a stranger how to get to their favorite restaurant in English (4.34) and discussing a problem with their friend in English (4.34). The students were also moderately confident in being able to take part in group discussions in English (4.26). Figure 4 also presents the activities the participants were least confident regarding their communication confidence in English. On average, the subjects were least confident in their ability to moderate a discussion on their course in English, with the average confidence score being 3.34. The activity the participants considered themselves

the second least confident in was their ability to contribute to as class debate in English (3.45), followed by giving an oral presentation in English to the rest of the class (3.62). Being able to correct someone else's errors in English was the fourth activity with the lowest confidence score (3.87).

However, it needs to be considered that the variation between the average confidence scores among the different activities is not very high. The confidence scores ranged between 3.34 and 4.85 and, therefore, all confidence scores were placed in a 1.51 range of variation. Most of the statements were placed above the score 4 (in a range between 1 to 6), which indicated that the participants' communication confidence was approximately higher than moderate. Individual variation between different answer alternatives can be seen in Table 4.

	1 - Not at all true about me	2 - Very slightly true of me	3 - Slightly true of me	4 - Moderately true of me	5 - Very much true of me	6 - Extremely true of me	No. of responses	Avg.	MED
I know I am able to tell my group mates in English what I do in my free time.	n = 0 0%	n = 1 2.13%	n = 2 4.26%	n = 12 25.53%	n = 20 42.55%	n = 12 25.53%	47	4.85	5
I know I am able to tell a stranger how to get to my favorite restaurant in English.	n = 0 0%	n = 1 2.13%	n = 12 25.53%	n = 12 25.53%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 8 17.02%	47	4.34	4
I know I am able to discuss a problem with my friend in English.	n = 0 0%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 17 36.17%	n = 6 12.77%	47	4.34	4
I know I am able to take part in group discussions in English.	n = 1 2.13%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 8 17.02%	47	4.26	4
I know I am able to answer my teacher's questions on my course in English.	n = 3 6.38%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 9 19.15%	47	4.19	4
I know I am able to self-correct when	n = 1	n = 7	n = 6	n = 13	n = 11	n = 9	47	4.13	4

	1 - Not at all true about me	2 - Very slightly true of me	3 - Slightly true of me	4 - Moderately true of me	5 - Very much true of me	6 - Extremely true of me	No. of responses	Avg.	MED
somebody draws my attention to my error.	2.13%	14.89%	12.77%	27.66%	23.40%	19.15%			
I know I am able to speak in English without preparation in class.	n = 4 8.51%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 6 12.77%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 7 14.89%	47	4.06	4
I know I am able to speak to my teacher in English.	n = 3 6.52%	n = 5 10.87%	n = 8 17.39%	n = 13 28.26%	n = 8 17.39%	n = 9 19.57%	46	3.98	4
I know I am able to correct somebody else's errors in English.	n = 4 8.51%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 12 25.5%	n = 12 25.53%	n = 6 12.77%	47	3.87	4
I know I am able to give an oral presentation in English to the rest of the class.	n = 7 14.89%	n = 6 12.77%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 15 31.91%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 6 12.77%	47	3.62	4
I know I am able to contribute to a class debate in English.	n = 6 12.77%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 3 6.38%	47	3.45	4
I know I am able to moderate a discussion on my course in English.	n = 6 12.77%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 12 25.53%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 5 10.64%	47	3.34	3

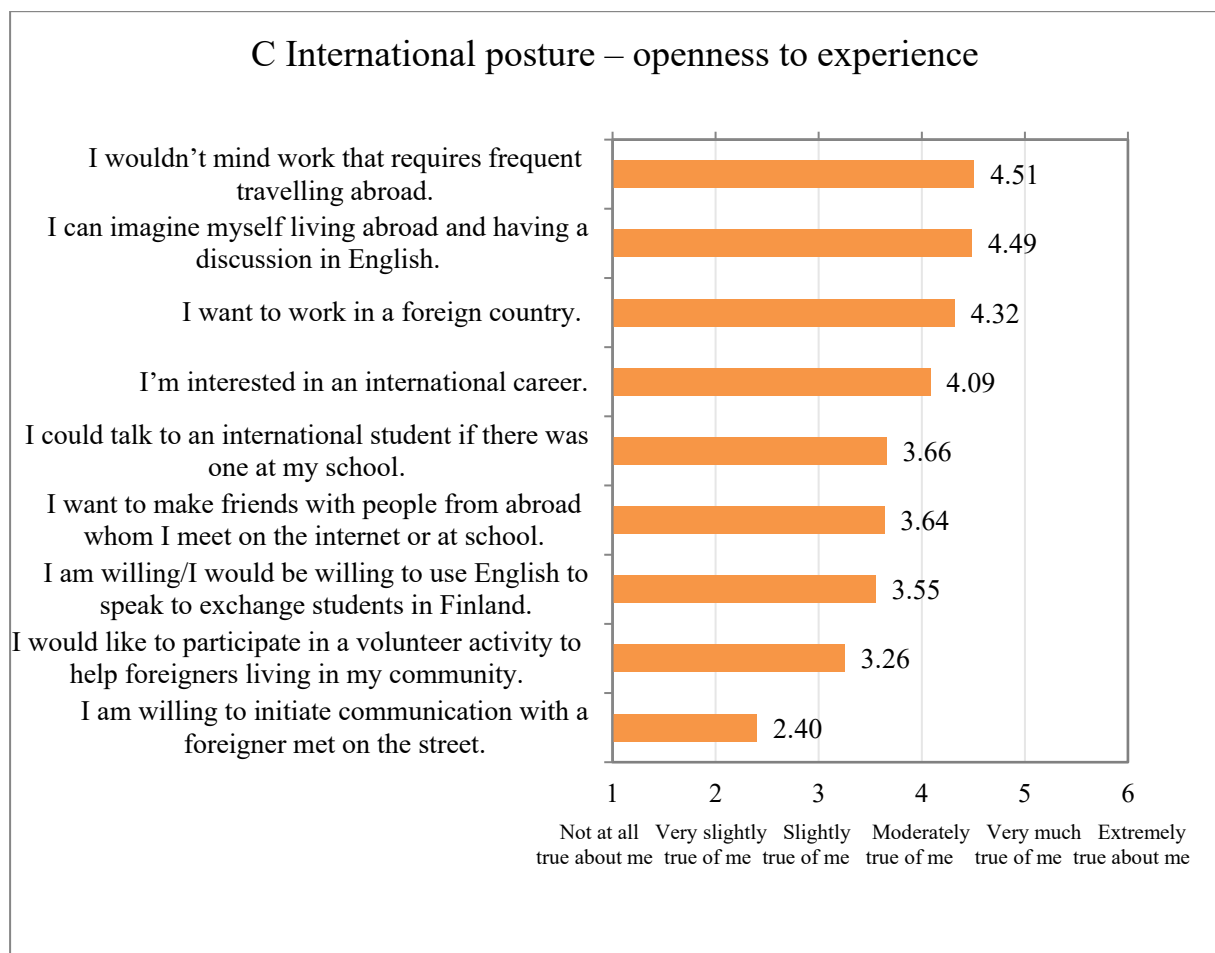
Table 4 Individual variation in communication confidence

#### 5.1.4 Factor C: International posture – openness to experience

Factor C examined the level of the participants' international posture and openness to experience. Yashima's (2002, 63) study, which was mentioned in section 2, suggested that international posture affected WTC both directly and indirectly (Yashima 2002, 63). In addition, international posture had an indirect effect on WTC by affecting one's motivation,

and motivation in turn predicts the L2 proficiency and communication confidence (ibid.). Openness to experience reflects how willing one is to seek new opportunities and experiences, and it can be seen as utilizing opportunities of L2 communication situations. According to Yashima (2002, 63) adding interest in international affairs is a key goal of EFL teaching.

As can be seen in Figure 5, the highest average score, 4.51, was in the statement “I wouldn’t mind work that requires frequent travelling abroad”. This score was between “moderately true of me” and “very much true of me”, which makes the score rather high. The statements with the highest scores can be seen at the top of Figure 5.



*Figure 5 Average scores in international posture – openness to experience*

Figure 5 shows that the participants were least willing to “initiate communication with a foreigner met on the street”, with the average score being 2.40 (between very slightly true of me and slightly true of me”. The average score of all the statements of Factor C, international posture – openness to experience, was 3.77. However, the views of the participants in different statements ranged quite a lot.

The individual variation in international posture – openness to experience is presented in Table 5.

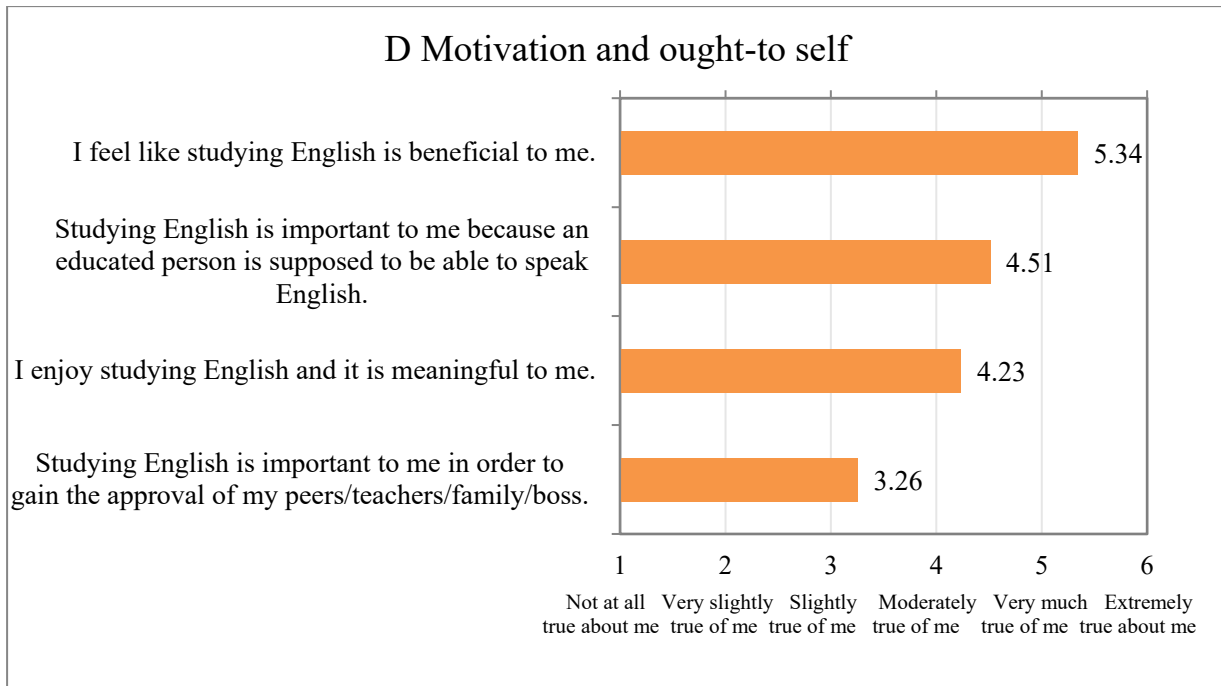
	1 - Not at all true about me	2 - Very slightly true of me	3 - Slightly true of me	4 - Moderately true of me	5 - Very much true of me	6 - Extremely true of me	No. of responses	Avg.	MED
I wouldn't mind work that requires frequent travelling abroad.	n = 1 2.13%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 16 34.04%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 14 29.79%	47	4.51	4
I can imagine myself living abroad and having a discussion in English.	n = 2 4.26%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 2 4.26%	n = 16 34.04%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 16 34.04%	47	4.49	4
I want to work in a foreign country.	n = 2 4.26%	n = 1 2.13%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 16 34.04%	n = 6 12.77%	n = 13 27.66%	47	4.32	4
I'm interested in an international career.	n = 2 4.26%	n = 6 12.77%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 15 31.91%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 12 25.53%	47	4.09	4
I could talk to an international student if there was one at my school.	n = 3 6.38%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 4 8.51%	47	3.66	4
I want to make friends with people from abroad whom I meet on the internet or at school.	n = 4 8.51%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 6 12.77%	47	3.64	4
I am willing/I would be willing to use English to speak to exchange	n = 7 14.90%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 7 14.89%	47	3.55	4

students in Finland.									
I would like to participate in a volunteer activity to help foreigners living in my community.	n = 8 17.02 %	n = 6 12.77%	n = 11 23.40%	n = 15 31.91%	n = 2 4.26%	n = 5 10.64%	47	3.26	3
I am willing to initiate communication with a foreigner met on the street.	n = 14 29.79 %	n = 14 29.79%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 2 4.26%	n = 0 0%	47	2.40	2

*Table 5 Individual variation in international posture – openness to experience*

### 5.1.5 Factor D: Motivation and ought-to self

The statements in factor D in the questionnaire represent the participants' motivation and ought-to-self in studying English. In MacIntyre et al.'s pyramid model, motivation is an important factor influencing WTC in intergroup attitudes: according to the model, enjoyment of L2 learning and using the L2 foster L2 learning (1998, 552). In factor D, there were four statements in total. The first statement, "I enjoy studying English and it is meaningful to me" looked at the intrinsic motivation of the participants, whereas the second statement "I feel like studying English is beneficial to me" could possibly show the participants' extrinsic motivation regarding studying English. The third and fourth statements were about one's ought-to-self: whether studying English fulfills something that one is 'supposed to be' like.



*Figure 6 Average scores in motivation and ought-to self*

According to Figure 6, the average score of the participants in the statement “I feel like studying English is beneficial to me” was 5.34, which is very high. It is between “very much true of me” and “extremely true of me”. This means that on average the students thought that studying and learning English benefits them somehow, which could measure their extrinsic motivation. However, it does not mean that the participants would only be motivated by the benefits of learning English – the average score of the first statement, which measures the level of enjoyment and meaningfulness of studying English, is moderately high as well (4.23). There is a 1.11-point difference between the average scores of these two statements, though, which suggests that on average the participants thought that studying English is more beneficial than enjoyable or meaningful to them.

The ought-to-self statement “Studying English is important to me in order to gain the approval of my peers/teacher/family/boss” was scored 3.26 on average, which means that it was slightly true to the participants. Therefore, the participants did not feel strongly about studying English to gain approval of others. The statement about studying English because an educated person is supposed to be able to speak English, had a higher average score (4.51), between moderately true and very much true. According to the average score in this statement, it is likely that the participants think that they are supposed to know English to be considered an educated person.

The individual variation regarding motivation and ought-to self can be seen in Table 6.

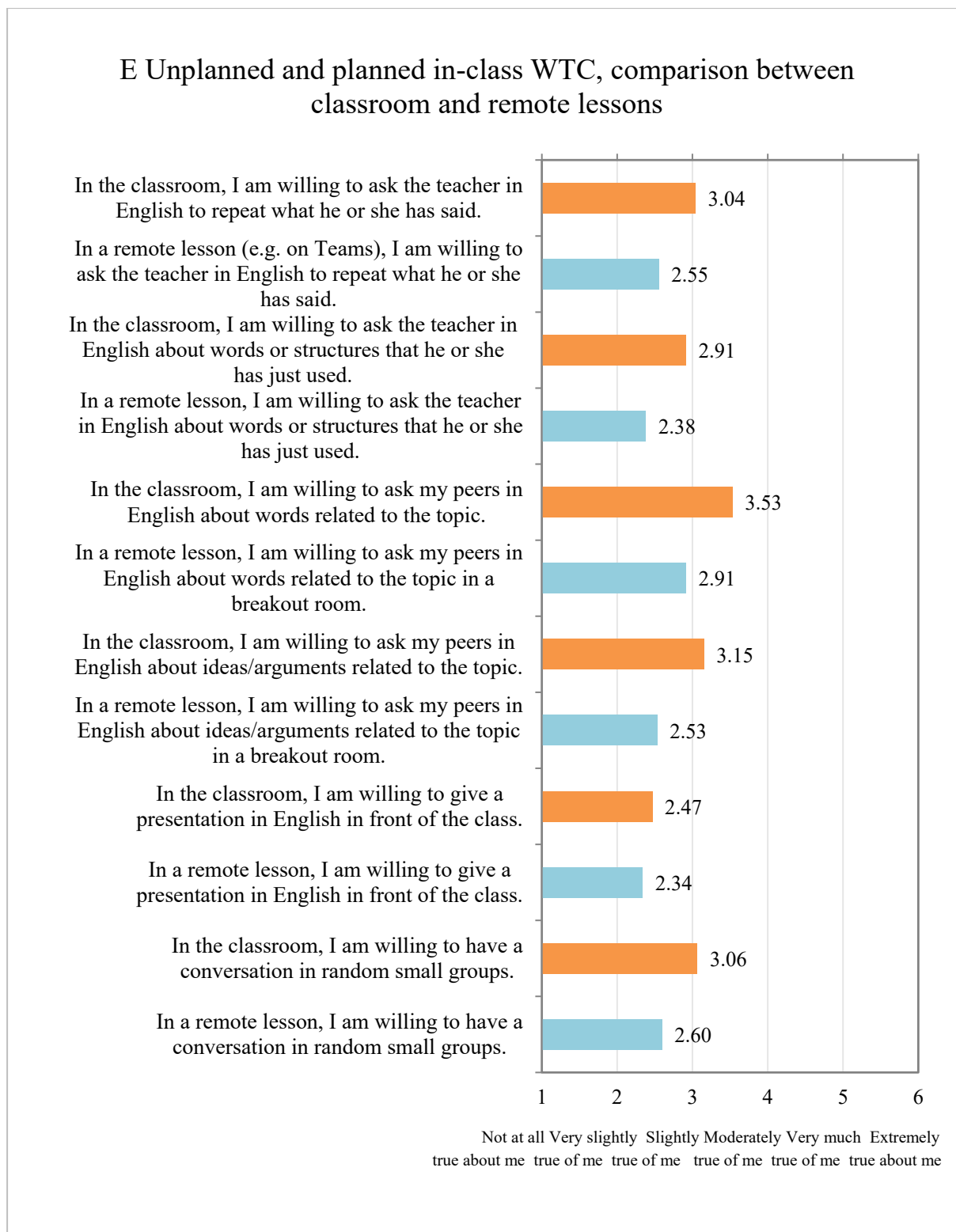
	1 - Not at all true about me	2 - Very slightly true of me	3 - Slightly true of me	4 - Moderately true of me	5 - Very much true of me	6 - Extremely true of me	No. of responses	Avg.	MED
I feel like studying English is beneficial to me.	n = 0 0%	n = 1 2.13%	n = 2 4.25%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 27 57.45%	47	5.34	6
Studying English is important to me because an educated person is supposed to be able to speak English.	n = 2 4.26%	n = 2 4.26%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 14 29.79%	47	4.51	5
I enjoy studying English and it is meaningful to me.	n = 3 6.38%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 11 23.41%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 10 21.28%	47	4.23	4
Studying English is important to me in order to gain the approval of my peers/teachers/family/boss.	n = 10 21.28%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 7 14.89%	47	3.26	3

*Table 6 Individual variation in motivation and ought-to self*

### 5.1.6 Factor E: Unplanned and planned in-class WTC, comparison between classroom lessons and remote lessons

Factor E included statements about the participants WTC in unplanned and planned activities in the classroom and in remote lessons. Individuals may differ in WTC levels in unplanned and planned in-class WTC as well as in WTC in the classroom versus outside the classroom. Figure 7 presents a comparison between each activity in classroom and in remote lessons.





*Figure 7 Average scores in unplanned and planned in class WTC and comparison between classroom and remote lessons*

As can be seen in Figure 7, the participants' average WTC in both unplanned and planned lesson activities ranged between 2.34 and 3.53. The results of the comparison of different activities in classroom and remotely suggest that the students' WTC is lower in every activity in remote lessons. This finding is particularly interesting. To test whether there was a

significant difference between the participants' WTC in remote lesson activities and classroom lesson activities, a Mann-Whitney u-test was conducted. The Mann-Whitney u-test suits small samples and, therefore, it was a suitable method for the analysis of the present study. The test was conducted based on the average scores of each statement in the questionnaire's factor E. The results can be seen in Table 7. The value of U was 4.5 and the sample sizes were six ( $n = 6$ ). The sample for each variable (average scores for remote lesson activities and average scores for classroom activities) included six average numbers. The significance level was 0.03,  $P < 0.05$  which means that the test results of the Mann-Whitney u-test suggest that the result is statistically significant.

The value of U	4.5
The sample sizes	6 average numbers for each variable
The significance level	0.03* P < 0.05 two-tailed

*Table 7 Mann-Whitney u-test*

The averages of each activity both in classroom and remote lessons and their calculated differences can be seen in Table 8.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Classroom</b>	<b>Remote lessons</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Willingness to ask the teacher in English to repeat what he or she has said	3.04	2.55	0.49
Willingness to ask the teacher in English about words or structures that he or she has just used	2.91	2.38	0.53
Willingness to ask the peers in English about words related to the topic	3.53	2.91	0.62
Willingness to ask the peers in English about ideas/arguments related to the topic	3.15	2.53	0.62
Willingness to give a presentation in English in front of the class	2.47	2.34	0.13
Willingness to have a conversation in random small groups	3.06	2.60	0.46

*Table 8 WTC in different activities in classroom and remote lessons*

Table 8 indicates that the highest differences in WTC between classroom and remote lessons are in “willingness to ask the peers in English about words related to the topic” and “willingness to ask the peers in English about ideas/arguments related to the topic”. The next highest difference can be found in “willingness to ask the teacher in English about words or structures that he or she has just used”, followed by “willingness to ask the teacher in English to repeat what he or she has said”. The second lowest difference is in “willingness to have a

conversation in random small groups”, and the slightest difference is “willingness to give a presentation in English in front of the class”. Overall, the lowest WTC in the listed activities both in face-to-face lessons and remote lessons is in giving a presentation in English in front of the class.

Table 9 presents information regarding individual variation between the Likert-scale answer alternatives.

	1 - Not at all true about me	2 - Very slightly true of me	3 - Slightly true of me	4 - Moderately true of me	5 - Very much true of me	6 - Extremely true of me	No. of responses	Avg .	MED
In the classroom, I am willing to ask the teacher in English to repeat what he or she has said.	n = 6 12.77 %	n = 14 29.79 %	n = 8 17.02 %	n = 12 25.53 %	n = 5 10.64%	n = 2 4.25%	47	3.04	3
In a remote lesson (e.g. on Teams), I am willing to ask the teacher in English to repeat what he or she has said.	n = 12 25.53 %	n = 16 34.04 %	n = 7 14.89 %	n = 7 14.89 %	n = 3 6.38 %	n = 2 4.26 %	47	2.55	2
In the classroom, I am willing to ask the teacher in English about words or structures that he or she has just used.	n = 8 17.02 %	n = 13 27.66 %	n = 8 17.02 %	n = 13 27.66 %	n = 3 6.38 %	n = 2 4.26 %	47	2.91	3
In a remote lesson, I am willing to ask the teacher in English about words or structures that he or she has just used.	n = 13 27.66 %	n = 16 34.04 %	n = 9 19.15 %	n = 6 12.77 %	n = 2 4.25 %	n = 1 2.13 %	47	2.38	2
In the classroom, I am willing to ask my peers in English about words related to the topic.	n = 4 8.51%	n = 8 17.02 %	n = 11 23.41 %	n = 11 23.40%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 4 8.51%	47	3.53	4
In a remote lesson, I am willing to ask my peers in	n = 7	n = 15	n = 7	n = 12	n = 5	n = 1	47	2.91	3

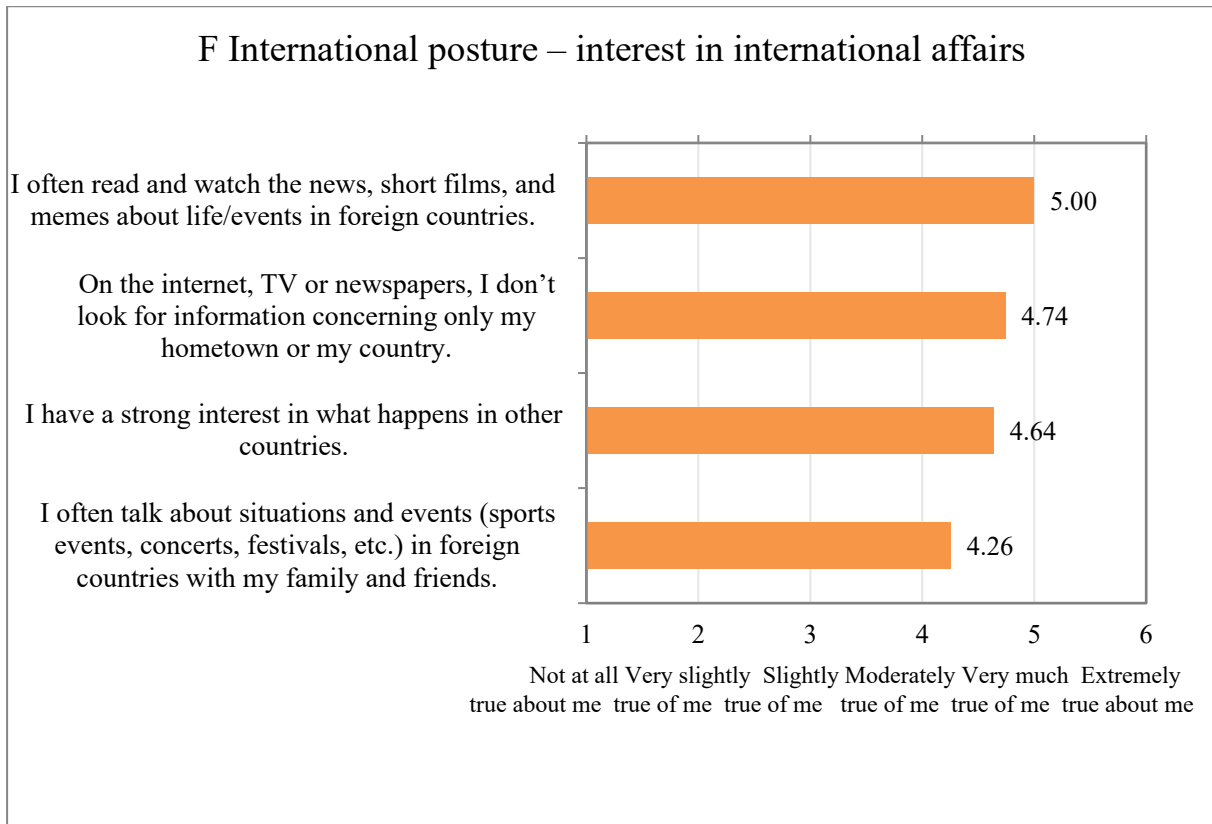
English about words related to the topic in a breakout room.	14.89%	31.92 %	14.89 %	25.53%	10.64%	2.13%			
In the classroom, I am willing to ask my peers in English about ideas/arguments related to the topic.	n = 7 15.22%	n = 11 23.91 %	n = 7 15.22 %	n = 12 26.08%	n = 7 15.22%	n = 2 4.35%	46	3.15	3
In a remote lesson, I am willing to ask my peers in English about ideas/arguments related to the topic in a breakout room.	n = 14 29.79%	n = 11 23.40 %	n = 9 19.15 %	n = 10 21.28%	n = 2 4.25%	n = 1 2.13%	47	2.53	2
In the classroom, I am willing to give a presentation in English in front of the class.	n = 19 40.42%	n = 8 17.02 %	n = 6 12.77 %	n = 8 17.02%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 1 2.13%	47	2.47	2
In a remote lesson, I am willing to give a presentation in English in front of the class.	n = 19 40.42%	n = 10 21.28 %	n = 6 12.77 %	n = 7 14.89%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 0 0%	47	2.34	2
In the classroom, I am willing to have a conversation in random small groups.	n = 7 14.89%	n = 10 21.27 %	n = 10 21.28 %	n = 14 29.79%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 1 2.13%	47	3.06	3
In a remote lesson, I am willing to have a conversation in random small groups.	n = 15 31.91%	n = 9 19.15 %	n = 8 17.02 %	n = 10 21.28%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 0 0%	47	2.60	2

*Table 9 Individual variation in Unplanned and planned in-class WTC, comparison between classroom lessons and remote lessons*

### 5.1.7 Factor F: International posture – interest in international affairs

The findings in Factor F represent the international posture and interest in international affairs among the participants. As can be seen in Figure 8, the average score of each statement is rather high: all the scores are all between 4 (Moderately true of me) and 5 (Very much true of

me). This means that on average the participants' international posture is from moderate up to high.



*Figure 8 Average scores in international posture – interest in international affairs*

As can be seen in Figure 8, the first statement of this category has the highest average score: “I often read and watch the news, short films, memes about life/events in foreign countries”, with the score of 5 (very much true of me). The other statements had rather high scores as well, the lowest score being 4.26. On average, the total average score for the participants' statements regarding interest in international affairs was 4.66. Therefore, the findings in Factor F indicate that the participants were rather interested in international affairs.

The numbers for each answer option can be seen in Table 10.

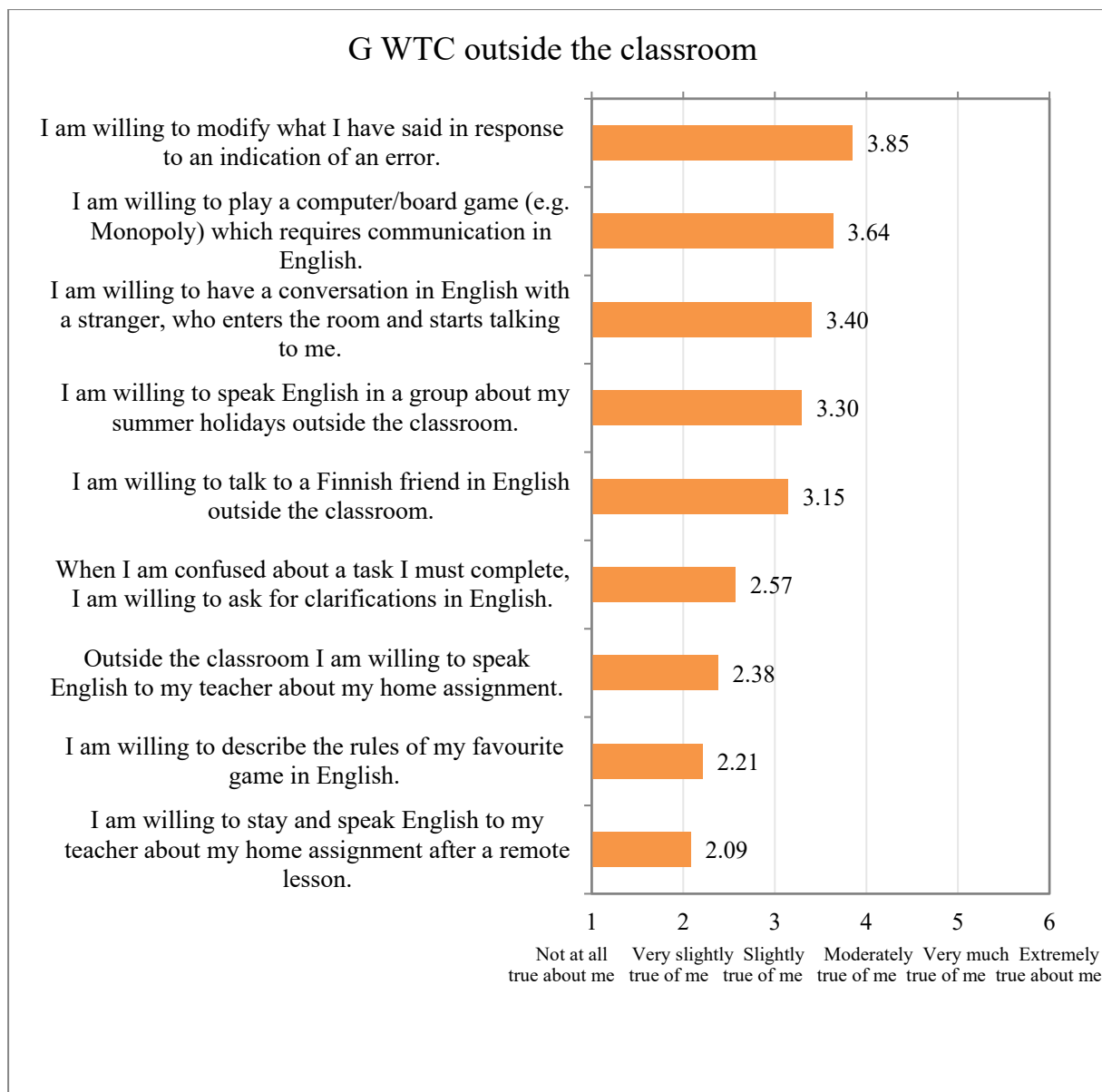
	1 - Not at all true about me	2 - Very slightly true of me	3 - Slightly true of me	4 - Moderat ely true of me	5 - Very much true of me	6 - Extre mely true of me	No. of resp onse s	Avg .	MED
I often read and watch the news, short films, and memes	n = 0	n = 0	n = 7	n = 9	n = 8	n = 23	47	5.00	5

about life/events in foreign countries.	0%	0%	14.89%	19.15%	17.02%	48.94%			
On the internet, TV or newspapers, I don't look for information concerning only my hometown or my country.	n = 1 2.13%	n = 2 4.25%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 6 12.77%	n = 20 42.55%	47	4.74	5
I have a strong interest in what happens in other countries.	n = 0 0%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 11 23.41%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 17 36.17%	47	4.64	5
I often talk about situations and events (sports events, concerts, festivals, etc.) in foreign countries with my family and friends.	n = 1 2.13%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 13 27.66%	47	4.26	4

*Table 10 Individual variation in international posture – interest in international affairs*

### 5.1.8 Factor G: WTC outside the classroom and practice-seeking WTC

The last category of statements in the questionnaire, factor G, examined the WTC of participants in different situations outside of the classroom. Figure 9 shows that the WTC scores range between 2.09 and 3.85. No statement has an average score higher than 4 (moderately true of me), which means that most of the listed activities or situations had rather low WTC scores. The statement “I am willing to modify what I have said in response to an indication of error” scored the highest average WTC score, 3.85. This means that on average, it was nearly “moderately true” of the participants that they would be willing to modify their utterances if they had done an error and they were told that.



*Figure 9 Average scores in WTC outside the classroom and practice-seeking WTC*

Willingness to stay online after remote lessons and speak English to the teacher about the students' home assignment received the lowest average score (2.09). After this statement, the next lowest scored situation was the willingness to describe the rules of the participants' favourite game in English (2.21). The findings regarding the participants' WTC outside the classroom and practice-seeking WTC suggest that on average, the students were less than moderately willing to communicate outside the class or in a practice-seeking way; they were only very slightly, slightly or almost moderately willing to communicate in different situations outside the classroom. In Kostiaainen's study (2015, 51), many participants felt that communication outside the classroom felt more natural than communicating in the classroom; one reason being the evaluation by the teacher occurring in the classroom and not outside of it.

The individual variation in different answer alternatives can be seen in Table 11.

	1 - Not at all true about me	2 - Very slightly true of me	3 - Slightly true of me	4 - Moderately true of me	5 - Very much true of me	6 - Extremely true of me	No. of responses	Avg.	MED
I am willing to modify what I have said in response to an indication of an error.	n = 4 8.51%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 17 36.17%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 2 4.26%	47	3.85	4
I am willing to play a computer/board game (e.g. Monopoly) which requires communication in English.	n = 7 14.89%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 6 12.77%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 8 17.02%	47	3.64	4
I am willing to have a conversation in English with a stranger, who enters the room and starts talking to me.	n = 8 17.02%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 11 23.40%	n = 14 29.79%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 2 4.26%	47	3.40	4
I am willing to speak English in a group about my summer holidays outside the classroom.	n = 6 12.77%	n = 8 17.02%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 15 31.91%	n = 5 10.64%	n = 3 6.38%	47	3.30	3
I am willing to talk to a Finnish friend in English outside the classroom.	n = 10 21.28%	n = 6 12.76%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 4 8.51%	n = 4 8.51%	47	3.15	3
When I am confused about a task I must complete, I am willing to ask for	n = 9 19.15%	n = 17 36.17%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 0 0%	47	2.57	2



clarifications in English.									
Outside the classroom I am willing to speak English to my teacher about my home assignment.	n = 15 31.91%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 9 19.15%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 2 4.26%	n = 1 2.13%	47	2.38	2
I am willing to describe the rules of my favourite game in English.	n = 18 38.30%	n = 10 21.28%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 3 6.38%	n = 0 0%	47	2.21	2
I am willing to stay and speak English to my teacher about my home assignment after a remote lesson.	n = 20 42.55%	n = 13 27.66%	n = 6 12.77%	n = 7 14.89%	n = 0 0%	n = 1 2.13%	47	2.09	2

*Table 11 Individual variation in WTC outside the classroom*

## 5.2 Comparison of factors affecting WTC in remote lessons and in the classroom

This section focuses on the influencing factors of WTC both in remote lessons and in the classroom. First, I will introduce the factors affecting WTC in remote lessons, followed by the factors influencing WTC in the classroom, and finally I will present a comparison between these two learning environments.

### 5.2.1 Factors influencing WTC in remote lessons

The open-ended question “What kind of factors do you think affect your willingness to communicate in remote English lessons?” provided qualitative data about the possible factors having an effect on the participants’ WTC in remote learning settings. The participants responded by writing their answers. Eight participants provided no answer or responded that nothing in particular affect their WTC in remote lessons, or that they do not know. Most participants provided an answer, and their responses were translated into English and grouped to different categories based on the factors they had mentioned. Table 12 shows the key factors affecting the participants’ L2 English WTC in remote lessons. The most frequently

mentioned factor was the participants' own skills or communication confidence, which was mentioned eight times. The second most mentioned factors were related to others' participation ( $n = 6$ ) and classmates or friends in general ( $n = 6$ ). This result supports the study findings of Kostiainen (2015, 60), in her study of upper secondary students' classroom WTC. In her study, the results suggested that other students' active participation increases the WTC of the students (ibid.). The study by Kostiainen was conducted in a classroom setting, but it is an interesting observation that the results of the present study in remote learning settings, have somewhat similar findings as Kostiainen's study.

Own mood or tiredness was mentioned in five responses, as was the topic of the lesson, too. A factor specific to remote lessons that affects one's WTC, was the fear of background noises when speaking to the microphone. This was mentioned in four responses. In addition to the factors listed in Table 12, there were some other factors that were mentioned less frequently, such as speaking on the microphone when everyone else is listening ( $n = 3$ ), the time of the lesson ( $n = 2$ ), voluntariness ( $n = 2$ ), wanting to maintain good grades ( $n = 1$ ), familiar teacher ( $n = 1$ ), the pressure of the lesson ( $n = 1$ ), and encouragement ( $n = 1$ ).

Factor	Number of students mentioning the factor
Own skills/communication confidence	$n = 8$
Others' participation	$n = 6$
Classmates/friends	$n = 6$
Mood/tiredness	$n = 5$
Topic of the lesson	$n = 5$
Background noises	$n = 4$

*Table 12 Key factors affecting the participants' L2 English WTC in remote lessons*

Responses related to the participants' skills or communication confidence were the most frequently mentioned factors regarding their L2 WTC in remote learning settings. These answers were explained by, for instance, stating that WTC is higher if one is certain about the answer or pronunciation, own abilities to start a discussion on the topic, own feelings regarding one's skills, and that a familiar topic increases WTC.

An interesting finding about factors affecting L2 WTC in remote lessons was that the fear of background noises was mentioned a few times. For instance, the participants responded that they are scared that there will be noise in their background, and that constant noise at home makes it uncomfortable to open the microphone even if the participant needed to ask the teacher something. One participant, however, considered the lack of background noises uncomfortable (in comparison to noises in the classroom) and mentioned that sometimes it

bothers them that others can hear so precisely how they pronounce difficult words or something they are uncertain of.

In the open comment section of the questionnaire, one participant brought up an important factor to be considered when ensuring students' participation during remote lessons. The participant stated: "In remote lessons, it has been good that during small group exercises the teacher has visited the call [the small group call]. It ensures that everyone participates and that the exercise has been understood". When students work in small groups in the so-called breakout rooms, the teacher is able to visit the small groups and communicate with them. This makes it possible for the students to ask the teacher questions in the smaller groups, to ensure proper comprehension of tasks, and it enables the teacher to make sure that everyone participates.

In addition, one participant commented in the open comment section: "I think no one should be forced to answer in remote lessons, because it can even be very anxiety-provoking for some students". Though three participants had mentioned that non-voluntariness could increase their WTC in remote lessons, not all learners agree on that. Individual differences need to be considered when interpreting study results or making conclusions on how to increase WTC – because for some, some methods may improve their WTC whereas for others, the same methods may hamper their WTC.

### 5.2.2 Factors affecting WTC in the classroom

In the last section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked open-ended questions about their WTC. The following open-ended questions: "What kind of factors do you think affect your willingness to communicate in English lessons in the classroom?" and "What kind of factors do you think affect your willingness to communicate in English remote English lessons?" made it possible to make a comparison between the factors the students thought affected their WTC both in traditional classroom lessons and remote lessons. First, we will go through the finding of the factors the participants thought affected their in-class L2 English WTC.

The collected responses of the participants' factors influencing their English WTC in classroom were grouped into different main categories depending on the answers. Each participant's response could, however, include more factors than one; it was then counted how many times different factors were mentioned and the total number of each factor was

calculated. In total, six participants (12.77%) did not provide an answer for this question. The key factors affecting the students' WTC in the classroom were the topic of the lesson, atmosphere, the students' feeling of their own skills, classmates or friends, being physically present in the classroom, and other students' participation. According to the earlier presented pyramid model of WTC, knowledge of the topic in question is a situational factor that affects one's WTC (MacIntyre et al. 1998, 546). This can also be seen in the findings of the present study, since the topic of the lesson was mentioned multiple times when the participants were asked to explain the factors that affect their in-class L2 English WTC. This finding confirms Zarrinabadi's (2014) research discoveries on the topic of the lesson.

Factor	Number of students mentioning the factor
Atmosphere/class spirit	n = 10
Topic of the lesson	n = 6
Physical presence in the classroom	n = 6
Own English skills	n = 6
Classmates/friends	n = 5
Other students' participation	n = 4

*Table 13 Key factors affecting the participants' in-class L2 English WTC*

As can be seen in Table 13, the factor that was mentioned the most was atmosphere or class spirit. This was clarified, for instance, by one participant as follows: "What the class [group] is like, if there is a bad class spirit in general, it is difficult to answer [the teacher's questions], but if the class spirit is good, answering is considerably easier". This finding supports previous research, such as Kostiainen's (2015, 56) study: in her study, the results suggested that it was important for WTC that the atmosphere was relaxed. According to her, teachers can affect the atmosphere (ibid.). Other mentioned factors included, for example, the teacher's mood and the students' moods, the teacher being familiar, time of the lesson, encouragement, and the manner in which the teacher presents the topics and questions. All in all, seems like the teacher can have an effect on the class atmosphere and could improve it, for instance, by being encouraging, stating that making mistakes is okay, smiling, or nodding when the students speak.

### 5.2.3 Comparison of remote learning WTC and classroom WTC

The first open-ended question of the questionnaire was: "Do you feel like your willingness to communicate in remote English lessons differs from classroom lessons? If yes, how?" The responses of the participants were categorized into three main categories: 'yes', 'somewhat', and 'no', depending on their answers. In total, 46.81% (n = 22) of the participants reported

that their WTC differed in remote English lessons compared to classroom lessons. 17.02% (n = 8) of the students' responses suggested that their WTC differed to some degree, and 25.53% (n = 12) reported that it did not differ. Three responses (n = 3, 6.38%) were not categorizable and two participants (4.26%) did not provide an answer for the question.

When comparing the results in sections 5.2.1 (factors affecting WTC in classroom settings) and 5.2.2 (factors influencing WTC in remote lessons), some differences can be noticed. In remote learning settings, the most frequently mentioned factor was own skills or communication confidence, whereas in classroom settings, the most often mentioned factor was atmosphere or class spirit. Others' participation was considered more important in remote lessons, whereas the importance of the topic of the lesson was almost similar in both learning environments. Some participants mentioned their own mood or tiredness being an affective factor in remote lessons, but it was not mentioned when asked about WTC in classroom lessons. The physical presence in the classroom lesson was mentioned as an affective factor by six participants, whereas presence was mentioned only once in remote learning settings. In remote lessons, the teacher as an influencing factor was mentioned only once, whereas in classroom lessons the teacher was mentioned three times. An open comment made by one of the participants emphasized that communication is easier in face-to-face education and "not as scary as in remote learning". It should be kept in mind that the students in the present study were obliged to study remotely in the times of the pandemic, and that they most likely had not experienced remote learning before the pandemic. Therefore, it might be natural to not feel as comfortable communicating remotely in comparison with traditional classroom learning. Again, individual differences need to be taken into account. These findings are interesting and provide information about the factors affecting the L2 WTC of the study group but leave room for further studies with larger samples as well.

### **5.3 Learners' perspectives on increasing their L2 English WTC in remote lessons**

In the last open-ended question of the research survey, the participants were asked how their L2 English WTC could be increased in remote English lessons. A total of 45 participants responded this question. Nineteen participants (42.2%) provided no answer for this question or responded "no" or "do not know". 23 participants (51.1%) explained how their WTC could possibly be increased and three participants (6.7%) stated that their WTC cannot be increased by themselves or others. Table 14 presents three categories of responses that were the most

frequent – working in small groups, others’ participation, and non-voluntariness – followed by example responses by the participants. Five participants mentioned working in small groups, three participants reported others’ participation playing a role in increasing WTC, and two participants stated that non-voluntariness in answering could increase their WTC.

Therefore, the most significant factor was working in small groups rather than in larger ones. These results support Kostiainen’s (2015, 58–59) findings: in her study, the students seemed to have higher WTC when communicating with a smaller number of other students.

<b>Small groups</b>	<b>Others’ participation</b>	<b>Non-voluntariness</b>
“Working in small groups is considerably easier for many“	“Others participating more”	“I find it a good practice to ask everyone in order, because then everyone is given the responsibility to at least bother saying ‘I do not know’”
“There could be more small-group activities where everyone would speak English together and help each other“	“Others’ activeness and initiative”	“I think people should be more commanded to speak and answer.”
“Doing more small group exercises, in groups of students with whom one is close with”	“If someone else is speaking too”	
“If I could get to a pleasant, for example, small group to communicate”		
“Self-picked groups, not having to speak English alone in front of the whole class”		

*Table 14 Participants’ views on how to increase WTC*

In addition to these three main categories of responses on how to increase L2 English WTC in remote lessons, the participants provided other possible explanations of how to increase their WTC. These included, for example, getting to discuss or do group exercises with friends (n = 2), playing games (n = 1), being more confident and getting over one’s fear of speaking English (n = 1), being able to answer by message (n = 1), error correction (n = 1), relaxed atmosphere or attitude (n = 2), general conversation (n = 1), and pleasant topics and exercises (n = 1). The desire to do group or pair exercises with friends and the students wanting to pick the groups themselves support MacIntyre et al.’s (1998) pyramid model: according to the

pyramid model, situated antecedents (layer III), include the “desire to communicate with a specific person”. The want to communicate with friends or familiar people, is a situation-specific factor that affects WTC and can be seen in these examples of the answers in the open-ended questions.

Therefore, the findings suggest that the most frequently mentioned factors that could potentially help increase L2 English WTC in remote lessons, are working in small groups, others participating more, and the teacher commanding students to answer more (non-voluntariness). It needs to be considered that only a small percentage of the study sample mentioned these three main factors, and therefore no general conclusions can be made. However, the results of the present study indicate that working in small groups, increasing others’ participation, and non-voluntariness were the most frequently mentioned factors possibly increasing L2 WTC among this group of students. Previous studies have suggested that WTC could be increased, for instance, by lowering learners’ FLA and fostering their TL self-confidence (Yashima, 2002), visualization and goal setting (Munezane, 2015), utilizing dramatized role-plays by (Lee, Abott, and Chen, 2020), and by providing supportive feedback, increasing wait time, and delaying error correction (Zarrinabadi, 2014). However, all the mentioned studies have examined L2 WTC in traditional classroom settings, whereas the present study focused particularly on L2 English WTC in remote learning settings. For instance, Zarrinabadi’s study findings could be promising for remote learning as well, but many of the factors that were found important in increasing WTC in his study, were not mentioned in the present study. The importance on the topic of the lesson, however, was mentioned multiple times by students in the present study as well. Further studies ought to be conducted in remote learning settings to gain more knowledge on how to increase L2 WTC in remote learning environments.

#### **5.4 The dynamic approach of WTC over the years during the pandemic**

The present study also examined whether the participants’ L2 English WTC had changed during the pandemic. The participants were asked: “Do you think your willingness to communicate in remote English lessons has changed during the COVID-19 pandemic, when you compare the first remote learning periods and the latest remote lessons? If yes, how?” and their answers were divided into three main categories. The categories were: ‘yes’, ‘somewhat’, and ‘no’. Ten participants (21.28%) reported that their WTC had changed from the beginning of the pandemic to the latest remote lessons. Out of these ten participants, eight

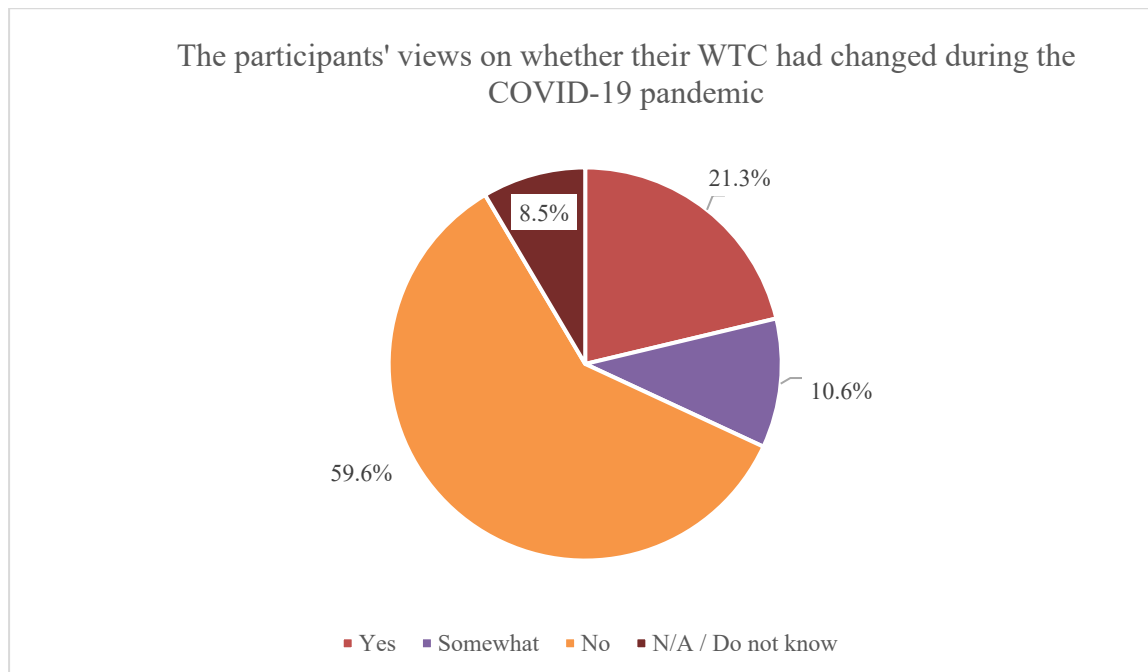
clarified that their WTC had increased, and two reported that their WTC had decreased during the time of the pandemic. Examples of the responses of the students who reported an increase or decrease in their WTC can be seen in Table 15. Examples 1 and 2 are responses of students who had experienced an increase in their WTC. It was also mentioned that perhaps it is easier for everyone to operate in remote lessons now that people know how lessons work remotely, and that it is easier to respond and communicate now compared to the first remote learning periods. The two participants who had experienced a decrease in their WTC, explained it, for instance, by the examples in 3 and 4.

Participant 1 (Increased WTC)	“Yes, now that I have got used to remote learning a bit, I have been able to communicate better in remote lessons”,
Participant 2 (Increased WTC)	“Yes, it is not so uncomfortable to speak in remote English lessons, as before“.
Participant 3 (Decreased WTC)	“Yes. In the beginning of the pandemic, I was quite active in remote lessons, but it has decreased over time”,
Participant 4 (Decreased WTC)	“Yes, first I thought it was nice/comfortable to be at home and study in peace but soon it became tough”.
Participant 5 (Somewhat increased WTC)	“Nowadays I maybe have more courage to open the microphone, but I still do not prefer to do that”
Participant 6 (Somewhat increased WTC)	“I have got used to remote learning at some degree, so my willingness to communicate has increased a bit“
Participant 7 (Somewhat decreased WTC)	“A bit, I respond less because I am feeling not to or if everyone else is quiet, so am I“
Participant 8 (No change in WTC)	“No. I still answer as much”
Participant 9 (No change in WTC)	“Has not changed, I answer only if I know the answer. I am not guessing.”
Participant 10 (No change in WTC)	“I do not know, the first remote learning period was tough, but I think it did not affect my willingness to communicate”

*Table 15 Examples of participants' responses on changed WTC*



Figure 10 presents the results of the participants' WTC changing during the COVID-19 pandemic in percentages.



*Figure 10 Pie chart on the responses of WTC changing during the COVID-19 pandemic*

Five participants' (10.6%) responses were categorized as 'somewhat', suggesting that their L2 English WTC had changed to some degree. The participants that reported their WTC having 'somewhat' changed positively ( $n = 3$ ), explained that they had become a bit more courageous to speak in remote lessons or that becoming used to remote learning had increased their WTC. One participant reported their WTC having 'somewhat' changed negatively by responding in remote lessons less than before due to not feeling like it or everyone else being quiet as well. One of the five participants in the 'somewhat' category had responded "Not significantly" with no further explanation: this response was placed in the category in question since it suggests that the WTC has changed to some degree, but not at a significant level.

Majority of the participants, in total 28 students (59.6%) reported that their WTC had not changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of them had also provided explanations, such as examples 8, 9, and 10 in Table 15. However, most of the participants ( $n = 24$ ) that reported their WTC not having changed, did not provide any further information about it. Therefore, based on only this question, it cannot be known what their WTC was like at the start of the pandemic and whether it was considered high, average, or low, for example.

Four participants (8.5%) provided no answer for this question (N/A) or responded, "do not know". In conclusion, slightly over a fifth of the participants reported a change in their WTC

during the pandemic. In addition to this, 10.6% of the participants thought that their WTC had somewhat changed. Even though most participants (59.6%) of the present study reported their WTC not having changed, the findings about the shifted WTC support the recent theoretical framework of WTC that emphasizes the dynamic aspect of it and concentrates more on state WTC than trait WTC. In total, 31.9% of the participants reported their WTC having changed at least to some degree over time during the pandemic. This number includes shifts to both increased or decreased WTC. It is important to keep in mind that the results are self-reported, which is why the results should mostly be interpreted as the participants' own views and perceptions.

## 6 Discussion

This study was conducted to investigate the L2 English WTC of dual qualification students in remote learning settings and discover potential differences on the learners' perspectives between remote learning and traditional classroom learning. The study also examined the learners' views on how their L2 English WTC could possibly be increased in remote learning settings. The third key goal of the study was to research the dynamic aspect of WTC by uncovering how the learners' WTC had possibly changed over the years during the pandemic and remote learning, according to the learners themselves.

The results of the present study suggest that the L2 English WTC of the participants was lower in all activities in remote lessons compared to classroom lessons. The result was statistically significant ( $p = 0.03$ ). The findings in the section of the questionnaire, which examined the participants' views and experiences regarding remote learning (Factor A: Remote learning), suggest that the participants' WTC was rather low or slightly below moderate. However, on average, the participants reported to moderately enjoy remote learning. On average, the participants' communication confidence (Factor B) appeared to be higher than moderate, and their average scores in different statements related to international posture and openness to experience (Factor C) were placed somewhat above mid-scale. When it comes to motivation and ought-to self (Factor D), the students did not place much value about studying English to gain approval of others. Nevertheless, the participants thought that studying English is more beneficial than enjoyable or meaningful to them. When comparing unplanned and planned classroom activities (Factor E), the lowest average WTC score in all the given activities or tasks in face-to-face lessons or remote lessons were giving a presentation in English in front of the others. The findings in Factor F indicated that the participants were rather interested in international affairs. Factor G examined the participants' WTC outside the classroom and practice-seeking WTC and the results suggested that the students were less than moderately willing to communicate outside the classroom or in a practice-seeking way, since they were merely very slightly, slightly, or nearly moderately willing to communicate in the listed outside the classroom situations.

The present study attempted to discover possible methods of increasing the learners' WTC in remote learning settings. One of the key findings in the present study was that many participants expressed that their WTC could be higher if other learners were active on the lessons. The active participation of other interlocutors has been found to increase WTC in

other studies, too, such as in Kostianen's (2015) study. Therefore, attempting to improve the participation and activeness of everyone in the lessons could foster WTC among learners. However, if participation and activeness mean the same as manifestations of WTC, the solution lies elsewhere. How to make learners participate more, if their WTC is closely related to other learners' participation and activeness, in other words, their WTC? Other factors for increasing WTC included, for instance, working in smaller groups, and non-voluntariness in communication or responding to the teachers' questions in remote lessons.

The correlation of other learners' WTC and that of an individual in remote learning settings could be a potential topic to investigate in future studies. Further studies should also be conducted to investigate how WTC levels may change, when different methods of attempting to increase learners' WTC in remote learning are adapted to practice.

The third research question attempted to uncover how remote learning had affected the learners' WTC in the years during the pandemic and, therefore, gain a deeper knowledge on the dynamic aspect of WTC. Majority of the learners who participated in the study, did not report having experienced a change in their WTC during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approximately a third of the participants, however, reported their WTC having changed or somewhat changed. Some participants' WTC had increased and some of them reported their WTC having decreased. It is interesting, that there were shifts into both directions. For example, some had first thought that remote learning is fun and interesting but then it had become hard. Others had become used to remote learning which had increased their WTC over the years.

The present study had some limitations. For instance, the majority of the sample were females, which may complicate the generalization of the results. However, the study was not focused on gender differences, though it may be a factor to consider in interpreting the results. Individual differences were not taking into account by, for example, analyzing the data of the students that reported to speak English at home, too, and see whether their scores were above the average WTC levels of the participants. The quantitative part of the study results was demonstrated and introduced by reporting average scores, and, for instance, correlations were not calculated. One Mann-Whitney u-test was conducted. Had more statistical methods been utilized, the results would have been more thorough. Additionally, the size of the sample was somewhat limited, considering the quantitative part of the mixed-methods approach of the study. The sample, dual qualification students, was rather unique, and that is why even a

smaller sample like the one in the present study, may lead to notable study results. The qualitative part of the mixed-methods approach was accomplished by having open-ended questions in the questionnaire as well. However, the qualitative data could have been analyzed more thoroughly to accomplish the full benefits of a mixed-methods research. In future studies, more mixed-methods research should be conducted by utilizing, for instance, structured or open interviews or narratives to gain more important material of L2 English WTC in remote learning settings. Mixed-methods research appears to be a beneficial method for studying the dynamic approach of WTC, which seems to be in the limelight of today's WTC research.

The present study focused on WTC in remote learning settings. Remote learning and teaching ought to be a part of teacher education and training in Finland in the future to ensure the quality and versatility of remote teaching. Even if remote teaching were to decrease in the upcoming years, it seems to be an essential skill for a modern teacher to be able to teach remotely. This can be seen in, for instance, job advertisements: ability to teach remotely seems to be becoming a prerequisite for today's teachers. Adapting remote teaching as a part of obligatory teacher training would benefit both teachers and learners: it is as essential for teachers to have enough tools for diverse remote lessons as it is for traditional classroom lessons, and high-quality teaching is very meaningful for English learners. By applying new ideas and methods for remote English teaching, it may be possible to increase learner WTC, which then fosters language learning and communicative competence in the TL.

## 7 Conclusion

According to the results of the present study, the learners' average WTC scores for all the listed lesson activities were lower in remote lessons compared to traditional face-to-face education conducted in classrooms. The result was statistically significant. The participants' general WTC in remote lessons was from low to moderate. The results indicated that the participants' perceptions and views on how to increase their English WTC in remote lessons included methods such as working in smaller groups, others participating more during the lessons and, and non-voluntariness in communicating. Approximately a third of the participants considered their WTC having at least somewhat changed during the years of the pandemic. There were both shifts to increased WTC and decreased WTC: some had, for example, become accustomed to remote learning and therefore communicated more, whereas others had communicated more in the beginning of the pandemic and then experienced a decrease in their WTC. However, 59.6% of the participants stated that their WTC had not changed over time.

Since remote learning and teaching has become a more common practice due to the pandemic globally, new ideas and applications are needed to improve the learners' willingness to communicate in remote English lessons. Teachers should be offered in-service training on remote teaching as it develops constantly due to digitalization. It is important that teachers implement new ideas and methods for teaching – both in the classroom and remotely. In-service training on new ideas, platforms and applications for remote learning could be very beneficial for the future of remote language teaching.

Further studies should be conducted on WTC in remote learning settings to gain a deeper knowledge on WTC in modern online learning environments. More research ought to be conducted in larger study samples, utilizing mixed-methods research, for example. Conducting studies using different samples, such as dual qualification students, upper secondary students, tertiary education students, and compulsory education pupils, is important to gain a wide and encompassing view on remote learning WTC. The dynamic aspect of WTC could be further explored by using structured or open interviews or narratives as a method of gathering qualitative data regarding L2 WTC in remote learning settings. The need for longitudinal studies is apparent, as well, to study the long-term impacts of remote learning on L2 English WTC of learners. Understanding L2 WTC and its dynamic aspect in remote

learning environments offers myriad opportunities to study and explore further. There is plenty to uncover and to implement in modern language teaching and learning.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 The questionnaire in Finnish

#### Kyselylomake

Tämä kyselylomake käsittelee toisen asteen kaksoistutkinto-opiskelijoiden kommunikaatiohalukkuutta englannin etätunneilla sekä sitä, miten etäopetus on vaikuttanut opiskelijoiden kommunikaatiohalukkuuteen koronapandemian edetessä. Lisäksi tutkimus selvittää opiskelijoiden näkemyksiä kommunikaatiohalukkuuden lisäämiseen englannin etäopetuksessa.

Kysely on anonyymi ja sen täyttöön menee noin 15-20 minuuttia. Tuloksia käytetään pro gradu-tutkielmassa.

Alaikäisten opiskelijoiden huoltajilta on pyydetty lupa Wilma-viestitse. Tutkimustuloksia käytetään vain kyseessä olevan pro gradu-tutkielman tekemiseen ja tutkija säilyttää ne asianmukaisesti ja käyttää niitä tutkimuksen teon ajan. Tästä pääset halutessasi tutustumaan tietosuojailmoitukseen: [https://edumailturku-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/riikka\\_lyytikainen\\_edu\\_turku\\_fi/ESEcfd\\_BZsxPsAVm3iPJPcoBWAQqCKGS6RKszPcO\\_6icEw?e=zYnYrX](https://edumailturku-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/riikka_lyytikainen_edu_turku_fi/ESEcfd_BZsxPsAVm3iPJPcoBWAQqCKGS6RKszPcO_6icEw?e=zYnYrX)

#### Kommunikaatiohalukkuus englannin etätunneilla

Turun yliopisto

Tutkija: Riikka Lyytikäinen

#### OSA 1: Taustatiedot

1. Ikä: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Sukupuoli: nainen  mies  muu  en halua vastata

3. Äidinkieli: suomi  muu  Mikä?: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Muut kielet, joita kotonasi puhutaan arjessa:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Englannin kieli**

5. Minkä ikäisenä aloitit englannin opinnot koulussa? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Arvioi englannin kielen taitojasi ympäröimällä mielestäsi paras vaihtoehto.

	heikko	tydyttävä	hyvä	kiitettävä	erinomainen
a) Kuullunymmärtäminen	1	2	3	4	5
b) Luetunymmärtäminen	1	2	3	4	5
c) Suullinen vuorovaikutus	1	2	3	4	5
d) Kirjoittaminen	1	2	3	4	5

**Muu kielitausta**

7. Oletko viettänyt yhtäjaksoisesti kuukauden tai enemmän Suomen ulkopuolella (esim.

Opiskellut ulkomailla)?  kyllä  en

Mikäli vastasit kyllä, täytähän alapuolelle maan ja oleskelusi keston:

Maa	Kesto
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Oletko joskus opiskellut englantirikasteisella luokalla tai kokonaan englanniksi? Oletko

ollut esimerkiksi englanninkielisessä päiväkodissa?  kyllä  en

Mikäli vastasit kyllä, täytähän alapuolelle opetuksen tyyppin/kouluasteen ja keston:

Opetuksen tyyppi/kouluaste

Kesto

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## OSA 2: Etäopiskelu ja kommunikaatiohalukkuus

Alla olevat väittämät kuvaavat tunteita, joita englannin puhuminen etätunneilla ja luokassa pidetyillä tunneilla muiden kanssa herättää sekä erilaisia kielenkäyttötilanteita englannin kursseilla ja niiden ulkopuolella. Englannin etätunneilla tarkoitetaan kyselyssä esim. Teamsin kautta tapahtuvaa opetusta. Valitse vaihtoehto, joka vastaa parhaiten omaa kokemustasi:

- 1 - Ei kuvaa minua lainkaan
- 2 - Kuvaa minua hyvin vähän
- 3 - Kuvaa minua vähän
- 4 - Kuvaa minua jossain määrin
- 5 - Kuvaa minua hyvin
- 6 - Kuvaa minua erittäin hyvin

### A Etäopiskelu

1. Nautin etäopiskelusta.
2. Vastaan mielelläni opettajan kaikille yhteisesti esittämiin kysymyksiin etätunnilla (esim. Teamsissa) mikrofonin välityksellä.
3. Vastaan mielelläni opettajan kaikille yhteisesti esittämiin kysymyksiin kysymyksiin etätunnilla chat-ominaisuutta käyttämällä eli kirjoittamalla vastaukseni yhteiseen chat-kenttään.
4. Jos opettaja esittää kysymyksen juuri minulle, vastaan mielelläni mikrofonin kautta.

5. Jos opettaja esittää kysymyksen juuri minulle, vastaan mielelläni chatin kautta.
6. Pystyn keskittymään etätunnilla yhtä hyvin kuin luokassa.
7. Keskustelen mielelläni etätunneilla pienryhmissä muiden opiskelijoiden kanssa tehtävästä englanniksi.
8. Keskustelen mielelläni etätunneilla pienryhmissä muiden opiskelijoiden kanssa tehtävästä suomeksi.
9. Jos en ymmärrä tehtävää tai opettajan kertomaa asiaa etätunnilla, kysyn asiasta mielelläni esim. viittaamalla (viittaa-toiminto) ja mikrofonin välityksellä.
10. Pyydän mielelläni apua opettajalta etätunnilla.
11. Jos en ymmärrä tehtävää tai opettajan kertomaa asiaa etätunnilla, kysyn asiasta mielelläni Chatissa.
12. Jos opettaja kysyy yhteisesti koko ryhmältä, näkykö tai kuuluuko hänen materiaalinsa, vastaan mielelläni mikrofonin välityksellä tai chatissa.
13. Puhun englantia mieluummin englannin etätunnilla kuin englannin tunnilla luokassa.
14. Pidän mielelläni kameraa päällä englannin etätunneilla.
15. Toivon, että opettaja pitää kameraa päällä englannin etätunneilla.

**B Arvioi seuraavia väittämiä englannin suhteen yleisesti.**

16. Tiedän pystyväni pitämään suullisen esitelmän englanniksi toisille opiskelijoille.
17. Tiedän pystyväni osallistumaan ryhmäkeskusteluihin englanniksi.
18. Tiedän pystyväni osallistumaan väittelyharjoitukseen englanniksi.
19. Tiedän pystyväni vastaamaan opettajan kysymyksiin englanniksi.
20. Tiedän pystyväni puhumaan kurssilla englanniksi valmistautumatta etukäteen.
21. Tiedän pystyväni puhumaan kurssilla opettajalleni englanniksi.

22. Tiedän pystyvänä neuvomaan tuntemattomalle ihmiselle tien lempiravintolaani englanniksi.
23. Tiedän pystyvänä keskustelemaan jostakin ongelmasta englanniksi ystäväni kanssa.
24. Tiedän pystyvänä kertomaan englanniksi kurssikavereilleni, mitä teen vapaa-ajallani.
25. Tiedän pystyvänä korjaamaan jonkun toisen virheitä englannissa.
26. Tiedän pystyvänä korjaamaan itse oman virheeni, kun joku kertoo, missä kohdassa virhe on.
27. Tiedän pystyvänä johtamaan keskustelua kurssilla englanniksi.

### **C Arvioi väittämiä.**

28. Aloitan mielelläni keskustelun kadulla kohtaamani ulkomaalaisen kanssa.
29. Käytän/käyttäisin mielelläni englantia puhuakseni Suomessa opiskeleville vaihto-opiskelijoille.
30. Haluan ystäväystyä niiden ulkomaalaisten kanssa, joita tapaan internetissä tai koululla.
31. Voisin puhua koulussamme opiskelevalle vaihto-opiskelijalle.
32. Haluaisin osallistua vapaaehtoistoimintaan auttaakseni yhteisössäni asuvia ulkomaalaisia.
33. Haluan työskennellä ulkomailla.
34. Olen kiinnostunut kansainvälisestä urasta.
35. Minua ei häiritse työ, joka vaatisi säännöllistä matkustelua ulkomailla.
36. Voin kuvitella itseni asumassa ulkomailla ja keskustelemassa englanniksi.

### **D Arvioi väittämiä.**

37. Nautin englannin opiskelusta ja se on minulle mielekästä.

38. Koen, että englannin opiskelusta on minulle hyötyä.
39. Englannin opiskelu on minulle tärkeää, koska haluan saavuttaa toisten opiskelijoiden/opettajieni/perheeni/esimieheni hyväksynnän.
40. Englannin opiskelu on minulle tärkeää, koska koulutetun ihmisen odotetaan osaavan puhua englantia.

**E Arvioi tässä osiossa väittämiä ensin luokassa tapahtuvan opetuksen kannalta ja jälkimmäisissä väittämissä etäopetuksen kannalta.**

41. Pyydän luokassa mielelläni opettajaa englanniksi toistamaan, mitä hän on sanonut.
42. Pyydän etätunnilla (esim. Teamsissa) mielelläni opettajaa englanniksi toistamaan, mitä hän on sanonut.
43. Kysyn luokassa mielelläni opettajalta englanniksi hänen käyttämistään sanoista tai rakenteista.
44. Kysyn etätunnilla mielelläni opettajalta englanniksi hänen käyttämistään sanoista tai rakenteista.
45. Kysyn luokassa mielelläni toisilta opiskelijoilta englanniksi kurssin aiheeseen liittyvistä sanoista.
46. Kysyn etätunnilla pienryhmähuoneissa mielelläni toisilta opiskelijoilta englanniksi kurssin aiheeseen liittyvistä sanoista.
47. Kysyn luokassa mielelläni toisilta opiskelijoilta englanniksi kurssin aiheeseen liittyvistä käsityksistä/mielipiteistä.
48. Kysyn etätunnilla pienryhmähuoneissa mielelläni toisilta opiskelijoilta englanniksi kurssin aiheeseen liittyvistä käsityksistä/mielipiteistä.
49. Pidän mielelläni esitelmän englanniksi luokan edessä.
50. Pidän mielelläni esitelmän englanniksi etätunnilla.
51. Keskustelen mielelläni satunnaisissa pienryhmissä luokassa englanniksi.



52. Keskustelen mielelläni satunnaisissa pienryhmissä etätunnilla englanniksi.

### **F Arvioi väittämiä.**

53. Luen ja katson usein uutisia, lyhyitä videoita ja meemejä elämästä/tapahtumista ulkomailla.

54. Keskustelen usein ulkomaisten tilanteista ja tapahtumista (urheilutapahtumista, konserteista, festivaaleista yms.) perheeni ja ystäväni kanssa.

55. Olen hyvin kiinnostunut siitä, mitä muissa maissa tapahtuu.

56. Etsin internetistä, televisiosta tai sanomalehdistä muutakin kuin pelkästään omaa kotikaupunkiani tai kotimaatani koskevaa tietoa.

### **G Arvioi väittämiä.**

57. Puhun mielelläni kesälomastani englanniksi pienessä ryhmässä luokan ulkopuolella.

58. Puhun mielelläni luokan ulkopuolella opettajani kanssa kotitehtävästäni englanniksi.

59. Jään mielelläni etätunnin jälkeen puhumaan opettajani kanssa kotitehtävästäni englanniksi.

60. Keskustelen mielelläni englanniksi vieraan ihmisen kanssa, joka astuu sisään huoneeseen ja alkaa puhua minulle.

61. Jos en ymmärrä täysin tehtävää, joka minun pitää suorittaa, kysyn mielelläni lisäohjeita englanniksi.

62. Muokkaan mielelläni sitä, mitä olen sanonut, jos joku huomauttaa minun tehneen virheen.

63. Puhun mielelläni englantia suomenkieliselle ystävälleni luokan ulkopuolella.

64. Selitän mielelläni lempipelini säännöt englanniksi.

65. Pelaan mielelläni tietokone-/lautapeliä (esim. Monopolia), jossa pitää käyttää englantia.

### OSA 3: Avoimet kysymykset

Vastaa seuraaviin kysymyksiin omilla lauseilla. Kommunikaatiohalukkuudella tässä tarkoitetaan siis esim. sitä, kuinka halukas olet vastaamaan opettajan kysymyksiin etätunneilla, kysymään apua tai keskustelemaan muiden opiskelijoiden kanssa pienryhmissä englanniksi.

1. Koetko, että kommunikaatiohalukkuutesi englannin etätunneilla eroaa luokassa pidetyistä tunneista? Jos kyllä, miten?

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2. Onko kommunikaatiohalukkuutesi englannin etätunneilla mielestäsi muuttunut koronapandemian aikana ensimmäisistä etäopiskelujaksoista viimeisimpiin etätunteihin? Jos kyllä, miten?

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3. Millaiset tekijät vaikuttavat mielestäsi kommunikaatiohalukkuuteesi englannin tunneilla etänä?

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4. Millaiset tekijät vaikuttavat mielestäsi kommunikaatiohalukkuuteesi englannin tunneilla luokassa?

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5. Millä tavalla kommunikaatiohalukkuuttasi voisi mielestäsi lisätä englannin etätunneilla?

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Kommentteja (vapaaehtoinen) - jos sinulla on jotakin lisättävää/kommentoitavaa, kirjoita ne tähän!

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**Kiitos ajastasi ja vastauksistasi!**

## Appendix 2 The questionnaire questions in English

### Likert-scale for factors A to G

1 - Not at all true about me,

2 - Very slightly true of me,

3 - Slightly true of me,

4 - Moderately true of me,

5 - Very much true of me,

6 - Extremely true about me.

### Factor A: Remote learning

1. I enjoy remote learning.
2. I am willing to answer the questions the teacher asks everybody in remote lessons (e.g. on Teams) via microphone.
3. I am willing to answer the questions the teacher asks everybody in remote lessons (e.g. on Teams) by writing my answer on the chat.
4. If the teacher calls on me, I am willing to answer via the microphone.
5. If the teacher calls on me, I am willing to answer via the chat.
6. I am able to focus on remote lessons as well as I am in the classroom.
7. I am willing to discuss the task with other students in small groups in remote lessons in English.
8. I am willing to discuss the task with other students in small groups in remote lessons in Finnish.

9. If I don't understand the task or something the teacher has said in a remote lesson, I am willing to ask about it e.g. by raising my hand (raise hand-button) and via microphone.
10. I am willing to ask the teacher for help in remote lessons.
11. If I don't understand the task or something the teacher has said in a remote lesson, I am willing to ask about it via the chat.
12. If the teacher asks the whole group whether his/her material can be seen or heard, I am willing to ask via the microphone or chat.
13. I am more willing to speak English in remote English lessons than in English lessons in the classroom.
14. I am willing to have my camera on in remote English lessons.
15. I hope that the teacher has his/her camera on in English remote lessons.

**Factor B: Communication confidence**

16. I know I am able to give an oral presentation in English to the rest of the class.
17. I know I am able to take part in dialogue in a group in English.
18. I know I am able to contribute to a class debate in English.
19. I know I am able to answer my teacher's questions in English.
20. I know I am able to speak in English without preparation in class.
21. I know I am able to speak to my teacher in English in the classroom.
22. I know I am able to tell a stranger how to get to my favorite restaurant in English.
23. I know I am able to discuss a problem with my friend in English.
24. I know I am able to tell my group mates in English what I do in my free time.
25. I know I am able to correct somebody else's errors in English.
26. I know I am able to self-correct when somebody draws my attention to my error.

27. I know I am able to moderate a discussion in the classroom in English.

**Factor C: International posture – openness to experience**

28. I am willing to initiate communication with a foreigner met on the street.

29. I am willing/I would be willing to use English to speak to exchange students in Finland.

30. I want to make friends with people from abroad whom I meet on the internet or at school.

31. I could talk to an international student if there was one at my school.

32. I would like to participate in a volunteer activity to help foreigners living in my community.

33. I want to work in a foreign country.

34. I'm interested in an international career.

35. I wouldn't mind work that requires frequent travelling abroad.

36. I can imagine myself living abroad and having a discussion in English.

**Factor D: Motivation and ought-to self**

37. I enjoy studying English and it is meaningful to me.

38. I feel like studying English is beneficial to me.

39. Studying English is important to me in order to gain the approval of my peers/teachers/family/boss.

40. Studying English is important to me because an educated person is supposed to be able to speak English.

**Factor E: Unplanned and planned in-class WTC**

41. In the classroom, I am willing to ask the teacher in English to repeat what he or she has said.

42. In a remote lesson (e.g. on Teams), I am willing to ask the teacher in English to repeat what he or she has said.

43. In the classroom, I am willing to ask the teacher in English about words or structures that he or she has just used.
44. In a remote lesson, I am willing to ask the teacher in English about words or structures that he or she has just used.
45. In the classroom, I am willing to ask my peers in English about words related to the topic.
46. In a remote lesson, I am willing to ask my peers in English about words related to the topic in a breakout room.
47. In the classroom, I am willing to ask my peers in English about ideas/arguments related to the topic.
48. In a remote lesson, I am willing to ask my peers in English about ideas/arguments related to the topic in a breakout room.
49. In the classroom, I am willing to give a presentation in English in front of the class.
50. In a remote lesson, I am willing to give a presentation in English in front of the class.
51. In the classroom, I am willing to have a conversation in random small groups.
52. In a remote lesson, I am willing to have a conversation in random small groups.

**Factor F: International posture – interest in international affairs**

53. I often read and watch the news, short films, and memes about life/events in foreign countries.
54. I often talk about situations and events (sports events, concerts, festivals, etc.) in foreign countries with my family and friends.
55. I have a strong interest in what happens in other countries.
56. On the internet, TV or newspapers, I don't look for information concerning only my hometown or my country.

**Factor G: WTC outside the classroom and practice-seeking WTC**

57. I am willing to speak English in a group about my summer holidays outside the classroom.
58. Outside the classroom I am willing to speak English to my teacher about my home assignment.

59. I am willing to stay and speak English to my teacher about my home assignment after a remote lesson.
60. I am willing to have a conversation in English with a stranger, who enters the room and starts talking to me.
61. When I am confused about a task I must complete, I am willing to ask for clarifications in English.
62. I am willing to modify what I have said in response to an indication of an error.
63. I am willing to talk to a Finnish friend in English outside the classroom.
64. I am willing to describe the rules of my favourite game in English.
65. I am willing to play a computer/board game (e.g. Monopoly) which requires communication in English.

### **Open-ended questions**

1. Do you feel like your willingness to communicate in remote English lessons differs from classroom lessons? If yes, how?
2. Do you think your willingness to communicate in remote English lessons has changed during the COVID-19-pandemic, when you compare the first remote learning periods and the latest remote lessons? If yes, how?
3. What kind of factors do you think affect your willingness to communicate in remote English lessons?
4. What kind of factors do you think affect your willingness to communicate in English lessons in the classroom?
5. How could your willingness to communicate be increased in remote English lessons?



### **Appendix 3: Finnish summary**

## **Kommunikaatiohalukkuus englannin etäopetuksessa: Kaksoistutkinto-opiskelijoiden näkemyksiä (Tiivistelmä)**

### **Kommunikaatiohalukkuus, tutkimuksen tausta ja tavoitteet**

Tämä pro gradu -tutkielma tutki kaksoistutkinto-opiskelijoiden kommunikaatiohalukkuutta englannin kielessä COVID-19-pandemian aikana. Kommunikaatiohalukkuus on tärkeä toisen kielen oppimiseen ja kommunikaatioon liittyvä käsite, ja se on yksi sellaisista yksilöiden välisistä eroista, joka vaikuttaa kielen oppimiseen. Jotkut yksilöt tarttuvat tilaisuuksiin kommunikoida, kun taas toiset eivät. Toiset haluavat tilaisuuden tullen puhua ja toiset pysyä hiljaa. Usein korostetaan, että vieraan kielen oppimisen tärkeimpänä tavoitteena on saavuttaa kommunikatiivinen kompetenssi. Kuitenkaan taitavimmatkaan kohdekielen puhujat eivät välttämättä halua kommunikoida vieraalla kielellä. Kommunikaatiohalukkuuteen toisella kielellä vaikuttavat monet tekijät, kuten yksilölliset, sosiaaliset ja kielelliset erot, tulee ottaa huomioon. Kieltenopettajien olisi tärkeää ymmärtää kommunikaatiohalukkuuden ilmiö ja huomioida se opetuksessa niin, että erilaisia oppijoita kannustettaisiin ja tuettaisiin kommunikoidaan kohdekielellä.

Kommunikaatiohalukkuuteen toisella kielellä vaikuttavat sekä tilannekohtaiset tekijät että pidempiaikaiset tekijät. Tilannekohtaiset tekijät sisältävät esimerkiksi kommunikaatiokumppanin ja -hetken, kun taas pitkäaikaisiin tekijöihin esimerkiksi yksilön persoonallisuustekijät. Persoonallisuustekijöillä tarkoitetaan sitä, että joidenkin persoonallisuus on pohjana yleiselle taipumukselle kommunikoida mielellään. Tilannekohtaiset tekijät painottavat vaihtelevaa kommunikaatiokäyttäytymistä eri tilanteissa ja eri aikoina sekä eri ihmisten kanssa.

Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli selvittää, kuinka halukkaita oppijat olivat kommunikoidaan englannin etätunneilla, sekä verrata etätuntien kommunikaatiohalukkuutta perinteisen luokkahuoneopetuksen kommunikaatiohalukkuuteen. Tutkimuksen muita tärkeitä tavoitteita olivat esimerkiksi tutkia, miten oppijat kokivat heidän kommunikaatiohalukkuuttaan voitavan lisätä etätunneilla ja miten kommunikaatiohalukkuus oli muuttunut koronapandemian aikana. Koronapandemian aiheuttama tilanne loi mahdollisuuden tutkia englannin kielen kommunikaatiohalukkuutta etäopetuksessa, koska opetus järjestettiin etänä tiettyinä ajanjaksoina pandemian puhjettua keväällä 2020.

Pandemian alettua ja tilanteen jatkuttua oppijat ja opettajat joutuivat nopeasti siirtymään luokkahuoneista etäopetukseen ja omaksumaan uudet säännökset ja tavat pandemiatilanteen kehittyessä ja muuttuessa nopeasti. Kielten oppiminen ja opettaminen etänä on melko uutta oppivelvollisuuteen kuuluvan opetuksen osalta. Siksi on tärkeää tutkia, miten kommunikaatiohalukkuus näkyy etäopiskelussa. Koronapandemian aikana etäopetusta toteutettiin sekä Suomessa että globaalilla tasolla. Modernin teknologian nopean kehityksen ansiosta on mahdollista lisätä ajasta ja paikasta riippumatonta kommunikaatiota ja kontaktia, minkä takia on todennäköistä ja mahdollista, että etäopiskelu ja -opetus tulee jatkossa lisääntymään Suomessa ja muualla maailmassa. Etäopetukseen vaikuttaa liittyvän sekä positiivisia että negatiivisia vaikutuksia, eikä niitä kaikkia ole vielä tutkittu.

Kommunikaatiohalukkuus on ollut kielen oppimiseen liittyvien yksilöllisten erojen tutkimuksessa keskiössä viimeisten kolmen vuosikymmenen aikana.

Kommunikaatiohalukkuutta on siis tutkittu paljon, mutta kommunikaatiohalukkuutta etäopetuksessa ei vielä ole tutkittu laajasti. Täten kommunikaatiohalukkuuden tutkiminen etäopetusympäristöissä voi auttaa meitä parantamaan etäopetuksen ja -opettamisen keinoja tulevaisuudessa ja lisätä oppijoiden kommunikaatiohalukkuutta. Kommunikaatiohalukkuuden lisäämistä on tutkittu aikaisemmin muun muassa visualisoinnin ja tavoitteiden asettelun kautta, opettajan vaikutuksen kannalta sekä selvitetty erilaisten roolipelien hyödyntämisen vaikutusta kommunikaatiohalukkuuteen kielenopiskelussa.

Tämä pro gradu -tutkielma pyrki vastamaan seuraaviin tutkimuskysymyksiin:

1. Kuinka halukkaita tämän tutkimuksen osallistujat ovat kommunikoimaan englannin tunneilla etäopetuksessa? Miten oppijat reagoivat etäopiskelun ja luokkahuoneopiskelun eroihin ja vaikuttaako se heidän kommunikaatiohalukkuuteensa oppitunneilla?
2. Miten oppijoiden mielestä heidän kommunikaatiohalukkuuttaan etäopetuksessa voitaisiin lisätä?
3. Miten etänä opiskelu on vaikuttanut oppijoiden kommunikaatiohalukkuuteen pandemiavuosien kuluessa?

## Metodit

Tutkimusaineisto kerättiin anonyymisti itsearviointilomakkeena Webropolin kautta. Kyselyyn vastasi 47 kaksoistutkinto-opiskelijaa yhteensä neljästä eri ryhmästä Varsinais-Suomen alueelta. Osallistujien iät vaihtelivat 16 ja 20 välillä, mediaani-ikä oli 17. Suurin osa osallistujista (80,9 %) oli naisia ja 19,1 % osallistujista oli miehiä. Lähes kaikkien tutkimukseen osallistuneiden ainoa ensikieli oli suomi, ainoastaan yhdellä osallistujalla oli muu äidinkieli kuin suomi. Osallistujat arvioivat englannin kielen taitonsa keskimäärin melko hyväksi.

Tutkimus toteutettiin monimenetelmällisenä tutkimuksena, joten tutkimusta varten kerättiin ja analysoitiin sekä kvantitatiivista että kvalitatiivista tutkimusaineistoa.

Monimenetelmätutkimukset ovat tällä hetkellä tärkeitä kommunikaatiohalukkuuden tutkimisessa. Webropol-lomake täytettiin joko oppitunnin aikana tai kotona.

Kyselylomakkeen kieli oli suomi, jotta voitiin varmistaa aiheen ja kysymysten mahdollisimman hyvä ymmärrys. Osallistujat vastasivat kyselyyn suomeksi, ja heidän vastauksensa avoimiin kysymyksiin käännettiin myöhemmin englanniksi.

Kyselylomakkeeseen vastaamiseen meni osallistujilla noin 15-20 minuuttia. Kyselylomake koostui taustatieto-osiesta, 65 monivalintaväittämästä sekä viidestä avoimesta kysymyksestä. Taustatiedoissa kartoitettiin osallistujien ikää, sukupuolta, äidinkieltä tai –kieliä, mahdollista aiempaa osallistumista englantirikasteiseen päiväkotiin tai koulutukseen sekä mahdollisia pidempiä ulkomailla oleskelujaksoja. Osallistujilta kysyttiin myös, minkä ikäisenä he olivat aloittaneet opiskelemaan englantia koulussa. Lisäksi osallistujien englannin kielen taitoja kartoitettiin itsearvioinnilla koskien kuullun- ja luetunymmärtämistä, suullista vuorovaikutusta sekä kirjoitustaitoja. Taustatieto-osion jälkeen seurasi monivalintaväittämät koskien englannin opiskelua sekä etänä että luokkahuoneessa, erilaisia englanninkäyttötilanteita luokassa ja luokan ulkopuolella sekä englannin kieltä ylipäätään. Etäopetuksella tarkoitettiin oppitunteja, jotka tapahtuivat esimerkiksi Teamsin välityksellä. Osallistujien tuli valita omia kokemuksiaan ja mielipiteitään parhaiten kuvaava vastausvaihtoehto monivalintaväittämien vaihtoehdoista. Kyselylomakkeen lopussa olleet avoimet kysymykset koskivat englannin kommunikaatiohalukkuuden eroavaisuuksia luokassa ja etänä, koronapandemian aikana mahdollisesti muuttunutta kommunikaatiohalukkuutta, kommunikaatiohalukkuuteen vaikuttavia tekijöitä niin etänä kuin luokkahuoneessakin sekä mahdollisia keinoja kommunikaatiohalukkuuden lisäämiseksi englannin etätunneilla.

Kyselylomakkeella kerätty tutkimusaineisto siirrettiin Microsoft Exceliin aineiston analyysiä ja arviointia varten. Tutkimusaineisto sisälsi sekä kvantitatiivista että kvalitatiivista materiaalia. Kvantitatiivinen aineisto koostui enimmäkseen monivalintaväittämien luvuista, ja kvalitatiivista aineistoa saatiin kyselylomakkeen avoimista kysymyksistä. Kvantitatiivinen data analysoitiin laskemalla väittämien vastausten keskiarvoja, ja niistä tehtiin havainnollistavia taulukoita ja kaavioita. Kvalitatiivinen data eli avoimet kysymykset ryhmiteltiin ensin kategorioihin vastausten perusteella ja käännettiin sitten englanniksi. Tämän lisäksi jokaisen kategorian vastaukset laskettiin yhteen, jotta voitiin laskea kunkin kategorian vastausten frekvenssit. Tällä tavoin saatiin laskettua, mitkä vastaukset mainittiin useimmiten, ja tehtyä sen perusteella päätelmiä.

## **Tulokset**

Ensimmäisessä tutkimuskysymyksessä selvitettiin, kuinka halukkaita osallistujat olivat kommunikoidaan englannin etätunneilla, ja miten kommunikaatiohalukkuus etänä erosi perinteisestä luokkahuoneopetuksesta. Tutkimustulosten mukaan osallistujien kommunikaatiohalukkuus englannin etätunneilla oli keskimäärin matalampi kaikissa tutkimuksessa listatuissa tuntiaktiiviteeteissa verrattuna luokkahuoneessa pidettyjen tuntien kommunikaatiohalukkuuteen. Tulos oli tilastollisesti merkittävä. Osallistujien yleinen kommunikaatiohalukkuus etätunneilla oli keskimäärin matalasta keskitasoiseen. Osallistujat kuitenkin keskimäärin nauttivat etäopiskelusta kohtalaisesti. Osallistujien kommunikaatioitsevarmuus oli keskimäärin kohtalaista korkeampi, ja heidän keskimääräiset vastauksensa liittyen kansainväliseen suuntautumiseen ja avoimuuteen kokemuksille olivat jonkin verran keskitason yläpuolella. Motivaatioon liittyen osallistujat kokivat englannin opiskelun olevan enemmän hyödyllistä kuin nautinnollista tai merkityksellistä heille. Osallistujat eivät pitäneet suuressa arvossa englannin opiskelua muiden hyväksynnän saamisen kannalta. Sekä spontaanien että suunniteltujen luokkahuoneaktiiviteettien joukosta alin kommunikaatiohalukkuus niin etänä kuin luokassakin oli esitelmän pitäminen muiden edessä englanniksi. Osallistujat olivat melko kiinnostuneita kansainvälisistä suhteista. Osallistujat olivat vähemmän kuin kohtalaisen halukkaita kommunikoidaan luokkahuoneen ulkopuolella saadakseen harjoitusta ja kommunikoidaan kyselyssä listatuissa luokkahuoneen ulkopuolisissa aktiiviteeteissa.

Toinen tutkimuskysymys oli, miten oppijoiden mielestä heidän kommunikaatiohalukkuuttaan voitaisiin mahdollisesti lisätä etätunneilla. Suurin osa osallistujista (51,1 %) antoi vastauksen

kysymykseen ja selitti, miten heidän kommunikaatiohalukkuuttaan voisi mahdollisesti lisätä. Tulosten mukaan osallistujien näkemykset siitä, kuinka heidän kommunikaatiohalukkuuttaan voitaisiin lisätä etätunneilla, sisälsivät esimerkiksi pienryhmissä työskentelyn, muiden aktiivisen tuntiosallistumisen ja aktiivisuuden etätunneilla sekä ei-vapaaehtoisuuden vastaamisessa. Ei-vapaaehtoisuudella tarkoitettiin, että opettaja määräisi tietyn opiskelijan vastaamaan kysymykseen, tai tehtävien vastaukset käytäisiin esimerkiksi järjestyksessä läpi. Osallistujista 42,4 % vastasi kysymykseen ”ei” tai ”en tiedä”, ja 6,7 % osallistujista vastasi, etteivät he itse tai muut voi vaikuttaa heidän kommunikaatiohalukkuuteensa.

Viimeinen tutkimuskysymys käsitteli kommunikaatiohalukkuuden muuttumista pandemiavuosien edetessä. Noin kolmasosa osallistujista (31,9 %) koki kommunikaatiohalukkuutensa muuttuneen ainakin jossain määrin pandemiavuosien kuluessa. Muutoksia koettiin molempiin suuntiin: osa opiskelijoista koki kommunikaatiohalukkuuden lisääntyneen, kun taas osa koki sen vähentyneen. Suurimman osan osallistujista (59,6 %) mielestä heidän kommunikaatiohalukkuuteensa ei ollut tullut muutoksia pandemiavuosien edetessä. 10,6 % osallistujista ei vastannut kysymykseen, ei osannut sanoa tai jätti vastaukseksi esimerkiksi pelkän viivan.

Tuloksia tulkitessa tulee ottaa huomioon tutkimuksen rajoitteet esimerkiksi pienen otoskoon suhteen. Lisäksi tutkimuksen kvantitatiivista aineistoa analysoidessa ei laskettu korrelaatioita, vaan käytettiin keskiarvojalukuja ilmaisemaan tuloksia. Mikäli tilastollisia menetelmiä olisi käytetty laajemmin, tulokset olisivat voineet olla perusteellisempia tai syvällisempiä.

## **Loppupäätelmät**

Etäopiskelusta ja –opetuksesta on tullut pandemian myötä yleisempää maailmanlaajuisesti. Uusia ideoita ja sovelluksia etäopetukseen tarvitaan, jotta voitaisiin lisätä oppijoiden kommunikaatiohalukkuutta englannin etätunneilla. Opettajille tulisi tarjota täydennyskoulutusta etäopetukseen liittyen, koska digitalisaation myötä teknologia ja opetusmenetelmät etäopetuksessa kehittyvät jatkuvasti. On tärkeää, että opettajat ottavat käyttöön uusia ideoita ja metodeita opetukseensa sekä luokkahuoneessa että etänä. Täydennyskoulutukset uusiin ideoihin, etäopetusalustoihin ja sovelluksiin liittyen voisivat olla erittäin hyödyllisiä kielten etäopetukselle tulevaisuudessa. Jos oppijoiden kommunikaatiohalukkuutta saataisiin esimerkiksi uusien ideoiden tai menetelmien avulla lisättyä, edistettäisiin samalla kielen oppimista sekä kohdekielen kommunikatiivisen kompetenssin saavuttamista.

Kommunikaatiohalukkuudesta etäopetusympäristöissä tulisi tehdä jatkotutkimuksia. Tutkimuksia tulisi toteuttaa esimerkiksi laajemmilla otoksilla hyödyntäen monimenetelmällistä tutkimusasetelmaa. Tutkimusten toteutus eri otoksissa, kuten kaksoistutkinto-opiskelijat, lukio-opiskelijat, korkeakouluopiskelijat sekä perusopetuksen oppilaat, olisi tärkeää laajemman ja kattavamman käsityksen saamiseksi kommunikaatiohalukkuudesta etäopetuksessa. Kommunikaatiohalukkuudesta etäopetuksessa tulisi tehdä lisää tutkimuksia, jotta saataisiin syvällisempää tietoa ja ymmärrystä kommunikaatiohalukkuudesta moderneissa verkko-oppimisympäristöissä.

Kommunikaatiohalukkuuden dynaamista perspektiiviä tulisi tutkia lisää käyttämällä esimerkiksi strukturoituja tai avoimia haastatteluja laadullisen tutkimusaineiston keräämiseksi. Tulevissa tutkimuksissa tulisi myös selvittää, miten kommunikaatiohalukkuus voisi muuttua, kun erilaisia keinoja sen lisäämiseksi hyödynnettäisiin käytännössä. Myös pitkittäistutkimusten tarve on ilmeinen, jotta englannin etäopetuksen pitkäaikaisia vaikutuksia voitaisiin tutkia. Englannin kielen kommunikaatiohalukkuuden ja sen dynaamisen perspektiivin ymmärtäminen tarjoaa lukuisia tutkimusmahdollisuuksia myös tulevaisuudessa.