

# UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE ON THE CLUBHOUSE APPLICATION: INSIGHTS FROM THE HEURISTIC PYRAMID THEORY

Fatimah Az Zahra<sup>1</sup>, Shierly Novalita Yappy<sup>2</sup>, J. Priyanto Widodo<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Universitas PGRI Delta Sidoarjo, Indonesia

**Abstract:** *Despite the growing popularity of digital language learning platforms, understanding the intricacies of communication willingness within these contexts remains limited. This study addresses the gaps in understanding the dynamics of willingness to communicate (WTC) on the “Smart and Easy English” Clubhouse Application through the lens of the Heuristic Pyramid Theory. The study adopts a case study design with three participants and employs a questionnaire encompassing Motivational Propensities (MP), Affective and Cognitive Context (ACC), and Social and Individual Context (SIC), complemented by an interview. The findings reveal both positive and negative insights into the participants’ communication experiences on the platform, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of WTC. The positive results highlight enhanced confidence and motivation, while negative aspects point to challenges in affective and cognitive dimensions. These findings have significant implications for optimizing communication experiences on Clubhouse and similar platforms, emphasizing the need for tailored interventions to address individual and social factors influencing WTC. This study contributes valuable insights to the intersection of language learning, communication willingness, and digital platforms, paving the way for improved user experiences and educational outcomes on Clubhouse.*

**Keywords:** *Clubhouse application, communication, language learning, Heuristic Pyramid theory, willingness to communicate*

**About the author:** *Fatimah Az Zahra is an English practitioner and teacher. She received a bachelor’s degree in English Education program from Universitas Jember and a master’s degree in the same program from Universitas PGRI Delta Sidoarjo. She is interested in English Language Teaching, educational technology, instructional design, curriculum development, and World English research.*

**e-mail:** [fatimah.azzahra5891@gmail.com](mailto:fatimah.azzahra5891@gmail.com)

**ORCID iD:** <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-5253-6809>

**About the author:** *Shierly Novalita Yappy is currently teaching English as a foreign language at several universities. She has completed a Ph.D. in language education. Her research interests include Linguistics, Discourse Analysis, and TEFL.*

**e-mail:** [snovalita@gmail.com](mailto:snovalita@gmail.com)

**ORCID iD:** <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-2300-2055>

**About the author:** *J. Priyanto Widodo is currently a lecturer at Universitas PGRI Delta Sidoarjo and Petra Christian University Surabaya, where he teaches courses in education and educational technology. He is a dedicated educator who is committed to improving the quality of education in Indonesia. He is also a strong advocate for the use of technology in education. He received his Ph.D. in Educational Technology from Universitas Negeri Malang.*

**e-mail:** [prowidodo18@gmail.com](mailto:prowidodo18@gmail.com)

**ORCID iD:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6445-7032>

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## Introduction

Language learning, a nuanced and challenging endeavour, hinges on learners' willingness to communicate (WTC). This WTC aspect encompasses self-confidence, motivation, and anxiety, all of which significantly influence the language acquisition process (Basoz & Erten, 2018; MacIntyre, 2020; Nematizadeh & Wood, 2019). Traditional language learning applications, often relying on asynchronous text-based communication, may fall short in addressing these complex challenges effectively (Freiermuth & Ito, 2020; Lee & Drajadi, 2019; Peng, 2019). The advent of real-time platforms presents an intriguing alternative, potentially offering a more immersive and authentic language learning experience (Al-Murtadha, 2019; Buckingham & Alpaslan, 2017; Lee, 2019). However, the extent to which learning platforms addresses or exacerbates WTC challenges remains inadequately explored.

Clubhouse, an English social networking app, has swiftly gained popularity for its unique real-time conversational format and "Smart and Easy English" as the second biggest English club which has more than 200.000 followers (Ebadi & Azizimajd, 2023). Despite its widespread use, a notable gap persists in understanding the dynamics of communication within this context, particularly concerning language learning and WTC. Previous research, grounded in conventional communication settings, may not fully capture the distinctive features and challenges presented by Clubhouse (Boyko & Horbyk, 2022; Kocakoç & Özkan, 2022; Yep et al., 2023). A focused investigation into the communication dynamics of this platform is imperative to comprehend its impact on language learning and communicative willingness (Ebadi & Azizimajd, 2023).

In this context, the Heuristic Pyramid Theory emerges as a valuable theoretical framework, offering a holistic lens to examine communication dynamics (Macintyre et al., 1998). Rooted in social psychology, this theory posits that individuals' willingness to communicate is shaped by a hierarchy of needs, ranging from fundamental psychological factors to more complex social considerations (Khajavy et al., 2018; Macintyre et al., 2020). While extensively applied in various communication contexts, its relevance and applicability to digital platforms like Clubhouse remain relatively unexplored (Ebadi & Azizimajd, 2023). By adopting the Heuristic Pyramid Theory, this study aims to uncover the underlying motivational, affective, and social mechanisms shaping communication behaviours on Clubhouse.

To address the existing gaps in literature, it is essential to recognize the dearth of specific investigations into communication dynamics on Clubhouse within the broader domain of language learning. Moreover, while studies have delved into WTC in conventional settings (Fatima et al., 2020; Sato & Dussuel Lam, 2021), the manifestation of WTC dynamics in digital environments (Lee,

2019, 2022), with unique features like anonymity and variable audience sizes, warrants more focused exploration (Alrabai, 2022; Lee & Chen Hsieh, 2019; Macintyre et al., 1998). Additionally, while the Heuristic Pyramid Theory provides a robust foundation for understanding communication motivations, its application to digital platforms requires deeper exploration to establish its relevance and effectiveness (Buckingham & Alpaslan, 2017; Lee & Drajati, 2019; MacIntyre & Wang, 2021; Peng, 2019). In light of these considerations, this study's rationale stems from a commitment to advancing our understanding of language learning and communication in the digital age. By scrutinizing WTC on Clubhouse through the theoretical lens of the Heuristic Pyramid Theory, this research seeks to bridge both theoretical and empirical gaps in the existing literature. It holds the potential to inform targeted interventions and pedagogical approaches, thereby enhancing language learning experiences in the realm of digital platforms. This study is guided by two research questions (RQs) namely:

1. How do Motivational Propensities (MP), Affective and Cognitive Context (ACC), and Social and Individual Context (SIC), as conceptualized in the Heuristic Pyramid Theory, influence language learners' WTC on the Clubhouse app?
2. What are the perceived challenges and opportunities for WTC on the Clubhouse app?

## Literature Review

### *WTC and Its Challenges in Digital Environments*

WTC is a crucial aspect of language learning, indicative of individuals' preparedness to engage in communicative activities within a target language (Fatima et al., 2020; Sato & Dussuel Lam, 2021). The digital landscape introduces both opportunities and challenges to WTC. While online platforms provide extensive resources for language exposure and interaction, they also present formidable barriers that can impede WTC (Lee, 2019, 2022). Factors such as anonymity, the absence of nonverbal cues, and the fear of negative evaluation in digital contexts can hinder language learners' active participation in communicative activities. Moreover, the asynchronous nature of many digital platforms may not offer the immediate feedback and social interaction essential for cultivating WTC effectively (Al-Murtadha, 2019; Alshammri, 2023). Understanding and addressing these challenges within digital environments are imperative for optimizing language acquisition outcomes. Numerous studies have recognized the significance of WTC in language learning, emphasizing its role in fostering language proficiency and intercultural competence (Alrabai, 2022; Fatima et al., 2020; Khajavy et al., 2018). However, the existing literature on WTC in digital environments remains somewhat limited. While some studies acknowledge the challenges posed by digital platforms, such as online language exchange platforms and virtual

classrooms, there is a notable scarcity of research specifically delving into the multifaceted nature of WTC in these settings (Alshammri, 2023; Buckingham & Alpaslan, 2017; Lee & Chen Hsieh, 2019). Furthermore, the asynchronous nature of communication on most digital platforms introduces a layer of complexity that demands closer examination. Consequently, there exists a significant gap in the literature regarding the nuanced dynamics of WTC within contemporary digital language learning contexts.

### ***The Heuristic Pyramid Theory on WTC***

The Heuristic Pyramid Theory, rooted in social psychology, provides a comprehensive framework for comprehending the motivations and barriers shaping WTC. This theoretical perspective suggests that individuals' willingness to communicate is intricately linked to a hierarchy of needs, encompassing basic psychological factors and extending to higher-order social considerations (Khajavy et al., 2018; MacIntyre, 2020; Macintyre et al., 1998). Applying the Heuristic Pyramid Theory to the realm of digital language learning offers a promising avenue for gaining nuanced insights into the multifaceted nature of WTC. By unravelling the interplay of motivational, affective, and social factors, this framework becomes instrumental in understanding the complex landscape of communicative behaviours within digital language learning contexts (Al-Murtadha, 2019; Lee, 2019). While the Heuristic Pyramid Theory has been applied across various communication contexts, its exploration within digital language learning platforms is limited. Previous studies primarily focus on face-to-face communication, leaving a gap in understanding its relevance to digital environments (Alshammri, 2023; Buckingham & Alpaslan, 2017; Lee, 2022). Thus, further empirical research into the application of WTC in digital contexts is essential to address this identified gap. Exploring WTC within the Clubhouse application will enhance our understanding of language learning in the digital era.

### ***Gaps and Research Directions on WTC Dynamics on Clubhouse Application***

In the existing body of literature, while the importance of WTC in language learning is acknowledged (Ebadi & Azizimajd, 2023; Fatima et al., 2020; Khajavy et al., 2018), a critical gap emerges in understanding its nuances within digital platforms. The asynchronous nature of digital platforms adds complexity to WTC that remains largely unexplored (Buckingham & Alpaslan, 2017; Lee & Chen Hsieh, 2019). An essential research direction is to delve into the intricate dynamics of WTC within contemporary digital language learning contexts, highlighting an unmet need in current scholarship. Additionally, the potential of the Heuristic Pyramid Theory in comprehending WTC

motivations has been underutilized in the digital language learning landscape, particularly on language learning platforms (MacIntyre & Wang, 2021; Peng, 2019). Investigating the Heuristic Pyramid Theory empirically within digital language learning becomes a pivotal research avenue. This exploration holds the promise of enriching our understanding of the motivations and challenges influencing WTC in digital environments. This study investigates language learning experiences and communication patterns on Clubhouse, focusing on the dynamics of WTC in this digital platform. Clubhouse, known for its English club social networking features, facilitates real-time conversations on various topics, offering spontaneous language practice opportunities. The research aims to address the gap in understanding WTC dynamics on Clubhouse, particularly in language learning contexts, where limited research exists, leaving a significant void in our comprehension of WTC in this digital space.

## **Methodology**

### ***Research Design and Participants***

This study adopts a case study design to delve into the phenomenon of WTC on the “Smart and Easy English” Clubhouse Application through the lens of the Heuristic Pyramid Theory. Case studies are particularly suited for examining complex phenomena in social and life sciences, making them ideal for this study’s objectives. The case study approach allows for an in-depth exploration of individual experiences and behaviours within their natural setting, providing valuable insights into WTC dynamics on Clubhouse.

The participants (anonymous), Khalid (27 years old) from Morocco, Pedram (33 years old) from Iran, and Ray (26 years old) from Indonesia, were selected for this study through purposive sampling. This method was chosen to ensure that participants were actively engaged in speaking practice rooms on Clubhouse and had been members of the community for over six months. Purposive sampling allowed for the selection of individuals with diverse backgrounds and experiences, enhancing the study’s ability to capture a wide range of perspectives on WTC within the Clubhouse environment. The participants’ active involvement and extended membership in the community were considered essential criteria for providing insightful contributions to the study’s exploration of WTC dynamics. Through this method, the study aimed to gather rich and varied insights into WTC behaviours on the Clubhouse app, enriching our understanding of communication dynamics in digital environments.

### ***Data Collection Procedure and Analysis***

Data collection for this study involved the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire, adapted from Ebadi and Azizimajd (2023) and Lee (2019) encompassing MP, ACC, and

SIC related to their WTC on Clubhouse. Quantitative data gathered from the questionnaire underwent analysis using descriptive statistics, utilizing a scale ranging from 1 (Almost never willing) to 5 (Almost always willing) to discern patterns and trends in the participants' responses. Concurrently, qualitative data from interviews underwent thematic analysis to uncover recurring themes and insights regarding the participants' WTC experiences on Clubhouse. This questionnaire was designed to provide insights into the factors influencing the participants' willingness to engage in spoken communication on the platform. In addition to the questionnaire, semi-structured interview was conducted with each participant to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences, motivations, and challenges related to WTC on Clubhouse.

Data analysis for this study involved a multi-faceted approach. Quantitative data from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify patterns and trends in the participants' responses. Qualitative data from the interview's results were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and insights related to the participants' WTC experiences on Clubhouse. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing WTC on the Clubhouse app. Themes identified through qualitative analysis were triangulated with quantitative findings to provide a robust interpretation of the data.

### ***Ethical Considerations***

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement in the study, and they were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. The participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without repercussions. Additionally, ethical guidelines regarding data handling and storage were followed to ensure the protection of the participants' privacy and confidentiality. Finally, all data were securely stored and accessible only to the research team to ensure adherence to ethical standards in research involving human participants.

## **Results**

### ***Influence of Heuristic Pyramid Theory on WTC Dynamics***

To address the first RQ, the questionnaire is used to encompass Motivational Propensities (MP), Affective and Cognitive Context (ACC), and Social and Individual Context (SIC), as conceptualized in the Heuristic Pyramid Theory. The results are presented in detail in the following table.

**Table 1.** Influence of the Heuristic pyramid theory on WTC dynamics

Participant	MP-IPM1	MP-IPM2	MP-IGM1	MP-IGM2	MP-SC1	MP-SC2	ACC-IA1	ACC-IA2	ACC-SS1	ACC-SS2	ACC-CC1	ACC-CC2	SIC-IC1	SIC-IC2	SIC-PI1	SIC-P2
Khalid	4	3	2	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	3	4	5	5
Pedram	4	3	2	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	3	4	5	5
Ray	4	2	3	5	4	3	5	4	3	3	2	5	5	5	5	5

1= Almost never willing, 2= Sometimes willing, 3= Willing half of the time, 4= Usually willing, 5= Almost always willing

**Noted**

MP-IPM1 (Motivational Propensities – Interpersonal Motivation): I’d like to speak depending on the room type (casual conversation or topical room).

MP-IPM2: I’d rather be a moderator/interlocutor than a speaker.

MP-IGM1 (Motivational Propensities – Intergroup Motivation): I prefer speaking in a public room rather than a private/social room.

MP-IGM2: I enjoy speaking in club discussions with a number of critical questions.

MP-SC1 (Motivational Propensities – Self Confidence): I always confidently speak in the club public room whether the replay/recording is on/off.

MP-SC2: I find it easy to express my ideas in the discussion.

ACC-IA1 (Affective and Cognitive Context – Intergroup Attitude): I’d like to communicate in the club public room.

ACC-IA2: I find it difficult to understand other members’ talking in the club public room.

ACC-SS1 (Affective and Cognitive Context – Social Situation): I prefer speaking when the replay/recording is on.

ACC-SS2: I’d like to speak about casual conversation rather than certain topics.

ACC-CC1 (Affective and Cognitive Context – Communicative Competence): I prefer a topical room with a challenging or IELTS topic.

ACC-CC2: I like the moderators/speakers’ critical questions.



SIC-IC1 (Social and Individual Context – Intergroup Climate): I like Clubhouse public room because there is no need for video to communicate.

SIC-IC2: I like CH because the club members encourage me to speak.

SIC-P1 (Social and Individual Context – Personality): Clubhouse features to improve my confidence to speak.

SIC-P2: The public rooms on Clubhouse encourage me to speak every day.

The results shown in Table 1 reveal nuanced insights into the WTC dynamics among the participants within the Clubhouse application, as influenced by the Heuristic Pyramid Theory. Regarding MP, Khalid and Pedram exhibit a moderate to high inclination for communication activities, preferring roles as moderators or interlocutors over speakers (MP-IPM1, MP-IPM2). Ray, on the other hand, shows a lower inclination towards speaking but a strong preference for moderator or interlocutor roles. In terms of intergroup motivation (MP-IGM), Khalid and Pedram favour public rooms for broader discussions, while Ray enjoys participating in club discussions with critical questions, indicating a deeper engagement with Clubhouse content (MP-IGM1, MP-IGM2). Moving to self-confidence (MP-SC), Khalid and Ray demonstrate higher confidence levels in speaking within the club public room, and all participants express ease in expressing their ideas during discussions, highlighting comfort and fluency in communication (MP-SC1, MP-SC2). Regarding ACC contexts, all participants prefer the club public room for communication (ACC-IA1), emphasizing the importance of open and accessible spaces. However, they face challenges in understanding others' speech in these settings, indicating potential barriers to effective communication (ACC-IA2). In social situations (ACC-SS), participants prefer speaking when the replay/recording is on, expressing a desire for recorded or acknowledged contributions (ACC-SS1). They also favour discussing casual conversations over specific topics, highlighting a preference for relaxed and informal interactions (ACC-SS2). In terms of communicative competence (ACC-CC), Khalid, Pedram, and Ray show a preference for topical rooms with challenging or IELTS topics, indicating an interest in intellectually stimulating discussions (ACC-CC1). They value moderators or speakers who pose critical questions, emphasizing the facilitators' role in stimulating discourse within Clubhouse (ACC-CC2). Lastly, in social and individual contexts, participants express positive attitudes towards Clubhouse's public rooms, citing the absence of video communication and encouragement from club members to speak (SIC-IC1, SIC-IC2). They perceive Clubhouse features as enhancing their confidence to speak and acknowledge the public rooms' role in encouraging daily participation (SIC-P1, SIC-P2). In summary, the results from Table 1 offers a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing WTC dynamics within



Clubhouse, highlighting both the participants' engagement and the challenges they encounter in their communication experiences.

### ***Perceived Challenges and Opportunities for WTC on Clubhouse***

To answer the second RQ, qualitative data from interview were examined to explore the participants' perspectives on the challenges and opportunities for WTC on the Clubhouse app. The findings of the interview's results are elaborated upon in the following section.

### ***Motivation for Learning English***

Khalid's interest in learning English stems from his admiration for English-speaking countries' cultures. He states, *"I'm in love with this language...I like the English speaking countries' culture."* This demonstrates his personal affinity for the language and its associated cultures. Additionally, he sees English proficiency as beneficial for his future, claiming that, *"I think it will be like helpful for me in the future, you know, for my future."* This highlights his pragmatic approach to language learning, where he views English not just as a personal interest but as a strategic tool for his future. By recognizing the value of English proficiency for both personal and professional growth, Khalid demonstrates a practical perspective on language acquisition. He understands that mastering English can open doors to opportunities and enhance his career prospects, making it a valuable asset in his long-term plans.

Pedram's initial motivation for learning English stems from practical goals, such as passing the IELTS exam. He notes, *"Of course, my primary purpose was taking the IELTS exam."* Additionally, he mentions the economic incentive, stating, *"People who want to use AI as a source for making money have to learn English language."* The desire to immigrate or pursue higher education in English-speaking countries serves as a driving force for many Iranians to learn the language, as Pedram notes, *"Most Iranians who attend Clubhouse have an objective like immigration or continue their education in another country like the United States or England."* Pedram's motivations underscore a practical approach to language learning that aligns with both immediate and long-term goals. His focus on passing exams and leveraging English for economic opportunities illustrates a clear understanding of how language proficiency can serve as a gateway to broader ambitions, including academic and professional advancement. This insight reveals a common pattern among learners who view English not merely as a skill but as a critical asset for achieving their broader life goals.

Ray's motivation for learning English initially stemmed from practicality, such as the need to practice speaking confidently. He notes, *"It's good for practicing your confidence in speaking."* Ray also emphasizes the scarcity of English-speaking environments in his country, expressing frustration with the lack of

support for English language development. He mentions encountering negative reactions when attempting to speak English in public, stating, *“Many people say...‘sok Inggris (Indonesian being English)’ or something like that, which is really sad.”* Ray attributes his ongoing motivation to speak English to personal interest rather than professional necessity, stating, *“I just want to speak. That’s it, because whenever I see someone speaking English and the things that they’re talking about is interesting... just talk about things that we went through.”* Ray’s experience underscores a dual aspect of language learning: the practical need for confidence and the intrinsic motivation driven by personal interests. His insight illustrates how the desire to engage in meaningful conversations and connect with others can sustain language learning efforts, even in the face of societal challenges and limited local support.

### **Experiences on Clubhouse**

Khalid initially joined Clubhouse to discuss societal issues in Morocco but soon discovered English-speaking clubs. He shares, *“I started entering and joining, participating to the stage...it is a good chance and opportunity to practice my English...meeting people and communicating with people from different places around the world.”* This illustrates how Clubhouse serves as a platform for language practice and global networking, aligning with Khalid’s goals of improving his English skills and broadening his cultural understanding.

Pedram highlights the supportive and interactive environment of Clubhouse, particularly in rooms like Smart and Easy English, where he feels encouraged to speak and improve his language skills. He notes, *“These two rooms’ environment were too friendly.”* emphasizing the positive impact of such spaces on his language learning journey. Pedram appreciates the diverse range of topics discussed in different rooms, from language learning to AI and finance, offering valuable learning opportunities beyond just English proficiency.

Ray found Clubhouse to be an intriguing platform for socializing and meeting people from diverse backgrounds. He describes it as *“like an organized meeting kind of type of application.”* highlighting its structured format and the ability to switch between rooms freely. Ray appreciates the platform’s capacity to connect him with individuals from countries like Japan and India, contributing to his social network beyond geographic boundaries.

### **Communication Preferences**

Khalid prefers public rooms over private ones and enjoys both casual and topical discussions. He explains, *“Sometimes I like topical, sometimes I like the casual...but I prefer the casual...you feel free and comfortable.”* This indicates his flexibility in conversation topics but ultimately favours casual discussions

for their relaxed atmosphere. Additionally, he is open to rooms with critical questions, emphasizing, *“It doesn’t matter...my goal is to practice my English.”* This underscores his primary objective of language practice, showing his willingness to engage in discussions regardless of their level of criticality.

Pedram expresses a preference for speaking over moderation roles, citing the benefits of active participation in improving speaking and listening skills. He states, *“But for people like me who want to participate in an important exam like IELTS exam, I think being a speaker would be more beneficial.”* He values the opportunity to engage in conversations with native speakers and fellow learners alike, recognizing the importance of exposure to different accents and communication styles for language development.

Ray expresses a preference for engaging in English conversations on Clubhouse due to the limited opportunities for English practice in his local environment. He acknowledges the challenges of expressing complex ideas in English discussions, particularly when conversing with individuals who may not fully understand his perspective. Ray values Clubhouse as a safe space for practicing English and combating feelings of loneliness, stating, *“The best part of Clubhouse is just my escape room for long from loneliness.”*

### **Challenges in Communication**

Khalid faces challenges in understanding various accents, such as Indian accents. He admits, *“It is difficult to understand...some accents...like the Indian one.”* This highlights the linguistic barriers he encounters in multicultural environments, emphasizing the need for improved comprehension skills. However, he appreciates Clubhouse’s diverse environment, stating, *“You have a courage to...practice...it gives you the ability to do the same thing.”* This reflects his resilience in overcoming language barriers and his appreciation for the platform’s inclusive nature.

Pedram acknowledges challenges in expressing ideas, particularly in settings with native speakers where he may feel self-conscious about his proficiency level. He notes, *“I have problems expressing my ideas specifically in a gathering involving a lot of natives because I feel like they may get bored by my talking because I’m not a native.”* However, he attributes these difficulties primarily to confidence rather than pronunciation issues, indicating a need for continued practice and exposure to gain comfort and fluency in communication.

Ray admits to encountering hurdles when articulating his thoughts during English discussions on Clubhouse, stating, *“It is very hard for me because when I speak English with Indonesians, it feels like I’m speaking English with Africans.”* He highlights the challenge of ensuring his message is accurately understood, especially on contentious topics, saying, *“Not all people can get*

*my idea...most of my ideas are much more controversial than many ordinary people.”* Ray acknowledges the necessity of adjusting his communication style to improve clarity, noting, *“It’s fine it is just a voice right here, I mean, it is a lot easier than just texting, but we need to set up our volume or the way we talk, the tone of the tonality of our voices, just to make sure that people understand the messages that we are trying to imply.”*

### **Clubhouse Features**

Khalid values Clubhouse’s audio-only communication for privacy and comfort. He asserts, *“The audio...it is necessary...I prefer to speak...through audio...it is better for me.”* This showcases his preference for audio-based communication, citing its convenience and user-friendly nature. He also appreciates features like raising hands and back channels for facilitating communication and protecting user privacy. This demonstrates his awareness of privacy concerns and his appreciation for features that enhance user interaction while maintaining confidentiality.

Pedram emphasizes the importance of Clubhouse’s features in facilitating language practice and confidence-building. He appreciates the audio-only format, which eliminates visual distractions and encourages focus on spoken communication. He mentions, *“You know, once you want to get involved in these kinds of applications, speak with strangers, it may be important for you not be... that your voice not be recorded.”* Additionally, he values the public room feature for its potential to connect with native speakers and engage in diverse conversations that contribute to language learning.

While Ray finds certain features of Clubhouse beneficial, such as the “raise hand” function for participating in discussions, he expresses frustration with the platform’s back-channel feature. He remarks, *“The minus of the back channel is that I cannot do some voice kind of chat, like we do in WhatsApp or Instagram.”* Ray appreciates the privacy settings of Clubhouse, seeing them as conducive to open communication, stating, *“It is kind of safer place for everyone to talk what they want to talk about.”* He clarifies that his motivation to speak English on Clubhouse is driven by personal interest rather than the specific features of the platform, emphasizing, *“It doesn’t really matter what kind of room that they make...My motivation to speak English is just because I want to speak English. That’s it.”*

### **Discussion**

This study aimed to investigate the motivations, experiences, challenges, and preferences of English learners within the Clubhouse app, considering dimensions of MP, ACC, and SIC. By integrating thematic interview results

with existing literature, this discussion provides a deeper understanding of language learning dynamics in virtual spaces.

The findings from the MP dimension underscore the complex interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic factors driving individuals' motivations of WTC to learn English on Clubhouse. While participants express a genuine interest in real-life language practice and engagement, societal attitudes towards English proficiency in Indonesia emerge as a significant barrier. This aligns with previous research emphasizing WTC and its role of socialization and personal interest in language acquisition (Macintyre et al., 1998, 2020; Peng, 2019). Furthermore, the study's findings highlight the need for a holistic approach to address motivational propensities, incorporating both internal desires and external influences (Alrabai, 2022). Educators and policymakers must recognize the multifaceted nature of language learning motivations to provide effective support and guidance to learners.

Within the ACC dimension, the participants' experiences of WTC on Clubhouse reveal the platform's potential to foster cultural exchange, emotional connections, and language learning opportunities. The app facilitates informal language practice and intercultural communication, connecting individuals from diverse backgrounds (Fekete et al., 2021; Yep et al., 2023). However, challenges related to room dynamics and exclusive topics within certain language communities highlight the emotional and cognitive impact of social contexts on language learning experiences. The exclusive conversations and trivial topics underscore the importance of creating inclusive and intellectually stimulating environments conducive to effective language learning (Kocakoç & Özkan, 2022). These findings emphasize the need for platforms like Clubhouse to promote meaningful interaction and learning by addressing room dynamics and topic selection (Boyko & Horbyk, 2022).

The SIC dimension provides insights into the participants' WTC preferences, challenges, and the impact of social dynamics on language learning experiences. The participants express a preference for engaging discussions in English rooms, highlighting the value of active participation and language use in fostering proficiency (Ebadi & Azizimajd, 2023). Moreover, their willingness to engage in critical and sensitive topics reflects a desire for intellectually stimulating conversations, consistent with research on discourse complexity in language learning (Basoz & Erten, 2018; MacIntyre, 2020). However, challenges in conveying complex ideas effectively point to the need for enhanced communication strategies and linguistic support (Al-Murtadha, 2019; Nematizadeh & Wood, 2019). The participants' struggle to articulate thoughts in English discussions underscores the importance of scaffolding and peer interaction in language development.

The challenges in WTC reveals the difficulties encountered by participants in expressing ideas and opinions effectively on Clubhouse. The participants' experience of potential misinterpretation and communication barriers highlight the complexities of cross-cultural communication and language use (Freiermuth & Ito, 2020; Sato & Dussuel Lam, 2021). Moreover, their frustration with navigating nuanced discussions suggests a need for improved communicative competence and intercultural awareness among participants. These findings align with previous research on the multifaceted nature of WTC challenges in language learning contexts (Fatima et al., 2020). They underscore the importance of creating supportive environments that encourage risk-taking and experimentation in language use (Ebadi & Azizimajd, 2023; Lee & Chen Hsieh, 2019).

The Clubhouse features shed light on the role of platform functionalities in language practice and communication. The participants appreciate features such as the "raise hand" function for engaging in discussions and the privacy settings for fostering open communication. These findings resonate with research on the affordances of digital technologies in language learning, emphasizing the importance of user-friendly interfaces and interactive features (Boyko & Horbyk, 2022; Ebadi & Azizimajd, 2023). However, limitations in certain features, such as the back-channel function, highlight the need for multimodal communication tools and enhanced support for language learners (Fekete et al., 2021; Yep et al., 2023). The participants also struggle to convey nuanced ideas through text underscores opportunities for improving the design and functionality of virtual communication platforms to better meet the diverse needs of language learners.

The findings of this study also underscore a multifaceted landscape where individual motivations and societal factors interplay to shape language learning experiences on digital platforms. The participants' motivations reveal the intricate balance between intrinsic desires and extrinsic pressures. While intrinsic motivations, such as personal interest and a genuine passion for the English language, drive engagement, extrinsic factors such as societal expectations and the perceived utility of English play a crucial role. Previous studies have highlighted the dual influence of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations on language learning (Alrabai, 2022; Peng, 2019). This study's findings align with these perspectives, showing that the participants' enthusiasm for English is tempered by external factors such as societal attitudes and the economic advantages of proficiency. The integration of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations suggests that effective language learning strategies must address both personal interests and broader societal contexts.

In terms of challenges, the study provides a detailed examination of how platform-specific factors and social dynamics impact WTC. Participants



encountered significant barriers related to room dynamics and topic exclusivity, which align with findings from prior research on digital communication platforms (Kocakoç & Özkan, 2022; Boyko & Horbyk, 2022). The difficulties in engaging with diverse and intellectually stimulating topics highlight the limitations of current digital spaces in fostering meaningful language practice. These challenges emphasize the need for platforms to facilitate inclusive and varied discussions that cater to a wide range of interests and proficiency levels. Furthermore, the participants' experiences of communication barriers and misinterpretations echo findings from studies on cross-cultural communication challenges (Freiermuth & Ito, 2020; Sato & Dussuel Lam, 2021). Addressing these issues requires a more robust design of virtual communication tools and greater emphasis on intercultural competence to support effective and nuanced interactions.

To address the limitation of the small sample size and its impact on the generalizability of the findings, it is important to clarify that this study's design was inherently constrained by the scope and objectives of the research. The decision to focus on a limited number of participants was driven by the aim to conduct an in-depth, qualitative analysis of individual experiences within the specific context of the "Smart and Easy English" Clubhouse Application. While the small sample size restricts the ability to generalize findings to a broader population, it allows for a detailed exploration of WTC dynamics from diverse perspectives within the Clubhouse environment. This approach provides valuable insights into the phenomenon at hand, though it should be noted that the results are most applicable to the specific context and participants involved. Future research could significantly benefit from expanding the sample size to include a broader and more diverse group of participants. Additionally, incorporating longitudinal studies would allow researchers to track changes over time and capture evolving trends in WTC behaviours. The use of supplementary methods such as observations and field notes could further enrich the data, offering a more nuanced understanding of participant interactions and experiences. These approaches would address the limitations of the current study by providing a more comprehensive and dynamic view of communication dynamics in digital environments, ultimately enhancing the generalizability and robustness of the findings.

Overall, the findings of this study highlighted a nuanced interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing language learning motivations, with societal attitudes acting as significant barriers. The participants valued Clubhouse for fostering cultural exchange but faced challenges in room dynamics and exclusive topics. Although they preferred English discussions, difficulties in conveying complex ideas indicated a need for improved communication strategies. While certain platform features were appreciated, identified limitations suggested opportunities for enhancement. In conclusion,

the study emphasizes the importance of addressing motivational barriers, fostering inclusivity, and enhancing communication support to facilitate effective language learning experiences on Clubhouse.

## **Conclusion**

This study sheds light on the dynamics of WTC within the Clubhouse Application, utilizing the Heuristic Pyramid Theory. Positive insights from the findings reveal Clubhouse's potential to enhance language learners' WTC through its interactive features and opportunities for real-life language practice. Participants expressed genuine interest in engaging with international users, fostering cultural exchange, and honing their language skills, aligning with the motivational propensities dimension. Moreover, the platform's informal setting and diverse user base contribute positively to the participants' affective and cognitive dimensions, fostering emotional connections and intellectual conversations conducive to language learning. However, challenges such as communication barriers, exclusive topics, and platform limitations impede optimal WTC experiences, emphasizing the necessity for tailored interventions to address societal attitudes towards language learning and refined digital platforms for enhanced inclusivity and communication effectiveness. The implications of this research extend to educators, policymakers, and platform developers engaged in language learning initiatives. Despite these valuable insights, the study has limitations, including a small sample size and a focus on Clubhouse, potentially limiting generalizability. Future research should employ larger samples and diverse methodologies to validate and extend these findings, with longitudinal studies providing deeper insights into the long-term impacts of WTC dynamics. It is also recommended that future research explores the intersectionality of WTC dynamics with socio-cultural factors, and platform developers prioritize user feedback to iteratively improve Clubhouse's features for a more inclusive language learning experience.

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