

Title: The Effect of General Trust on Willingness to Communicate in English Among Japanese Individuals Across Various Situations

Takehiko Ito¹ and Hideo Ueichi²

¹Hosei University, Machida, Japan ²University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Japan

This study examined the effect of general trust on the willingness to communicate (WTC) in English among the Japanese using a new scale for WTC. Previous studies have utilized the original scale for WTC, which presented abstract situations such as "Talking in a small group of acquaintances." However, it was unclear whether the impact of general trust on WTC varied across different specific situations. In this study, the situations were defined based on two perspectives: whether the conversation would develop or not and whether the conversation was active or passive. For instance, if the conversation were developing and active, the item would be "Asking a question in English about his/her hobby to a person who attended a party." If the conversation were not developing and passive, the item would be "Answering a passenger who asked how to make a transfer in English at a station." Two types of conversation partners were considered: native and non-native speakers. Ultimately, 74 items were created. An online social survey targeted 500 Japanese ranging from their 20s to 60s. The results were as follows: 1) the WTC score was higher in passive conversations than in active ones, but there was no difference in WTC scores between developing and non-developing conversations; 2) the WTC scores demonstrated a similar trend for both native and non-native conversation partners; 3) general trust had equal positive effects on WTC in all situations, including developing/not developing and active/passive. Therefore, higher general trust enhanced English communication for Japanese people.