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## **Turkish ELT students' willingness to communicate in English**

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### **Abstract**

This paper aims to present the willingness to communicate (WTC) in English of the English Language Teaching Department (ELT) students of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University inside and outside the class. Additionally, the relationships among students' willingness to communicate in English, their linguistic self-confidence, motivation, attitudes toward international community, and personality will be presented. To this end, quantitative data were gathered from 274 students studying at the department. For the qualitative aspect of the study, the researcher selected 26 students among 274 students who completed the questionnaire. The research study utilized a mixed approach, and the instruments employed in this study included a questionnaire, classroom observations, and interviews. Students' overall willingness to communicate in English was found to be between moderate and high, and their motivational intensity to be very high both inside and outside. Most of the students seemed to have positive attitudes toward the English language and the cultures of the English speaking countries. Additionally, it was found that self-confidence, attitude toward international community, and motivation showed significant correlations with the WTC in English. There were also significant correlations among self-confidence and learners' attitude and self-confidence and motivation. It was also found that the most significant predictor on students' in-class WTC level was self-confidence and that it provided a direct change on their WTC. Besides, it was considered that students' motivation levels, too, partly, had an effect on their WTC in English.

**Keywords:** *Willingness to communicate, motivation, communication apprehension, individual differences*

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## Introduction

In order to acquire a foreign language, certain conditions for learning must be met. According to Krashen (1982), second language (L2) learning takes place when a learner understands input that contains grammatical forms that are a little more advanced than the current state of the learner's interlanguage. He suggests that the right level of input is attained automatically when interlocutors succeed in making themselves understood in communication. Swain (1985) also maintains that learners must be pushed to produce comprehensible output, without which learning cannot be said to have taken place. She suggests that output can serve a consciousness-raising function by helping learners to notice gaps in their interlanguages, helps learners to test hypotheses, identify problems with it and discuss ways in which they can be put right.

Other authors stress the importance of negotiating meaning to ensure that the language in which the input is modified to the level the speaker can manage. Long (1985) points out the usefulness of 'interlanguage talk', conversation between non-native speakers in which they negotiate meaning in groups, and posits that interacting in the L2 is necessary for acquisition. According to Lightbrown and Spada (1999), if the language classroom does not allow for interaction, learners cannot be expected to develop the oral skills required for successful communication. They add that if learners lack opportunities to use the language for meaningful interaction, many will be frustrated and unable to participate in ordinary conversations. Vygotsky (1978) explains how interaction serves as the bedrock of acquisition, and that zones of proximal development are created through interaction with more knowledgeable others. Furthermore, Williams and Burden (1997) emphasize the importance of social interaction between teachers and learners and their peers, in which the interplay of both internal and external factors contribute to the process of learning.

Related to the views of some prominent researchers given above, if we accept that learners must communicate in order to acquire the language then, learners are required to knowingly use underdeveloped L2 skills. However, some people are more willing to communicate than others to accept this unusual communication situation. Obviously, there is a need to investigate the factors influencing the willingness to communicate (WTC) of the students in order to provide more successful language acquisition.

From the perspective of L2 or foreign language learning and using, since students need to use the target language to learn it, it is proposed that WTC facilitates learning and using the target language. Thus, clearly, more work on WTC and other individual difference factors should be carried out in foreign language contexts for better understanding of EFL students' communication behavioral characteristics.

Although some research on WTC was carried out in different contexts in the world, little research has been carried out in Turkey. The previous studies on WTC conducted in the Turkish and Asian contexts mostly focused on English non-major students. Whereas, the factors that influence the prospect teachers' foreign language WTC remained under-investigated. Since these students will be the teachers of English, it is supposed to be

important that we should know to what extent prospect teachers are willing to communicate in English.

In conclusion, the focus of this paper is specifically WTC in English among Turkish university students, whose major is English. When the problems related to being less willing to communicate in English are revealed, both trainers and trainees can be more conscious about the difficulties, and educational program developers can review and redesign courses given at these departments.

### **Willingness to communicate**

A recent addition to the affective variables coming from the field of speech communication is WTC. WTC, which was initially developed by McCroskey and Baer (1985) in psychology, was defined as the intension to initiate communication when free to do so. McCroskey (1992) and associates employed the term to describe the individual's personality based predisposition toward approaching or avoiding the initiation of communication when free to do so.

When WTC was extended to L2 communication situations by MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei and Noels (1998), it was proposed that it is not necessary to limit WTC to a traitlike variable, since the use of an L2 introduces the potential for significant situational differences based on wide variations in competence and inter-group relations. They defined L2 WTC as "a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a[n] L2" (p. 547). They conceptualized WTC in an L2 in a theoretical model in which social and individual context, affective cognitive context, motivational propensities, situated antecedents, and behavioral intention are interrelated in influencing WTC in an L2 and in L2 use.

### **Research on willingness to communicate in second and foreign language**

The construct of WTC was first developed by McCroskey and Baer (1985) in relation to communication in the first language. The construct is defined as a stable predisposition toward communication when free to choose to do so. In later years several researchers conducted studies to investigate the variables responsible for the variation of a person's WTC. In the early 1990s the development of research on WTC in first language (L1) started to gain researchers' attention in the area of L2 acquisition. Studies conducted in various Canadian contexts combined WTC model with Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model in order to examine the relations among variables underlying WTC in a L2.

MacIntyre and Charos' (1996) model was the first to focus on WTC in L2. The two variables, self-perceived communication competence and communication apprehension, were included in their model, but they preferred the term 'language anxiety' instead of 'communication apprehension'. They broadened MacIntyre's (1994) model by adding integrativeness, attitude and motivation from Gardner's socio-educational model. In their study, WTC was a predictor of frequency of communication in a L2, whereas motivation was a predictor of WTC, frequency of communication in a L2, or both. They tested the mixed

model to predict the frequency of using the second language in the daily interactions of 92 Anglophone students, and investigated the relations between affective variables, such as perceived L2 competence, L2 anxiety, integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation, and their impact on the frequency of second language communication. The role of personality traits was also investigated. It was found that perceived communication competence has a strong and direct influence on the L2 communication frequency. The students with greater motivation for language learning reported that they used the language more frequently.

MacIntyre et al. (1998) argued that in the L2 context, WTC should be treated as a situational variable. They conceptualized WTC in an L2 in a theoretical model which has a total of twelve constructs. In their heuristic model, there are six categories referred to as 'layers' of the model. The layers from top to bottom are communication behavior (I), behavioral intention (II), situated antecedents (III), motivational propensities (IV), affective cognitive context (V), and social and individual context (VI). In this model, factors influencing WTC are divided into two groups: enduring influences and situational influences, which are the last three layers from the bottom. The top layers (I, II, III) of the pyramid are believed to have immediate influence on WTC, whereas the bottom layers (IV, V, VI) signify relatively stable and enduring influences on WTC. In this pyramid-figure model of L2 WTC, placed WTC in a Layer II and identified it as a behavioral intention, the final step before using L2.

Their heuristic model was important because it was "the first attempt at a comprehensive treatment of WTC in the L2" (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 55). Several researchers have tested various aspects of this model since it was proposed (Bektaş, 2005; Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Jung, 2011; Kim, 2004; MacIntyre et al., 2001; MacIntyre et al., 2003; Matsuoka, 2006; Sun, 2008; Yashima, 2002; Yu, 2009; Wen & Clément, 2003). These studies concluded that motivation, communicative competence, and language anxiety are predictors of WTC.

In the Japanese context, applying WTC model to the EFL context, Yashima (2002) conducted a study with 389 Japanese EFL students to examine the predictors of learners' WTC in English. She examined relations among L2 learning and L2 communication variables in the Japanese, English as a foreign language context using the WTC model and the socio-educational model as a framework. It was found that a lower level of anxiety and a higher level of perception of L2 communication competence led to a higher level of WTC. This finding was consistent with the results of MacIntyre and Charos (1996).

Matsuoka (2006) conducted a study to test the applicability of MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) and Wen and Clément's (2003) modified model in the Japanese EFL context. She investigated how individual difference variables, such as integrativeness, communication apprehension, perceived competence, introversion, motivation, attitudes and other-directedness, are related with L2 willingness and English proficiency. The analysis of data, obtained from 180 Japanese college students, indicated that four independent variables

contributed to the prediction of L2 WTC. SPCC was the most influential factor contributed to the prediction of L2 WTC (22%), and the second strongest factor was introversion (11%).

In a Korean setting, Kim (2004) worked with 191 Korean university students to investigate the nature of MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) Heuristic Model in terms of its being trait-like or situational. She found significant positive correlations with motivation, desire to learn English, attitude toward learning English. Kim's results also indicated that students' WTC was directly related to their confidence in English communication and indirectly related to their attitudes and motivation through confidence in English communication.

Kang (2005) carried out a qualitative study in order to deepen the understanding of WTC and to provide pedagogical implications. She examined how the situational variables affect WTC in L2 in a communication situation, and how the situational WTC in L2 changes over the course of communication. She collected data from four volunteer Korean male students and provided evidence that situational WTC can dynamically emerge through the role of situational variables and fluctuate during communication. Kang proposed situational WTC as a multilayered construct that could change moment-to-moment in the conversational context, under the joint effect of the psychological conditions of excitement, responsibility and security.

Cao (2011) investigated the dynamic and situated nature of WTC in second language classrooms, and found that situational WTC in L2 classrooms emerged from the joint effects of individual characteristics including self-confidence, personality, emotion and perceived opportunity to communicate, classroom environmental conditions such as topic, task, interlocutor, teacher and group size, together with linguistic factors. The findings suggest that language teachers should be mindful of the interdependence of all these involved factors that create students' WTC in class.

In the Turkish context, Bektaş (2005) examined whether college students who were learning English as a foreign language were willing to communicate when they had an opportunity and whether the WTC model explained the relations among social-psychological, linguistic and communication variables in this context. In order to collect data, a questionnaire was administered to 356 randomly selected college students in Turkey. Then, interviews were conducted with 15 randomly selected students. The findings revealed that students were somewhat willing to communicate in English, were moderately motivated to learn English, had a positive attitude toward the international community, had low communication anxiety, perceived themselves somewhat competent to communicate in English, and were slightly extraverted and people oriented, and their perceptions of their personalities were directly related to their linguistic self-confidence. These students' willingness to communicate was found to be directly related to their attitude toward the international community and their perceived linguistic self-confidence. Students' motivation to learn English and their personality were found to be indirectly related to their willingness to communicate through linguistic self-confidence.

Atay and Kurt (2009), too, by employing a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodology investigated the factors affecting the willingness to communicate of

Turkish EFL learners as well as their opinions on communicating in English inside and outside the classroom. They collected data from 159 Turkish EFL students studying at the preparatory school of a state university in Istanbul. Similar to the findings of previous studies (McCroskey & McCroskey 1986; MacIntyre & Charos 1996), they found a strong positive correlation between perceived competence and WTC. Moreover, it was found that Turkish students with a higher score on international posture were more willing to communicate in English both outside and inside the classroom. In this study, desire to learn English was not a significant predictor of WTC. The qualitative findings of the study revealed that WTC is subject to situational variables. Similar to Kang's study (2005) they found topic, background knowledge, teacher, and peers as factors influencing the WTC of Turkish learners.

To sum up, the empirical studies mentioned above show that the relationships between L2 WTC and variables such as motivation, attitude, self-confidence, and communicative competence, are different when it is considered from a cultural perspective. However, they revealed that self-perceived communication competence, communication apprehension and motivation served as the most significant predictors of WTC in English in second and foreign language classrooms in different contexts.

## **Methodology**

### *Research design and aim*

The research session here discussed is a part of a larger study on willingness to communicate in English as a foreign language among ELT students in Turkey (Şener, 2014). The study is built with a structure suitable for combined approach where quantitative and qualitative methods are used together during the data collection and analysis phases. The primary aim of the present study is to examine Turkish EFL university students' perceptions of their WTC in English and individual difference factors that affect their willingness in the Turkish context and it also aims to examine the relationship among the variables that are believed to affect students' WTC in English by using the heuristic model proposed by MacIntyre et al. (1998) and Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model as basis for a framework. Non-linguistic variables, such as WTC, perceived communication competence, attitudes, communication apprehension in English and motivation for language learning will be the focus of the present study.

### *Research Questions*

The research questions posed for this research session are as follows:

1. What are the Turkish university students' perceptions of their WTC in English inside and outside the class?
2. What are the Turkish students' perceptions of their motivation, attitudes toward the international community, linguistic self-confidence, and their personality?

3. What are the relationships among students' WTC in English, their motivation, linguistic self-confidence, attitudes toward the international community, and personality?

### *Setting and participants*

The present study was conducted at the English Language Teaching Department (ELT) of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University in the winter and spring terms of the 2012-2013 academic year. The Department offers a four-year training program, plus a compulsory one-year prep class to improve the skills of students who fail to attain a sufficient score in a skills-based exemption exam at the beginning of their studies. The quantitative data were gathered from 274 students, consisting of 97 males and 177 females, and ranging in age from 17 to 28, and the qualitative data were gathered from the selected 26 students among 274 students. They were all native speakers of the Turkish language and were having their training at the prep, first and second classes of the ELT Department.

### *Data Collection Procedures and Instruments*

The instruments employed in this session of the study included a questionnaire, a scale, and semi-structured interviews.

The questionnaire used in the study included 47 items in total, which were collected and modified from a number of studies (Bektaş, 2005; Gardner & Smythe, 1981; Matsuoka, 2006; Yashima, 2002). The items were measured with a 5-point Likert Scale (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). The items of the questionnaire and scale were translated into the native language of the participants in order to increase the return rate. A back translation method was employed to verify the compatibility of item translations from English to Turkish. The WTC scale used in this study was adopted from McCroskey (1992), Cao and Philp (2006), MacIntyre, et al. (2001) and it contained 16 items. The students were asked to choose a number between 1 (I rarely communicate) and 10 (I always communicate), that they would be willing to communicate in English in each case. In the Personality section 10 items, adapted from Bektaş, were utilized to measure students' extraversion/extraversion dimension of personality. The students were asked to respond on a 9 point semantic differential scale. They were explained to select a number between 1 and 9 according to the degree of their perception.

For the qualitative aspect of the study, face-to face interviews were used in order to collect data. A semi-structured interview guide was prepared in order to gather data from the determined students about how they think and feel on WTC in English. In order to increase the credibility of the research, qualitative data gathered from a variety of sources were systematically analyzed by employing qualitative analysis techniques. Firstly, interview recordings of all the participants were carefully transcribed by the researcher. Then, the transcript was clarified by eliminating repetitions and digressions. Finally, the statements of the participants were summarized.

## Results and discussions

Firstly, the quantitative data that came from the questionnaire were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 21.0), the coefficients and reliability of each part of the scale were found to be reliable. Hotelling  $T^2$  test results, too, were found to be meaningful. SPSS was used to conduct descriptive statistics, correlation, variances, and regression analysis of the main study. Firstly, items 5, 28, 33, 34, 36 which were designed with a negative code were transferred to a positive code because the scale was mainly designed with a positive code. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze background information questions.

*RQ 1: What are the Turkish university students' perceptions of their WTC in English inside and outside the class?*

Students' overall willingness to communicate in English was found to be between moderate and high. The mean scores of WTC both inside ( $\bar{X} = 6.79$ ), and outside ( $\bar{X} = 6.70$ ) were very close to each other and to the high level interval. It is a good result to observe that there were no items on the scale which received a low level of willingness to communicate in English both inside and outside. The most threatening type of communication for most students was found to present a talk to a group of strangers (around 40) in English both inside ( $\bar{X} = 5.73$ ), and outside ( $\bar{X} = 5.16$ ).

According to the receiver types, it was observed that ELT students preferred to communicate in English with friends ( $\bar{X} = 7.16$ ), and acquaintances ( $\bar{X} = 7.03$ ) rather than with foreigners ( $\bar{X} = 6.54$ ), in and out the classes. In the present study the teacher was preferred as a new interlocutor type, and it was a striking result that ELT students were not as willing to communicate with the teachers ( $\bar{X} = 6.47$ ) as they were with their friends. This interlocutor type received the lowest score in this category. Teachers are evaluators and assess the performance of the students. It is probable that the students need to be tentative while communicating with their teachers.

When the context type was considered, both inside ( $\bar{X} = 7.36$ ) and outside ( $\bar{X} = 7.25$ ) the class, students preferred to communicate in small groups rather than giving presentations or talking in large groups. Besides, it was seen that students were highly willing to communicate in class presentations ( $\bar{X} = 7.12$ ). This result can be attributed to the fact that students know that it will be an advantage to speak in class and communicate properly during their presentations to get high scores from their instructors.



Table 1  
*WTC Sub-scores on Context and Receiver Type Measures*

Inside		Willingness to Communicate	Outside	
$\bar{X}$ *	SD	Measures	$\bar{X}$ *	SD
Receiver Type				
6.54	2.21	Foreigners	6.69	2.10
7.16	1.73	Friends	7.03	1.71
6.47	2.16	Teachers	6.08	2.31
6.71	2.15	Acquaintances	6.68	2.04
Context Type				
7.12	2.04	Presentations	--	--
6.11	2.23	Meetings	5.87	2.17
6.63	1.89	Dyads	6.63	1.86
7.36	1.92	Small groups	7.25	1.89
6.79	1.82	Total WTC Score	6.70	1.71

\*0-3.5: Low; 3.6-7.0: Moderate; 7.1-10.0: High

As for the qualitative aspect of the study, among 26 students majority (76.92%) expressed WTC in English. This finding was parallel to the findings of the quantitative analyses results, which indicated that the WTC in English of the survey students was found to be between moderate and high ( $\bar{X} = 6.70$ ). Besides, in the Turkish context Bektaş (2005) concluded that the participants of the study were somewhat willing to communicate in English.

Wen and Clément (2003) made a distinction between desire and willingness and in their WTC model stated that the students may have the desire to communicate but are effectively unprepared, which results in unwillingness to communicate. In the present study, it was observed that all of the participants had desire, but some did not show WTC in English. It was seen that 3 students who were not willing to communicate in English in the class actually had desire to communicate but they experienced a lot of anxiety, and consequently, they showed unwillingness.

The findings of the qualitative data are parallel to the findings of Hashimoto (2002) and Gardner et al. (1987) in that the integrative motivation plays a role in the frequency of L2 use, and the frequency of L2 use contributes to individual differences in proficiency.

The students were asked to mention how competent they regard themselves to communicate in English and rate their English proficiency. 14 students (53.84%) of the interview participants reported that they perceived their own English speaking proficiency as high, 8 of the students (30.76%) as moderate, and 4 of the students (15.38%) as low. Their perceptions about their reading and writing and listening skills were more or less similar to this finding. The number of the students who perceived their proficiency level as bad in writing and speaking skills was more than those who perceived their reading and listening skills as low. The students attributed their low level of writing or speaking skill to their bad pronunciation, limited vocabulary and lack of knowledge about the topic that is discussed. Besides, they ascribed their limited speaking skill to the language training they received at high school.

Finally, in this study, the anxiety students experienced seemed to be related to their perceptions about their friends and instructors. They were found to be other-directed, which means that they feel concern about what their friends or teachers may think of their communicative competence. 69.23% of the students stated that they would prefer to communicate with others, foreigners, because they do not focus on their mistakes.

*RQ 2: What are the Turkish students' perceptions of their motivation, attitude toward the international community, linguistic self-confidence, and personality?*

In the study, the latent variable motivation was defined by three indicator variables: 1-Desire to learn English; 2- Motivational intensity; 3-Attitude toward learning English. Overall, students' desire ( $\bar{X} = 3.65$ ) to learn English was above moderate. 89.1% of the students ( $\bar{X} = 4.41$ ) stated that they prefer to spend time on English than to deal with other subjects and would rather spend their time on English rather than other subjects (70.5%). Similarly, it is the view of 84.3% of the students ( $\bar{X} = 4.07$ ) that during the English classes, they are absorbed in what is taught and concentrate on their studies. However, it is worth considering that 58% of the participants pointed out that they really spent a lot of time on English, while 29.9% of the respondents admitted that they had no idea, and 12% of them said that they did not spend much time. This is an important controversy because on the one hand they seem to have desire to learn English, on the other hand, there is a 40% response group who expresses that they cannot spend much time on English.

The results also demonstrate that students have a high level of motivational intensity ( $\bar{X} = 4.04$ ). Almost all of the students (98.9%) believe in the importance of English, and are determined to improve their English after graduation (97.4%). When compared to Bektaş' (2005) study, which was carried out in the Turkish context, the students revealed higher levels of motivational intensity. However, the results of the present study also revealed that only 21.9% of the students thought that they studied English relatively hard when compared to their peers, and almost half of the participants (44.5%) said they were undecided on this issue, and 33.6% of them expressed that they did not participate in this idea. This situation reveals that some students find their studies or preparation for the class insufficient. It is important that these participants have to take actions in advance to improve themselves and become

competent teachers and fluent speakers of English when they are undergraduates not after graduating from the department. More than half of the students (55.1%) stated that they did not speak English outside the classroom with her friends, while 20.9% expressed that were talking with their friends. Considering the analyses of the two items above, it is observed that there may be limitations on students' communication in English, and that these limitations are reflected in their self-assessment and behaviors. These two reasons, mentioned above, are important in terms of educational outcomes and in order to increase students' exposure to language outside class, support services are recommended.

Students' overall attitudes toward learning English were found to be positive ( $\bar{X} = 4.26$ ). When students' opinions for some items were considered, they appeared to be involved in almost all of them. To give examples, more than 96% of the participants want to learn more than a foreign language; 97.8% of the participants believe that it is important to learn English because it makes them learn about different cultures. Actually, these were expected results since the students have been studying English at the ELT department. This finding is in consistent with some other studies in different contexts (Bektaş, 2005; Jung, 2011; Yu, 2009). However, some items were agreed by only half of the participants. To give some examples, 49.7% of the respondents agreed with the item 'my life would not be interesting if I did not study English', 21.5 % of them disagreed, and 28.8 % of them seemed to be undecided. To the item 'I have a favorable impression towards British people' was agreed by 55.5% of respondents but 19.0% of them disagreed, and 25.5% were undecided. Only 17.9% of the participants agreed with the Item 23 'I speak in English with my teachers at the department out of class', whereas 55.5% of them did not join the idea, and 26.6% remained undecided. This is a striking finding because it may be due to their lack of self-confidence, which is a significant predictor on WTC or they do not feel secure and experience anxiety while communicating with their instructors.

In the study, the latent variable attitude toward the international community was defined by four indicator variables; 1-Interest in international vocation activities, 2- Interest in foreign affairs, 3-Approach/avoidance tendency, and 4- Integrative orientation. The results revealed that most of the students would not avoid involvement in international activities ( $\bar{X} = 3.62$ ). When we look at the overall items of the scale, it is observed that the students are interested in international activities. However, the students want to work in a foreign country if English is spoken in that country. On the contrary, if a language other than English is the dominant case, their opinions may be negatively affected. The students are said to have a positive point of view towards foreigners, be in favor of life living in a common area with people from different cultures in a consensus, and be very sympathetic to foreigners ( $\bar{X} = 4.38$ ). It was found that students had positive attitudes as well as negative attitudes towards international groups. The students' interest in foreign countries can be described as medium ( $M = 3.35$ ), but not as high level. The mean scores of the items related to the integrative orientations are above ( $\bar{X} = 4.0$ ), which means students have highly positive attitudes toward different cultures.

Regarding students' integrative orientations ( $\bar{X} = 4.28$ ), in the first place, the students agreed that knowing English will facilitate communication ( $\bar{X} = 4.49$ ). This item was followed by their being interested in being friends with English-speaking people ( $\bar{X} = 4.38$ ). Furthermore, they agreed that they would like to go to English-speaking countries to receive training ( $\bar{X} = 4.30$ ), that English would provide them to understand the cultures of English speaking countries ( $\bar{X} = 4.09$ ), and that English would help them participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups ( $\bar{X} = 4.14$ ). Yashima (2002) proposed that international posture influences motivation, which, in turn, influences proficiency in English. In the literature review section, several studies which revealed positive relationship between attitudes toward the international groups and WTC were exemplified. It can be concluded that when students are internationally oriented, they are more willing to communicate and more motivated to study or learn English. Therefore, that the participants of the present study have positive attitudes is very hopeful, since it increases the motivation and consequently, the level of the willingness to communicate in English of the students will be higher. To sum up, positive attitudes towards the target language, its people, culture were found to be factors facilitating L2 learning and teaching in various studies. The students of the present study valued knowing various cultures and people of these cultures. This finding implies that they have integrative motivation and positive attitudes toward international groups.

In the study, it was observed that students' anxiety levels, inside ( $\bar{X} = 4.88$ ), and outside the classroom ( $\bar{X} = 4.74$ ) were moderate, and the total score seems to be closer to the low level, inside ( $\bar{X} = 4.88$ ), and outside ( $\bar{X} = 4.74$ ). The students' communication anxiety regarding to receivers, the highest anxiety scores were observed when they were communicating with foreigners both inside ( $\bar{X} = 5.41$ ) and outside ( $\bar{X} = 5.24$ ), and this was followed by teachers inside ( $\bar{X} = 5.08$ ) and outside ( $\bar{X} = 4.98$ ). In this study, only extraversion-introversion dimension of personality was measured. The personality characteristics of students were examined and they were found to be moderately extraverted ( $\bar{X} = 6.68$ ). It is a remarkable result that the students' anxiety level in the present study is neither too high, nor too low. When considered in the sense of success in education, the level of anxiety is expected to be neither high nor low; anxiety level should be at an optimal level. When taken from this perspective, the results can be reflected as an effective result, but it is essential to look at the reflections in the impact analysis of the results.

Similar to the findings of the previous results, overall, the participants' self-perceived communication competence, inside ( $\bar{X} = 6.41$ ) and outside ( $\bar{X} = 6.47$ ) the classroom, according to the persons and context were observed to be moderate, too. Related to the students' communicative competence regarding to receivers, the highest scores were observed when they were communicating with friends both inside ( $\bar{X} = 6.76$ ) and outside ( $\bar{X} = 6.79$ ), and this was followed by acquaintances inside ( $\bar{X} = 6.50$ ) and outside ( $\bar{X} = 6.60$ ), foreigners inside ( $\bar{X} = 6.07$ ), and outside ( $\bar{X} = 6.27$ ) and teachers inside ( $\bar{X} = 6.09$ ), and outside ( $\bar{X} =$

5.94). This finding is in line with Bektaş (2005) who found that the students felt more competent talking with a friend and an acquaintance.

The students' self-perceived communication competence in terms of context was found that students felt more competent while communicating in English in small groups in class ( $\bar{X} = 6.79/6.74$ ), and dyads ( $\bar{X} = 6.40/6.48$ ), rather than in meetings ( $\bar{X} = 5.94/5.95$ ), inside and outside class. Self-confidence has been found to be an important antecedent of L2 WTC in different contexts by several researchers. We should not underestimate the impact of students' judgments of their personal capabilities. On the contrary, by developing positive and friendly atmosphere in classes, we should try to diagnose the sources of their negative judgments about their capacities and provide them opportunities to overcome this drawback.

Table 2

*SPCC Sub-scores on Context and Receiver Type Measures*

Inside		SPCC	Outside	
$\bar{X}$ *	SD	Items	$\bar{X}$ *	SD
		Receiver Type		
6.07	2.20	Foreigners	6.27	2.23
6.76	1.90	Friends	6.79	1.81
6.09	2.19	Teachers	5.94	2.23
6.50	2.10	Acquaintances	6.60	2.05
		Context Type		
6.52	2.12	Class Presentations	--	--
5.94	2.13	Meetings	5.95	2.11
6.40	1.99	Dyads	6.48	1.98
6.69	2.02	Small Groups	6.74	1.99
6.41	1.92	Total Score	6.47	1.86

\* 0-3: Low; 3-6: Moderate; 6-10: High

To sum up, when students' willingness to communicate, self-confidence and anxiety scores were compared, it was observed that students' WTC, communication competence and anxiety scores were at the medium levels; but in the WTC and self-confidence categories, they were approaching a high level limit and relatively, they had higher scores.

*RQ3: What are the relationships among students' WTC in English, self-perceived communication competence, communication apprehension, motivation, linguistic self-confidence, attitudes toward the international community, and personality?*

In order to answer the research question, the data were analyzed by the Pearson Correlation test. One dependent variable (willingness to communicate) was correlated with all the independent variables (self-perceived communication competence, personality, and communication anxiety). Self-perceived communication competence revealed a positive, significant correlation with the in-class WTC ( $r = .830$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Besides, a negative correlation at the medium level was observed between in-class WTC and anxiety ( $r = -.441$ ;  $p < .05$ ). As for the correlation between students' out-class WTC in English, and self-perceived communication competence, a positive and significant correlation was observed ( $r = .796$ ;  $p < .05$ ). There was also a negative correlation at the medium level between their out-class willingness to communicate in English and anxiety ( $r = -.346$ ;  $p < .05$ ).

Table 3.

*Correlation among willingness to communicate and self-perceived communication competence, and communication anxiety*

		Inside SPCC	Outside SPCC	Inside Anxiety	Outside Anxiety
Inside WTC	Pearson Correlation	.830(**)	--	-.441(**)	--
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	--	.000	--
	N	274	--	274	--
Outside WTC	Pearson Correlation	--	.796(**)	--	-.346(**)
	Sig.(2-tailed)	--	.000	--	.000
	N	--	274	--	274

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It was observed that when students' self-perceived communication competence increased, their WTC level increased, and that their WTC level decreased when their anxiety level increased. In the light of these findings, both in the classroom environment and outside the classroom, it can be foreseen that the high level of students' communication competence can be effective in increasing the willingness to communicate of the students, whereas the high level of anxiety can reduce the students' level of willingness to communicate in English. The correlation between students' personality characteristics and willingness to communicate in English was relatively weak and positive both inside ( $r = .412$ ;  $p < .05$ ), and outside ( $r = .372$ ;  $p < .05$ ) the classroom. It was also revealed that when students' extraversion-introversion personality trait score increased, their WTC level increased. However, the

increase in the WTC related to the personality is limited. It is necessary to employ impact tests in order to determine the impact level.

These findings of the study are in consistent with some other studies in the field. To give examples, language anxiety has been shown to correlate negatively with achievement measures such as language course final grades in Horwitz's (1986) study and performance on a vocabulary learning tasks in MacIntyre and Gardner's (1989) study. In some studies, it was also found that students who perceived themselves as competent in communicating are more willing to initiate communication (Cao, 2011; Bektaş, 2005; Hashimoto, 2002; Matsuoka, 2006; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Yashima, 2002). Their studies suggested that students who were less anxious and had high perceived confidence seemed to be more willing to communicate inside the classroom.

In the Turkish context, Bektaş (2005) found in her study that students perceived themselves as more or less competent in speaking English. Similar to her study, which revealed a direct relationship between students' willingness to communicate and their attitude toward the international community, and perceived linguistic self-confidence, Atay and Kurt (2009), too, found a strong positive correlation between perceived competence and L2 WTC in the Turkish setting. In some other studies, it was also found that students who perceived themselves as competent in communicating are more willing to initiate communication (Cao, 2011; Hashimoto, 2002; Matsuoka, 2006; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Yashima, 2002). Their studies suggested that students who were less anxious and had high perceived confidence seemed to be more willing to communicate inside the classroom.

As for the qualitative aspect of the study, the analysis of the qualitative data implies that among 26 students majority (76.92%) expressed willingness to communicate in English. Self-confidence was seen to be an effective factor that contributed to students' WTC in English. Besides, from the quotations of the participants it was found that they had integrative motivation, which also plays a role in the frequency of L2 use. Most of the students (69.23%) did not express any willingness to communicate in English with teachers because their teachers seemed to be critical and intolerant to their mistakes.

Wen and Clemént (2003) made a distinction between desire and willingness and in their WTC model stated that the students may have the desire to communicate but are effectively unprepared, which results in unwillingness to communicate. In the study, it was seen that 3 students out of 13, who were not willing to communicate in English in the class actually, had desire to communicate but they experienced a lot of anxiety, and consequently, they showed unwillingness.

Related to the factors which promote or hinder their motivation, students expressed that they would like to communicate in classes where their friends who were more competent in speaking English, sincere, and willing to communicate with them eagerly. It was also revealed that most of the students are of opinion that they do not want to have friends who are too critical about their mistakes, demotivate them during class room activities, and insult them during their presentations or class performance. They expect positive attitudes from their

instructors and want them to employ different methodologies and approaches in the classes to motivate them.

## Conclusion

Students' overall WTC in English was found to be between moderate and high. It was also a good result to observe that there were no items on the scale which received a low level of WTC in English both inside and outside. As for the qualitative aspect of the study, a majority of the students expressed WTC in English. This finding was parallel to the findings of the quantitative analyses results, which indicated that the WTC in English of the survey students was found to be between moderate and high. Additionally, when the context type was considered, both inside and outside the class, students preferred to communicate in small groups rather than giving presentations or talking in large groups. According to the receiver types, it was observed that ELT students preferred to communicate in English with friends and acquaintances rather than with foreigners in and out the classes. Teacher as an interlocutor type received the lowest score in this category. It is probable that the students felt they need to be tentative while communicating with their teachers since teachers are evaluators and assess the performance of the students. The results also demonstrate that students had a high level of motivational intensity and desire to learn English. Almost all of the students believed in the importance of English, and are determined to improve their English after graduation. However, it was revealed that some students find their studies or preparation for the class insufficient. It is important that these participants have to take actions in advance to improve themselves and become competent teachers and fluent speakers of English when they are under-graduates.

In the study, it was revealed that students had positive attitudes as well as negative attitudes towards international groups. The students' interest in foreign countries was determined as medium, but not as high level. Related to the integrative orientations, students were found to have highly positive attitudes toward different cultures. Similar to the findings of the previous results, overall, the participants' self-perceived communication competence, inside and outside the classroom, according to the persons and context were observed to be moderate.

In terms of the relationship among independent variables and WTC, it was seen that a positive, significant correlation with the in-class WTC and SPCC existed. Besides, a negative correlation at the medium level was observed between in-class WTC and anxiety. As for the correlation between students' out-class WTC in English, and self-perceived communication competence, a positive and significant correlation was observed. The correlation between students' personality and willingness to communicate in English was relatively weak and positive both inside, and outside the classroom. When the levels related to these factors increases, their WTC in English are likely to increase. It can be said that other variables, too, need to be increased, which are likely to increase students' WTC in English.

When the regression results were considered in the three models, it was concluded that the most significant predictor on students' in-class WTC level was self-confidence and that it provided a direct change on their WTC. When the regression results of the three models



related to the out-class WTC were examined, it was also observed that self-confidence created the biggest impact on the out-class WTC of the students. Besides, in the second and third models anxiety, attitude, and motivation influenced the out-class WTC. Therefore, efforts aiming at increasing students' self-confidence may have a direct impact on their in-class WTC. Besides, it should be considered that students' motivation levels, too, partly, have an effect on their WTC, so it is important to ensure students' motivation and keeping it at high level in terms of their in-class WTC.

Finally, the findings obtained from the qualitative data suggest that tutors should take affective factors into consideration and motivate their learners to use anxiety lowering strategies through developing positive attitudes, creating a friendly atmosphere, and arranging speaking activities and tasks increasing their self-confidence

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