



## Willingness to communicate of EFL learners in Turkish context



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### ABSTRACT

This study reports on findings of an investigation into English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' ( $N = 134$ ) perceptions of willingness to communicate (WTC) in Turkish context. The participants completed questionnaires on WTC, communication and affective factors. The findings revealed that 21.6% of the participants had high WTC, 13.4% had high communicative competence and 18.7% had high scores in communication apprehension. The results of structural equation modeling (SEM) also indicated that communication competence and communication apprehension were the strong predictors of WTC while motivational factors indirectly influenced WTC. The proposed model for WTC accounted for 63% of the variance in WTC. The findings of this study will be beneficial for curriculum development, teacher education, teaching and learning foreign languages, and also for English teachers to unfold the factors affecting WTC, more specifically in teacher training programs where the first seeds of change and willingness to communicate must be sown.

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### 1. Introduction

Research into second language communication has established that some second or foreign language (L2) learners with high levels of linguistic competence remain reticent L2 speakers, while others with limited competence can speak incessantly (Baghaei, Dourakhshan, & Salavati, 2012). In other words, having a high level of communicative competence does not necessarily guarantee learners' performance and frequency of communication in a L2. Dörnyei (2005, p. 207) argues that "it is not uncommon to find people who tend to avoid entering L2 communication situations even if they possess a high level of communicative competence". Given that communication is an indispensable part of L2 acquisition, MacIntyre and Charos (1996) argue that whatever the purpose of language learning might be, e.g., meeting new people, traveling, experiencing other cultures, or even using language in one's job, the primary reason for language learning often is to be able to use language to communicate.

A significant body of research has already established the importance of individual differences (IDs) in second language acquisition (SLA) research (Andreou, Andreou, & Vlachos, 2004, 2006; Andreou & Galantomos, 2009; Andreou, Vlachos, & Andreou, 2005, 2006; Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). IDs refer to characteristics or traits which differentiate individuals from each other and seem to prevent the precise formulation of general themes concerning how humans acquire a particular language aspect over time (Dörnyei, 2005). Likewise, Andreou et al. (2006) argue that the way people learn and succeed in language study

is greatly influenced by individual differences. One of the ID variables which has been the subject of intensive research in second language (L2) research is willingness to communicate (WTC).

The willingness to communicate (WTC) construct was originally proposed to identify the trait-like personality that people reveal when communicating in their first language (McCroskey & Baer, 1985). Given that there might be some variables other than language aptitude and competence that would otherwise explain WTC in a L2, this construct was later applied to L2 context to explore the factors contributing to L2 learners' psychological readiness to initiate communication (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998).

However, over the last two decades the focus of substantial research on WTC has been mainly Western context, especially the US and Canada (e.g., Clément, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod, 2001; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan, 2003). Later, this challenge was taken up as an independent background variable (Dörnyei, 2002; Kormos & Dörnyei, 2004). Further research into WTC has also been conducted in Japan (Hashimoto, 2002; Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004); in China (Peng, 2007; Xie, 2011); in Iran (Baghaei et al., 2012; Ghonsooly, Khajavy, & Asadpour, 2012); and in Turkey (Bektas-Cetinkaya, 2009).

Scholars suggest that conversational interaction is an essential part of learning a L2 (Mackey, 1999). It is also suggested that WTC is "the most immediate determinant of L2 use" (Clément et al., 2003, p. 191). Thus, a fundamental goal of L2 instruction should be to produce learners who are willing to use the language for authentic communication (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Undoubtedly, generating L2 WTC as the primary goal of L2 instruction (MacIntyre et al., 2003) can help produce more active learners. In other words, higher levels of L2 WTC greatly

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contribute to L2 development and successful communication in a variety of L2 communication contexts. These potential advantages of L2 WTC provide the necessary impetus for the scholars to vigorously investigate various variables and antecedents underlying the construct in language study.

Notwithstanding much research on L2 WTC around the globe, it has not taken much consideration in Turkey in secondary or tertiary education. Thus, this study sought to examine English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' WTC at a Turkish state university. The main purpose was to explore the probable relationships among communication factors, i.e. communication apprehension (CA) and self-perceived communication competence (SPCC), affective factors, i.e. integrativeness, attitudes towards the learning situation, motivation, instrumental orientation, ideal L2 self as predictor variables and L2 WTC. The significance of this study lies in its theoretical contribution to the L2 WTC construct and its pedagogical implications for teaching English and teacher education in the Turkish EFL context.

### 1.1. Willingness to communicate in L2 (L2 WTC)

L2 WTC was defined by MacIntyre et al. (1998) as “a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2” (p. 547). It is indeed a multi-faceted construct that integrates affective, social-psychological, linguistic, and communicative variables and can describe, explain, and predict language learners' communicative behavior in a L2. A distinction is often made between personality trait WTC and situational or state level WTC. According to McCroskey and Baer (1985), the trait level WTC refers to a learner's stable personalities or ‘enduring influences’ that represent no fluctuations across different contexts. The situational level WTC, however, is regarded as a situation-specific variable which is a transient influence dependent on a specific context and open to changes across situations (MacIntyre et al., 1998). MacIntyre, Babin, and Clément (1999) argue that trait-level and situational level WTC are complementary and could be integrated in second language acquisition (SLA). In addition, the trait-like WTC has a preparatory role in L2 communication milieu, while state-level or situational WTC empowers language learners to initiate communication within a specific context (Xie, 2011).

Research in SLA indicates that there are many factors that directly and indirectly influence one's L2 WTC including introversion, self-esteem, communication competence (skills), communication apprehension, and cultural diversity. These factors, or antecedents of WTC, are considered to be central to successful language learning (McCroskey & Richmond, 1987). It is also argued that teachers' teaching style and their proper feedback during teacher–student interaction can influence language learners' communication behavior. Zarrinabadi's (2014) study with Iranian students indicated that teaching factors including teachers' wait time, error correction, decision on the topic, and support influence learners' WTC in English.

### 1.2. Self-perceived communication (communicative) competence (SPCC)

An individual's perception of his/her communication competence is regarded as having great impact on WTC (McCroskey & Richmond, 1987). This suggests that one's perceived level of communication may be more important than his/her actual capability to communicate. Barraclough, Christophel, and McCroskey's (1988) assert that “it is what a person thinks he/she can do not what he/she actually could do which impacts the individual's behavioral choices” (p. 188). Therefore, an individual's unwillingness to communicate may be attributed to both a lack of linguistic self-confidence and communicative competence. Current research seems to validate the view that perceived communicative competence has great potential to predict L2 WTC (e.g., Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Hashimoto, 2002).

### 1.3. Perceived communication apprehension

Communication apprehension (CA) concerns an individual's anxious feelings about communication. Barraclough et al. (1988) define it as “an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication with another person or persons” (p. 188). McCroskey (1997) maintains that CA is both traitlike and statelike. Research on CA in SLA has shown that people with high levels of fear or anxiety regarding communication often prefer to avoid or withdraw from communication in a L2 (Dörnyei, 2005; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). Indeed, CA is negatively correlated with language achievement and WTC (McCroskey & McCroskey, 2002). MacIntyre and Charos (1996, p. 6) too assert that reduced desire to communicate is “one of the strongest, most reliable effects” of CA.

### 1.4. Integrativeness

According to Gardner's (1985) socioeducational model of L2 acquisition, the integrativeness and attitudes to the learning situations are the two basic attitudes deeply rooted in sociocultural environment. MacIntyre and Charos (1996) define integrativeness as an individual's “desire to learn a second language to meet and communicate with members of the target language community” (p. 4). Further, Yashima et al. (2004) argue that the degree of integrativeness correlates with successful L2 learning.

Some researchers (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Hashimoto, 2002; Yashima, 2002) now question the applicability of the concept of integrativeness in L2 learning when there is no specific target language community or reference group with which to be identified. English is now taught along with other subjects in schools all over the world. In the context of Turkey, for instance, Ministry of National Education (MoNE) (2013) has already reframed English teaching curriculum and designed a new instructional program for 2nd–8th grades. This implies that if the curricular reframing continues at the present rate, within a decade we may witness a tremendous decline in the number of EFL learners in this country. Therefore, it is no surprise to see that the notion of integrativeness is being used to refer to international outlook or posture (Hashimoto, 2002; Yashima, 2002) and international community.

### 1.5. Instrumental orientation

In L2 learning, orientation refers to reasons for learning the L2. These reasons play a pivotal role in setting goals that will thrust and sustain motivation for language achievement. Orientations are instrumental “when pragmatic and utilitarian reasons are important, such as getting a better job or pursuing a higher level of education in the L2” (Ortega, 2009, p. 173). Thus, a core aspect of the instrumental orientation entails the motivation that a learner has to learn a L2 to get a better job, earn more money (financial appeal or increased salary), and receive better grades. Clément and Kruidenier (1983) maintain that social milieu plays an important role in one's orientations towards learning a L2. Research into the role of orientations in L2 learning and WTC (MacIntyre et al., 2001; Zarrinabadi & Abdi, 2011) has provided ample evidence that there is a strong correlation between language learning orientations and WTC inside and outside of the classroom.

### 1.6. Attitudes towards learning situations

Attitudes towards L2, its community, and speakers may increase or moderate the motivation for language learning. Attitudes towards the learning situation refer to the language learners' evaluation of the language teacher, the course and curriculum (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Hashimoto, 2002). Attitudes towards the learning situation contribute to the learners' level of motivation. These attitudes may come from collective values, beliefs, attitudes from communities they participate in such as classroom, family, mainstream community and institutions,

and the sociocultural milieu (Gardner, 1985; Ortega, 2009). According to Gardner, Masgoret, and Tremblay (1999), past school experiences and attitudes emerging from the sociocultural milieu have great causal effect on shaping language learning motivation. Hashimoto (2002) also observes that attitudes towards learning a language strongly influence perceived L2 competence and willingness to communicate in formal situations.

### 1.7. Motivation

Motivation is of great importance in SLA and “provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 65). Dörnyei also states that factors underlying motivation can override the aptitude effect on the individual variability in language learning achievement.

From social psychological perspective, Gardner's (1985, 2001) socioeducational theory posits that motivational factors such as integrativeness and instrumental orientations are the major incentives for L2 learning. The desire or willingness to be identified with the L2 community or acculturation (Schuman, 1986) greatly influences motivation towards a L2. From a poststructuralist perspective, motivation to learn a L2 is regarded as ‘investment’ in the target language (TL) which will eventually end up with increased cultural capital (Norton, 2000). Norton's (2001) ‘imagined community’ sheds more light on the interpretation of integrativeness and willingness to be identified with a L2 community. It also contributed a lot to solve the identity problems of language learners with greater implications for non-native English teachers (Demirezen, 2007) in teacher education programs.

From a psychological perspective, Dörnyei and Csizér's (2002) new theoretical framework of ‘possible selves’ posits that motivation to learn a L2 and the desire to be identified with the L2 community are better to be explained by the process of identification within the language learners' self-concept, rather than identification with the target language group. That is, in the world with varieties of Englishes, integrativeness in Gardenerian tradition may not aptly characterize language learners' desire to learn a L2. From a motivational perspective, linguistic self-confidence theory (Clément and Kruidenier, 1985), self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002) with its three interrelated substrates, i.e. *intrinsic*, *extrinsic* and *integrative* (Noels, 2003), and socioeducational theory play a crucial role in learning a L2 in both English as a second and foreign language (ESL/EFL) contexts. They also have the potential to determine the learners' WTC and the degree of acculturation and identification with the target language community or international community (Yashima, 2002). A significant body of research in SLA (Bektas-Cetinkaya, 2012; Ghonsooly et al., 2012) has shown that motivation has bearings on WTC.

### 1.8. Ideal L2 self

Dörnyei (2005, 2009) proposed the construct of the L2 Motivational Self System composed of the ideal L2 self, the ought-to self, and the L2 learning experience. Dörnyei (2005, p. 106) defines the ideal L2 self as the “L2-specific facet of one's ideal self.” It is indeed a central dimension of the construct of L2 motivation that includes traditional motives of both integrativeness and instrumentality. The ought-to L2 self relates to controlling and regulating possible negative outcomes and comprises more extrinsic or non-internalized instrumental motives. The L2 learning experience is connected with actual learning process and “concerns situated ‘executive’ motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience” (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29).

Dörnyei's (2005) new theoretical framework greatly draws upon the theory of possible selves and Higgins' (1998) discrepancy theory which includes promotion/prevention dimensions of motivation. Indeed, the new framework combines the effects of two significant developments in psychology, i.e. psychological research on self, and L2 field,

i.e., research on integrative motivation or integrativeness in SLA (Dörnyei, 2009). Although the L2 motivational self-system is at its emerging state, it has attracted many scholars in the field of L2 research. Some studies (e.g., Kim, 2009; Noels, 2009) have indicated that the ideal L2 self has more explanatory power with respect to learners' L2 communication than integrativeness.

### 1.9. The current study

Despite the substantial research studies conducted to investigate the factors that might moderate on the L2 WTC, there still exists a huge empirical research gap in English language teaching, particularly teacher education programs in the Turkish context. As English language teaching and learning in Turkey is undergoing profound reform, and MoNE's (2013) new curriculum perspective on promoting English language teaching, it is assumed that the present study would yield more useful insights into English as a second/foreign language teacher education programs and curriculum development. Therefore, the main purpose of the current study is to unfold the perceived level of L2 WTC among EFL learners majoring in English as a foreign language in the Turkish context. Next, we examine the variance in L2 WTC and factors underlying it in terms of gender differences. Finally, we attempt to find out whether the present study replicates the findings of the previous work (e.g., MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Yu, 2008) regarding the relationship between communication and affective factors and L2 WTC. It is hypothesized that there will be significant positive correlation between the variables under investigation and that the variance in participants' L2 WTC can be predicted by communication and affective factors.

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Setting and participants

The present study was conducted in an EFL teacher education program at a major state university in Turkey. A total of 134 EFL learners (male:  $N = 34$  and female:  $N = 100$ ) enrolled in the program voluntarily participated in the study and gave consent for data collection. The dominance of EFL female teachers in the program can be attributed to the nature of course, not to educational system. That is, the teaching of English as a profession is mostly favored by females in Turkey. The participants ranged in age from 19 to 22 ( $M = 19.93$ ,  $SD = .85$ ).

### 2.2. Measures

The data for this study were collected using eight different scales and subscales that are briefly described.

#### 2.2.1. Willingness to communicate

The willingness to communicate (WTC) scale (McCroskey, 1992) was used to assess the participants' WTC. It is a 20-item probability-estimate scale. The participants indicated the percentage of times they would choose to communicate in each type of situation, from 0 (never) to 100 (always). The internal consistency of the scale was  $\alpha = .94$ .

#### 2.2.2. Self-perceived communication (communicative) competence

The Self-Perceived Communicative Competence Scale (SPCC; McCroskey & McCroskey, 1988) was used to measure the participants' perceived competence in English. It is a 12-item probability estimate scale which assesses the average percentage of time (ranging from 0% to 100%) that respondents felt competent in using English to speak in L2 situations. The internal consistency of the scale was  $\alpha = .91$ .

#### 2.2.3. Perceived communication apprehension

The Perceived Communication Apprehension Scale (PRCA-24; McCroskey, 2005) was used to assess perceived level of communication

apprehension. The respondents rated a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) = Strongly Disagree to (5) = Strongly Agree. The total score for the PRCA is simply obtained by adding sub-scores together. The internal consistency was  $\alpha = .93$ .

#### 2.2.4. Integrativeness

Integrativeness was measured using Integrative scale (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996) with three single-item measures of integrative orientation, attitude towards the target language group, and interest in foreign languages. The internal consistency of the scale was  $\alpha = .79$  in the present study.

#### 2.2.5. Attitudes towards learning situation

Attitudes towards learning situation were measured by two items from MacIntyre and Charos (1996) related to the attitude towards the language teacher and attitude towards the course. The internal consistency of the scale was  $\alpha = .75$ .

#### 2.2.6. Motivation

Motivation was measured using three single-item (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996) scale assessing the desire to learn English, motivational intensity, and attitude towards learning English. The internal consistency of the scale was  $\alpha = .65$  both in the original and in the present study.

#### 2.2.7. Instrumental orientation

Instrumental orientation was measured by two items (Hashimoto, 2002; Yu, 2008), one measuring learning English for getting a good job and the other assessing future career. The internal consistency of the scale was  $\alpha = .77$ .

#### 2.2.8. Ideal L2 self

The 10-item ideal L2 self measure (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010) was used to assess the participants' desired L2 self-images or their views of themselves as successful L2 learners in the future, with responses to the statements on a 5-point scale. The internal consistency of the scale was  $\alpha = .90$ .

### 2.3. Procedures for data collection and analysis

The data for the present study were collected using questionnaires about the participants' WTC, communication apprehension, communication competence, and affective factors constraining communication. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages, and means) were used to characterize the participants' perceived levels of WTC, SPCC, and PRCA. Independent-samples *t* test was conducted to find out the role of gender differences in WTC.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was conducted using IBM AMOS 21 to examine the interrelated relationships in a single model. AMOS uses several types of indexes that determine goodness of fit in a model. These include Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ), normalized chi square (NC) or  $\chi^2/df$ , and other important indices such as GFI, AGFI, CFI and RMSEA. The acceptable cut-off point for GFI, AGFI, CFI is .92 and above. As for RMSEA, the cut-off point is .08 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Table 1 indicates the characteristics of the revised model of L2 WTC for EFL learners in the Turkish context and Fig. 1 diagrammatically shows the finalized version of the model.

**Table 1**  
Goodness of fit indices.

Model	$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	$\chi^2/df$	RMR	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RMSEA
	14.081	13	1.08	1.96	.97	.94	.99	.02

Note:  $\chi^2$  = chi-square; *df* = degree of freedom; RMR = root mean square residual; GFI = goodness-of-fit index; AGFI = adjusted goodness-of-fit index; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation.

During the model modification process, the insignificant variable 'anxiety' was deleted from the model since no significant path was found between anxiety and L2WTC and other variables in the model. Then, integrativeness and ideal L2 self were put under L2 Motivational System (MS) 1 as an unobserved or a latent variable and instrumental orientation and attitudes towards leaning situation (ATLS) were put under the latent variable of L2 MS 2. It should be noted that the L2 MS was used here as an umbrella term for the ease of reference to motivational factors; therefore, it does not represent the L2 motivational self-system in the same sense and complexity proposed by Dörnyei (2005).

### 3. Results

Our first goal was to explore perceptions of L2 WTC among EFL learners majoring in English as a foreign language in the Turkish context. Descriptive statistics for the perceived level of WTC, SPCC, and PRCA are presented in Table 2. As shown, 21.6% of the participants had high WTC, 13.4% had high SPCC, and 18.7% had high scores in PRCA, while more than 50% of their scores fall within moderate group. This suggests a satisfactory level of WTC since only 17% of the participants expressed low L2 WTC.

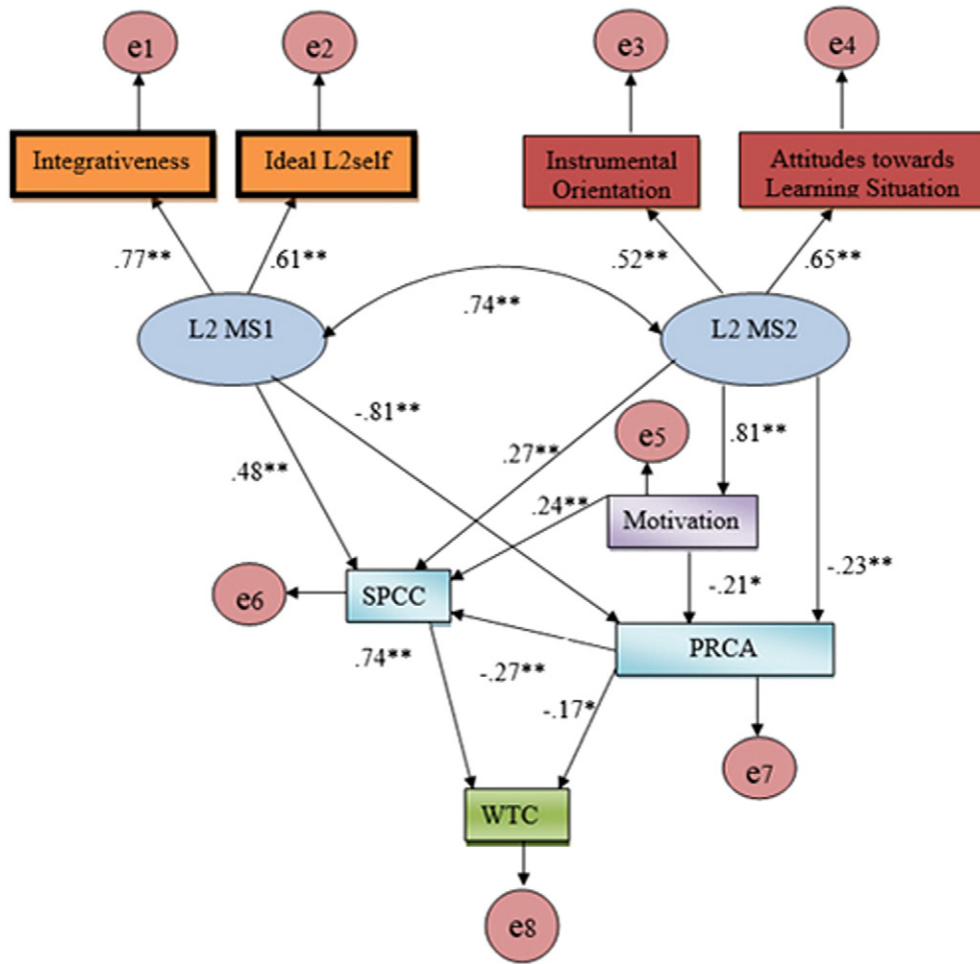
The second goal of the study was to examine the differences between male and female students in terms of all variables measured in the study. The results revealed statistically a significant gender difference only in PRCA,  $t(132) = -2.390$ ,  $p = 0.018$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . The highest mean score ( $M = 68.33$ ,  $SD = 14.63$ ) for PRCA was observed in females, while males had the lowest mean score ( $M = 61.38$ ,  $SD = 14.68$ ). Furthermore, males had higher mean scores in SPCC, integrativeness, ATLS and instrumental orientations, and WTC, while females had higher mean scores in motivation and the ideal L2 self.

The final goal of the study was to examine the interrelated relationship among communication and affective variables and L2 WTC. The structural equation modeling (SEM) showed a positive direct path from SPCC (regression coefficient = .74) to WTC and a significant negative path was found from PRCA (regression coefficient =  $-.17$ ) to WTC. Moreover, a negative path was obtained from PRCA (regression coefficient =  $-.21$ ) to SPCC.

The results showed no significant direct path from motivation to WTC. However, it indirectly exerted influence on L2 WTC through the mediation of communication apprehension and self-perceived communication competence. Similarly, no significant direct path was obtained from integrativeness and the ideal L2 self (MS) 1 to motivation and WTC. However, the results showed a positive significant relationship between integrativeness and the ideal L2 self and SPCC (regression coefficient = .48) on one hand and a negative significant path between these variables and PRCA (regression coefficient =  $-.81$ ) on the other. A strong correlation was also found between integrativeness and the ideal L2 self (MS1) and instrumental orientation and attitudes towards learning situation (MS2) as motivational factors ( $r = .74$ ). Additionally, the instrumental orientation and attitudes towards learning situation had no direct relationship with L2 WTC. However, it was directly connected to SPCC (regression coefficient = .27), PRCA (regression coefficient =  $-.23$ ) and motivation (regression coefficient = .81). Overall, integrativeness, the ideal L2 self, attitudes towards learning situation and instrumental orientations along with motivation account for 37% of the variance in PRCA and 40% in SPCC.

### 4. Discussion

The relationship between various individual difference variables and L2 WTC are well established (e.g., MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 1998; Yu, 2008). However, previous research has mainly relied on Gardner's (1985) socioeducational model of learning a L2, more specifically the integrative motivation construct. In this study, we were able to replicate the findings of the previous work; meanwhile, we extended them through using a recently developed motivational self-system



**Fig. 1.** L2 WTC model for EFL learners. Note: L2 MS 1&2 = L2 Motivational System; SPCC = Self-perceived Communicative Competence; PRCA = Perceived Communication Apprehension; WTC = Willingness to Communicate.

framework to find out if the ideal L2 self as a motivational variable can affect an individual's L2 WTC in an under-researched context of Turkey.

The results revealed that there was statistically a significant difference between male and female students only in PRCA. This implies that greater levels of communication apprehension might hinder speaking in English among females. Whereas males had higher mean scores in SPCC, WTC, integrativeness, ATLS and instrumental orientations, females had higher mean scores in motivation and the ideal L2 self, indicating that they are highly motivated and less anxious language learners and are more likely to cultivate their personal hopes, aspirations, wishes and any other attributes (Erten, 2014) related to their ideal L2 self (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009).

The results of SEM revealed significant positive direct path from SPCC to WTC, a significant negative path from PRCA (regression coefficient =  $-.17$ ) to WTC, and a negative path from PRCA (regression

coefficient =  $-.21$ ) to SPCC. That is, high levels of PRCA negatively affect one's communicative competence whereas higher levels of communicative competence enhance willingness to communicate in English. Therefore, SPCC was the strong predictor of WTC. These findings are congruent with those of other studies on WTC (Clément et al., 2003; Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Yashima, 2002; Yousef, Jamil, & Razak, 2012; Yu, 2008).

The results showed that motivation indirectly exerted influence on L2 WTC through the mediation of communication apprehension and self-perceived communication competence. This suggests that higher degrees of motivation may help them to lower their communication apprehension which also indirectly contributes to their communication competence and willingness to communicate in English. These results were similar to the findings of other studies (Ghonsooly et al., 2012; Kim, 2009; Yashima, 2002; Yu, 2008) that found an insignificant direct path from motivation to L2 WTC. Ghonsooly et al. (2012) also reported a direct path from motivation to L2 self-confidence (SPCC in the present study). However, this runs counter to MacIntyre and Clément (1996) and Hashimoto (2002) who found a significant path from motivation to L2 WTC. Therefore, it can be stated that motivation to learn English is by no means a propensity for WTC in English by itself. However, it can serve as a mediator between various factors contributing to L2 WTC.

The findings also showed no significant direct path from integrativeness and the ideal L2 self to motivation and WTC while they contributed significantly to the prediction of SPCC and PRCA. The findings emphasize that the degree to which a person shows willingness to be identified with L2 community and his/her ideal L2 self greatly affect his/her SPCC and PRCA. This may increase a person's self-

**Table 2**  
Descriptive statistics for participants' perceived levels of WTC, SPCC, and PRCA.

Variables	Rank	F	%	Mean	SD
WTC	High	29	21.6	1.95	.62
	Moderate	82	61.2		
	Low	23	17.2		
SPCC	High	18	13.4	2.08	.58
	Moderate	87	64.9		
	Low	29	21.6		
PRCA	High	25	18.7	1.96	.58
	Moderate	89	66.4		
	Low	20	14.9		

confidence in language learning and decrease communication apprehension, leading to successful communication. According to Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009, p. 4), “if proficiency in the target language is part and parcel of one’s ideal or ought-to self, this will serve as a powerful motivator to learn the language because of our psychological desire to reduce the discrepancy between our current and possible future selves”.

There was also a strong correlation between integrativeness and the ideal L2 self (MS1) and attitudes towards learning situation and instrumental orientations (MS2). Evidently, EFL learners are conscious of how to relate themselves to the international community in its new conceptualizations proposed by some researchers (Dörnyei, 2005; Yashima, 2002). The more they are aware of their possible selves or ideal L2 selves, and visualize themselves as “English-using selves” (Yashima et al., 2004), the more they will be motivated to communicate in English. These findings clearly unveil the true nature of WTC in English among the students. Overall, MS1, MS2, and motivation, i.e. affective factors, account for 37% of the variance in PRCA and 40% of variance in SPCC.

The findings of the present study emphasized that, from self perspective, it is the integrativeness coupled with ideal L2 self that greatly promotes communication competence and willingness to communicate among students not just the integrative motivation in Gardnerian tradition although integrative motivation still accounts for a great proportion of motivation among the participants. A possible explanation for these results may be the diminishing role of integrative motivation in navigating students towards authentic communication and language development. Dörnyei (2009, p. 25) asserts that “integrative motivation has played a rapidly diminishing role in L2 motivation research during the past decade, to the extent that currently few active motivation researchers include the concept in their research paradigms”.

The instrumental orientation and attitudes towards learning situations had no direct relationship with L2 WTC. However, they were directly connected to SPCC, PRCA, and motivation. This means that they indirectly exert influence on WTC. These findings are consistent with those of Yu’s (2008) study that revealed that ATLS, integrativeness and instrumental orientation were indirectly connected with L2WTC through the mediation of motivation and SPCC. Furthermore, compared with attitudes towards learning situation, instrumental orientation was found to be a stronger predictor of motivation. Bektas-Cetinkaya (2012) reported that the aim of most language learners in Turkish EFL context is to find a good job and join the international labor market.

## 5. Conclusion

The findings of this study showed that SPCC is the strongest factor that directly and positively influences EFL learners’ WTC in English. It is suggested, therefore, that L2 learners must be provided with more chances of strengthening their linguistic competence and communicative competence through increased opportunities for interaction. The opportunity for increased interaction and frequency of L2 use greatly affect one’s WTC in L2 (MacIntyre and Charos, 1996). Therefore, it is the task of teachers to create anxiety-free atmosphere in the classroom for interaction through designing tasks that are cognitively less demanding and psychologically safer.

The results showed that affective factors indirectly affect WTC in Turkish context. This indirect connection with WTC suggests that L2 motivation research should go beyond the confines of the traditional paradigm and investigate the motivation construct within a new ‘professional identity’ that puts more emphasis on the individuals’ future L2 selves or identities. It should value the ideal self which has the potential to regulate positive outcomes and help L2 learners to become professionally and personally successful in learning a second language (Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009).

Unfortunately, the present line of L2 research in Turkey (Engin, 2009; König, 2006) does not justice to the broader interpretation of the motivation to learn a L2 and, more specifically, to promote WTC in

English. Thus, research on motivation needs reframing and further research on WTC should look at the issue through the lenses of new developments, theories and models in the field. However, this reframing does not mean to throw out the baby with bathwater; rather, we should make use of past and present traditions of research in L2 motivation and WTC. To the researchers, the best place to start this change is teacher education programs and ELT departments. Curriculum designers should bear the brunt of designing programs which are more beneficial in promoting future English teachers’ understanding of their real or ideal selves and their communicative competence, making them professionally and personally competent and successful teachers.

Given that English as an international language is central to the worldwide communication, it is hoped that the findings of this study will be beneficial for curriculum development, teacher education, teaching and learning foreign languages, and English teachers in unfolding the factors affecting L2 WTC and strengthening their SPCC through using their acquired self-confidence and ideal L2 self, more specifically in teacher training programs where the first seeds of change and willingness to communicate must be sown. Therefore, findings of the current study have implications for language teaching and learning, especially in language learning environments where communicative language teaching is a widely used approach for teaching language. As stated earlier, communication is considered as the primary goal of language instruction (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). Therefore, teacher education programs should place much emphasis on developing communication skills and strategies in would be teachers since it is obvious that learners with higher levels of L2 WTC would benefit more from language instruction than those with lower levels of L2 WTC.

Although this study was conducted in the Turkish EFL context, the findings might have implications for other EFL contexts. Yet, the generalization of the results must be taken cautiously since exclusive self-reported data cannot assess frequency of L2 communication (MacIntyre, Burns, & Jessome, 2011). As seen, L2 WTC is a complex construct influenced by a vast variety of factors underlying it. It is also a context-specific phenomenon which varies according to learning environment. Thus, it is reasonable to claim that the results found in one context, e.g., second language acquisition context, might not necessarily be applicable to other contexts, e.g., foreign language context. Therefore, “a careful examination of what it means to learn a language in a particular context is necessary before applying a model developed in a different context” (Yashima, 2002, p. 62). Future research might approach the L2 WTC using mixed-method designs and from new perspectives such as L2 motivational self-system with all its complexity. Researchers should extend the scope of the study to include other factors such as personality traits with larger samples of participants from primary and secondary education.

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