



The Role of Motivation, Attitude and Ideal L2 Self in Predicting Willingness to Communicate in English in Turkish EFL Context¹

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ABSTRACT

Willingness to communicate (WTC), which is believed to be one of the main components of second language acquisition, has been the subject of many research studies that are conducted to investigate the factors affecting L2 learning. It has been revealed that no matter what the approach or technique followed in a language class is, many learners in an EFL context perceive the ability to effectively communicate in English as the most difficult skill to be developed. Therefore, the concept of willingness to communicate stands as an important research area for many researchers. The present study seeks to explore to the extent tertiary-level learners are willing to communicate in English and its relationship with individual affective factors including learners' motivation in learning English, attitude towards learning English and ideal L2 self. A group of 158 students enrolled at the School of Foreign Languages, Pamukkale University participated in the study. Data were collected through questionnaires. The results of the analysis revealed while learners had high ideal L2 self images and positive attitudes toward learning English, they were moderately willing to communicate in English and had moderate level of motivation. In addition, significant differences with respect to gender were found in learners' WTC in English and motivation. Pearson correlation coefficients analysis indicated learners' WTC in English was moderately correlated with ideal L2 self images, followed by a weak correlation between WTC and their motivation and attitude. Finally, ideal L2 self was found to be the only predictor of WTC in English in this specific context. Based on these findings, the study has presented pedagogical implications for English language classes. It can be recommended teachers consider learners' WTC, ideal L2 self, motivation and attitude as related constructs and take necessary steps for learners to achieve communicative competence in English, and prepare activities to enhance learners' ideal L2 self images, motivation, and attitude towards learning English in the class and incorporate these activities into curriculums of language teaching institutions in order to improve learners' WTC in English.

Keywords: Willingness to Communicate in English, Motivation for Learning English, Attitudes toward Learning English, Ideal L2 Self

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Türk EFL Bağlamında Motivasyon, Tutum ve İdeal Hedef Dil Benliği'nin İngilizce İletişim Kurma İsteğini Yordamadaki Rolü¹

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ÖZET

İkinci dil ediniminin ana bileşenlerinden biri olduğuna inanılan iletişim kurma isteği (WTC), ikinci bir dili öğrenmeyi etkileyen faktörleri araştırmak için yapılan birçok araştırmanın konusu olmuştur. Bir dil sınıfında uygulanan yaklaşım veya teknik ne olursa olsun, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen pek çok öğrenci, İngilizcede etkili bir şekilde iletişim kurma becerisini geliştirilmesi en zor beceri olarak algılamaktadır. Bu nedenle, iletişim kurma isteği kavramı, birçok araştırmacı için önemli bir araştırma alanıdır. Bu çalışma, üniversite öğrencilerinin İngilizce iletişim kurmaya ne kadar istekli olduklarını ve bunun, öğrencilerin İngilizce öğrenme motivasyonlarını, İngilizce öğrenmeye karşı tutumlarını ve ideal hedef dil benliğini içeren bireysel duygusal faktörlerle olan ilişkisini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmaya Pamukkale Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu'nda öğrenim görmekte olan 158 öğrenci katılmıştır. Veriler anket vasıtasıyla toplanmıştır. Analiz sonuçlarına göre, öğrencilerin ideal hedef dil benlikleri yüksek ve İngilizce öğrenmeye yönelik tutumları olumlu iken, İngilizce iletişim kurmaya orta düzeyde istekli oldukları ve orta düzeyde motivasyona sahip oldukları görülmüştür. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin İngilizce iletişim kurma isteğinde ve motivasyonlarında cinsiyete bağlı olarak önemli farklılıklar bulunmuştur. Pearson korelasyon katsayıları analizi, öğrencilerin İngilizce iletişim kurma isteğinin, ideal hedef dil benlikleriyle orta derecede, İngilizce öğrenme motivasyonları ve tutumları ile de zayıf düzeyde ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Son olarak, ideal hedef dil benliği, bu bağlamda İngilizce iletişim kurma isteğinin tek yordayıcısı olarak belirlenmiştir. Bulgulara dayanarak, bu çalışma İngilizce dil sınıfları için bazı pedagojik çıkarımları ortaya koymuştur. Öğretmenlerin, öğrencilerin İngilizce iletişim kurma isteklerini, ideal hedef dil benliklerini, motivasyonlarını ve tutumlarını birbiri ile ilgili yapılar olarak görmeleri ve öğrencilerin İngilizce iletişim yeterliliği kazanması için gerekli adımları atmaları ve öğrencilerin ideal hedef dil benliklerini, motivasyonlarını ve tutumlarını geliştirmeye yönelik faaliyetler hazırlamaları ve öğrencilerin İngilizce iletişim kurma isteklerini arttırmak için bu faaliyetleri dil öğretim kurumlarının müfredatlarına dâhil etmeleri önerilebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İngilizce İletişim Kurma İsteği, İngilizce Öğrenme Motivasyonu, İngilizce Öğrenmeye Karşı Tutumlar, İdeal Hedef Dil Benliği.

1. Introduction

As a result of the dissatisfaction with the audiolingual and grammar-translation methods in the field of second or foreign language education and the demand arising from the society to use the language, the idea of learning and teaching a second language through communication started to appear among educationalists and researchers. Since 1970s, there has been considerable research body on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in SLA, which puts the learner and active use of language at the centre of teaching and learning a second language. In CLT approach, learners' having communicative competence is considered as the ultimate goal of learning a language, but this goal is believed to be achieved via interaction as well (Dörnyei, 2005). It can be stated that attainment of success in acquiring a second language is highly based on using the language for interaction purposes.

However, it is not uncommon to see many learners complaining about not being able to use the language communicatively. The reasons underlying the inability to use the target language for communicative purposes have been one of the research focuses for researchers. Different factors have been proposed as affecting one's communicative competence. One of these concepts has been willingness to communicate (WTC), which is described as the "individual's readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2" (MacIntyre, Cle'ment, Dörnyei, and Noels, 1998, p.547). McCroskey and Richmond (1990) consider WTC as a personality quality and define it as "variability in talking behaviour" (p.72). Ellis (2008) puts forward that WTC is considered as the "immediate antecedent of communication behaviour" (p.697) and determined by different factors as well. Also, Dörnyei (2005) indicates "WTC is a means and an end at the same time" (p.210). Thus, it can be inferred that in order to gain competence in a second language, one must use the language actively. In addition, "high willingness is associated with increased frequency and amount of communication, which

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in turn are associated with a variety of positive communication outcomes" (McCroskey and Richmond, 1996, p. 153).

WTC is significant for language learners and attaining success in the target language, so studying this concept as the focus of many studies might prove to be beneficial for EFL classroom contexts. The more the antecedents of WTC are understood, the more teachers can enhance learners' ability to communicate in the target language.

MacIntyre et al. (1998) developed a multilayered pyramid model of WTC, which integrates linguistic and psychological variables in its layers forming one's behavioural intention of WTC. Inspired from this model, many researchers investigated WTC construct in relation to these variables. In the literature, many constructs have been proposed as direct or indirect predictors of WTC in a language like communication anxiety and perceived communication competence (Clement et al., 2003, Yashima, 2002; Hahimoto, 2002), motivation, international posture (Yashima, 2002), attitude (Dörnyei and Kormos, 2000), socio-economic factors (Hu, 2003), motivation (MacIntyre and Clement, 1996), etc. In addition, contextual variables including the place where the communication is performed, the time when it is realized, the interactants involved in the communication can also have an effect on one's willingness to communicate in a certain situation independently of other variables. This does not mean that these antecedents certainly cause variability in one's WTC, but may have an impact on the construct.

Some of the concepts that have received increasing attention from the researchers in relation with WTC include learners' motivation, ideal L2 self and attitude toward learning a language besides many others (Yousef, Jamil, and Razak, 2013; Lahuerta, 2014). In several studies, motivation was found to be a predictor of WTC (MacIntyre and Clement, 1996; Yashima, 2002). Gardner (1985) defines motivation as "the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experiences in this activity" (p.10). Motivation is an essential part of language learning process 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). Learners who are more motivated to learn a second language are believed to have higher WTC as well. Gardner (1985) developed a motivational model in second language learning called the socio-educational model. According to this model, integrative motivation is seen the primary impulsion for learning another language besides other variables. Motivation is usually divided into two types, as integrative and instrumental. Integrative motivation, which is the base of Gardner's motivational model, concerns one's positive orientation toward the L2 community and strong wish to affiliate with them, and indicates individuals' respect for the target L2 society and openness to their lifestyle (Dörnyei, 2005). It can be stated that integrative motivation is based on learners' interest in the language itself and the target L2 society. Instrumental motivation is concerned with the desire to learn a language to obtain some gains like job opportunities, increased salary, prestige etc. (Saville-Troike, 2006). Motivation, either instrumental or integrative is not something static, it may vary depending on the task, context, learning situation etc. Studies conducted on the relationship between motivation and WTC behaviours have revealed the influence of motivation on WTC directly (Hashimoto, 2002) or indirectly (Bektaş-Çetinkaya, 2005, 2007).

The concept of possible selves, developed by Dörnyei (2005) is proposed as one of main factors affecting motivation. Possible selves are described as "specific representations of one's self in future states, involving thoughts, images and senses and are in many ways the manifestations or personalized carriers, of one's goals and aspiration" (Dörnyei, 2005, p.99). Thus, it can be stated that positive possible self provides learners with the impetus to acquire the target language by creating visions of what could happen provided the desired goals are achieved. The more positive one's self image, the more motivated they become. Higgins (1987) introduced one type of possible self called ideal self, which indicates representation of the qualities that the individual would like to possess in himself or herself. Following Higgins's (1987) possible self theory, Dörnyei (2005) proposed the concepts of ideal L2 self and ought to L2 self in the conceptualization of motivational self-system. Ideal L2 self is defined by Dörnyei (2005) as "L2-specific facet of one's ideal self" (p.105) and is considered as a powerful resource for motivation while learning L2 due to strong wishes to decrease the gap between our actual and ideal selves. This dimension of selves is correlated with integrative motivation. Ought to L2 self is defined as one's beliefs about the attributes one ought to have so as to prevent any unwanted consequences. This dimension of selves is usually correlated with instrumental or extrinsic motivational factors. In recent years, L2 learning motivation has been investigated in relation to L2 Motivational Self System, including ideal L2

self, ought to L2 self, and L2 learning experience as the dimensions, in differing contexts. Among these three dimensions, ideal L2 self could be seen as the main component of L2 learning motivation (Dörnyei Csizér, and Németh, 2006). Ideal L2 self, a concept gaining increasing attention from researchers in the last two decades, has been revealed to influence learners' language success (Kim and Kim, 2014; Tort Calvo, 2015), motivation (Kim, 2010), and willingness to communicate (Öz, Demirezen, and Pourfeiz, 2015).

Attitudes toward the L2 being learnt is also believed to influence the language performance and learning process on the whole. The concept of attitude has also drawn too much attention from researchers in order to understand the effect of the concept on language attainment. Cambridge dictionary defines attitude as "a feeling or opinion about something or someone, or a way of behaving that is caused by this". Brown (2001) suggests that attitude is mostly shaped by affective factors like feelings or relationships. Therefore, it can be stated that attitudes are both cognitive and affective. Just like motivation, attitude is also not a static concept. It starts developing at early ages and is influenced by different factors involving home culture, target culture, parents, peers etc. (Elyıldırım and Ashton, 2006). Attitude is seen in relation to other individual variables like anxiety, motivation, self confidence etc. One of the mostly researched individual variables in relation with attitude is motivation. Gardner (1985) considered attitude as a component of motivation and included the concept of attitude in his motivation model. In addition, to Brown (2001) "second language learners benefit from positive attitudes and that negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation and, in all likelihood, because of decreased input and interaction, to unsuccessful attainment of proficiency" (p.181). It is supposed that if learners have positive attitudes toward the language they are learning, learning that language gets easier (Chamber, 1999). Since motivation is considered as one of the main antecedents of willingness to communicate, and attitude is such for motivation, the relation between attitude and WTC is of great interest to researchers in order to contribute to language classes. Revealing students' attitudes toward the target language can help teachers in their teaching process. Researchers have been trying to explore the relationship between attitude and several concepts like language achievement (Gardner and Lambert, 1972, Haitema, 2002; Saracaloğlu, 2000), motivation (Brown, 2000; Kim, 2004; Al-Mamun, Rahman, Rahman, and Hossaim, 2012), willingness to communicate (Yashima, 2004; Bektaş-Çetinkaya, 2007; Yu, 2009; Şener, 2014).

1.1. Purpose of the study

The principal purpose of the study was to examine the probable correlations between WTC in English and individual affective factors, including ideal L2 self, motivation, and attitudes towards the learning English as predictor variables. Since many studies propose that motivation is an immediate antecedent of WTC, and ideal L2 self and attitude toward learning a language are considered in close relation with motivation, the present study aimed to reveal the direct and indirect relationship between these individual concepts and WTC.

1.2. Significance of the study

The findings of this study are believed to contribute to our understanding of WTC in English construct, which is an essential concept for language classrooms. Since it provides opportunities to predict learners' communication orientation and promote their interactional skills in the EFL context, the study may provide implications for EFL context, teacher education in EFL context, teachers, material designers, etc. Since the concept of WTC and the other individual affective concepts including motivation, attitude and ideal L2 self are all complex terms to track concretely, there is still a gap in the relevant literature regarding the research studies focusing on this crucial relationship.

1.3. Research Questions

1. What are the Turkish EFL learners' perceptions of their willingness to communicate in English, motivation, attitude, and ideal L2 self?
2. Do female and male students differ from each other in terms of their willingness to communicate, motivation, attitude and ideal L2 self?
3. Are there gender-related proficiency level differences on students' willingness to communicate in English?

4. What is the nature of the relationship between Turkish EFL students' willingness to communicate in English and motivation, attitude and ideal L2 self?
5. What is the best predictor of Turkish EFL students' willingness to communicate in English?

2. Method

The present study investigated to what extent tertiary-level EFL learners with differing proficiency levels are willing to communicate and to examine whether learners' motivation, attitudes, and perceptions of ideal L2 self are potential factors that affect their willingness to communicate in English. Data of the study were collected quantitatively through a questionnaire having 5 different sections.

2.1. Setting and participants

The study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages at a medium-size state university in the spring term of the 2016-2017 academic year. A total of 158 EFL students aged 18-25 ($M= 19.51$, $SD= 1.23$) and enrolled at the School of Foreign Languages participated in the study. Among them, 52.5% of the participants (83) were male while 47.5% of them (75) were female. The participants of this study included learners from a range of disciplines with differing levels of competence in English. A total of 55 participants were low-intermediate learners, 88 of them were at the intermediate level and 15 of them were upper-intermediate level learners. All the participants had been studying English at the School of Foreign Languages at Pamukkale University for eight months. When the majors of the participants were examined, it was revealed that the 75.3% of the students (119) were studying at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences and 24.7% of them (39) were enrolled at the Faculty of Engineering. The participants were not selected among the researcher's own classes to ensure reliability. They were included in the study through convenience sampling method.

2.2. Instruments

Data were collected through a questionnaire made up of five different sections, namely demographic information, Willingness to communicate Scale (WTCS), Ideal L2 Self Measurement, and L2 Learning Motivation Scale and Attitudes toward learning English Scale. The questionnaire was translated into Turkish by different experts in the field of English language teaching in order to ensure clear understanding by the students. After reviewing the different translations, a draft version of translated instruments was prepared by the researcher and expert opinion was sought to prevent problems that might occur due to misunderstandings resulting from the mismatch between the original items and the translated ones. After getting feedback from an expert in the field of English language teaching, final version of the instrument was given.

The first section "Personal Information Form" seeks to obtain demographic information of the participants. Students are asked to give some demographic data with respect to their language proficiency, gender, age and departments through gap-filling questions (see Ap. A). The following sections of the questionnaire are addressed separately in the following parts.

2.2.1. Willingness to Communicate Scale (WTCS)

Willingness to communicate scale developed by McCroskey (1992) was used in the current study to explore how willing participants were to communicate in English. The scale consisted of 20 items originally, twelve of which were related to the concern and eight of which were used as fillers. The items were prepared based on four communication contexts (public speaking, talking in meetings, group discussions, and interpersonal conversations) and three types of receivers (strangers, acquaintances, and friends). It is believed that an individual's WTC in one context or with a certain receiver type is also related to WTC in other context and with other types of receiver. Participants were asked to indicate, using a number from 0 to 100, the percentage of the time they would prefer to communicate in each situation. The internal consistency of the scale was $\alpha = .94$. The higher learners score on WTCS, the more willing they are to communicate in English.

2.2.2. Ideal L2 Self Measurement

Ideal L2 Self measure developed by Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) was employed in the study to examine "L2-specific facet of one's 'ideal self'" (Dörnyei, 2009: 29). The measure has ten items to evaluate how learners image themselves on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The internal consistency of the Ideal L2 Self Measurement was $\alpha = .90$. The higher the scores of the learners on the scale, the higher ideal L2 self images they have for themselves as language learners.

2.2.3. L2 Learning Motivation Scale

L2 learning motivation scale consists of two subscales, namely Desire to learn English and Motivation intensity. The higher the scores of the learners on the scale, the more motivated learners are for learning English.

2.2.4. Motivation Intensity

A total of six items on motivation intensity ($\alpha = .74$), developed by Gardner (1985) and adapted by Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2005), was employed in the study. The original scale had a multiple-choice format, but in the present study a 7-point scale was used following Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide and Shimizu (2004). Participants were required to indicate their level of agreement with each statement by using a number from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

2.2.5. Desire to learn English

The second component of motivation scale, developed by Gardner (1985) and adapted by Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2005), made up of six items ($\alpha = .60$) to reveal participants' desire to learn English. In contrast to the original multiple-choice format, a 7-point scale was employed in the current study following Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide and Shimizu (2004). Respondents were asked to rate the degree they agreed with each statement by using a number from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

2.2.6. Attitudes toward Learning English Scale

Attitudes toward Learning English Scale developed by Gardner (1985) and adapted by Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2005) was employed in the study to examine learners attitudes. The measure has five items to evaluate how they feel about each statement on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The internal consistency of the Attitudes toward Learning English Scale was $\alpha = .74$. The higher the scores of the learners on the scale, the more positive attitudes learners have toward learning English.

3. Data collection and analysis

The data were collected in April 2017. Questionnaires were administered to the students taking part in the study by their class teachers in normal class hours. Although 200 questionnaires were distributed, only 158 of them were included in the study since some of the students did not want to attend the study or some of the students did not complete the questionnaire thoroughly. Data were analyzed by means of SPSS 16. Descriptive statistics were used to answer the first question, one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed for the second research question and two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted for the third research question. Finally, standard multiple regressions analysis was used to analyze the final research question.

4. Findings

Findings of the present study are presented in the same order with the research questions.

4.1. Learners' perceptions of their WTC in English, ideal L2 self, attitude and motivation

This study initially aimed to investigate learners' WTC, motivation, attitude, and ideal L2 Self in the process of learning English. Descriptive statistics revealed the findings for these variables. Descriptive statistics are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

Learners' perceptions of their WTC in English, ideal L2 self, attitude and motivation

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
WTC	158	2	100	56.57	19.493
Ideal L2 Self	157	2	6	4.66	.850
Attitude	155	2	7	5.81	.875
Motivation	155	2	6	4.69	.960

As Table 1 illustrates, learners were sometimes willing to communicate in English ($M = 56.57$, $SD = 19.49$), which means they were not very but moderately willing to communicate in English. When the receiver type was examined, it was seen that students were almost equal in their willingness to communicate in English for each type of receiver that is learners were sometimes willing to communicate in English with strangers, acquaintances, and friends. ($M_{\text{stranger}} = 57.62$, $SD = 19.05$; $M_{\text{acquaintance}} = 57.48$, $SD = 20.43$; $M_{\text{friends}} = 54.60$, $SD = 21.35$). Learners' ideal L2 self scores revealed that learners had high ideal L2 self images for themselves as L2 learners ($M = 4.66$, $SD = .85$). Another construct that was investigated was attitude, which was found to be highly positive for learners in the present context ($M = 5.81$, $SD = .87$). Finally, the results for learners' motivation indicated that learners were quite motivated in learning English on average ($M = 4.69$, $SD = .96$). When the subscales of the motivation scale was examined, it was revealed that students had similar levels of motivation in desire to learn English ($M = 4.80$, $SD = 1.01$) and motivational intensity ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 1.13$).

4.2. Differences in learners' WTC in English, ideal L2 self, attitude toward learning English and motivation for learning English according to gender

The next research question focused on learners' level of WTC, ideal L2 self, attitude, and motivation according to gender.

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) identified a clear gender effect on learners' WTC and motivation levels for learning English. Using Wilk's Lambda statistics, a significant main effect of participants' gender group was found ($\Lambda = .875$, $F = 5.344$, $p = .000$), indicating a large effect size (partial eta squared = .125). In order to reveal where the difference lies exactly, more detailed analysis was conducted. Table 2 illustrates the results for the effect of gender on learners' WTC, ideal L2 self, attitude, and motivation.

Table 2

Learners' willingness to communicate, ideal L2 self, attitude and motivation according to gender

	Female			Male		
	Mean	SD	N*	Mean	SD	N*
WTC	52.85	18.809	75	60.17	19.86	80
Ideal L2 Self	4.56	.814	75	4.76	.881	80
Attitude	5.90	.791	75	5.72	.944	80
Motivation	4.87	.875	75	4.52	1.00	80

Table 2 indicates that the mean scores do not appear to fit in a similar order of magnitude for both groups, and there is no statistical significance for learners' ideal L2 Self image scores (female = 4.56; male = 4.76; $F = 2.117$; $p > .05$) and attitudes toward learning English (female = 5.90; male = 5.72; $F = 1.714$; $p > .05$). Both male and female students had high ideal L2 self images as language learners and highly positive attitudes toward learning English. Other group differences on exam scores achieved statistical significance (in order of size of partial eta squared): Learners' WTC levels (female = 52.85; male = 60.17; $F = 5.533$; $p < .05$; eta squared = .035) and motivation levels (female = 4.87; male = 4.52; $F = 5.270$; $p < .05$; eta squared = .033) were found out to be influenced by gender. When the results were analyzed in detail, it was seen that while male learners achieved higher WTC in English, female students had higher level of motivation for learning English.

4.3. Differences in learners' WTC in English, ideal L2 self, attitude toward learning English and motivation for learning English according to gender and proficiency level

The next research question focused on learners' level of WTC, ideal L2 self, attitude, and motivation in the process of learning English according to gender and proficiency level and aimed to answer whether

there are gender-related proficiency level differences on students' willingness to communicate in English, deal L2 self, attitude, and motivation.

Multivariate analysis of variance indicated that although there are significant main effects of gender ($\Lambda = .928$; $F = 2.837$; $p < .05$) and proficiency ($\Lambda = .883$; $F = 2.336$; $p < .05$) on the scores of participants of this study in WTC, ideal L2 self, attitude and motivation indicating a small effect size (partial eta squared = .060), no interaction effect between proficiency and gender was revealed ($\Lambda = .938$; $F = 1.190$; $p > .05$). Distribution of mean scores of the variables according to gender and proficiency level can be seen in Table 3.

For all the proficiency levels, both females and males have similar scores in ideal L2 self, attitude towards learning English and motivation for learning English. However, females have lower WTC level in all proficiency levels compared to males.

Table 3

Learners' level of WTC, Ideal L2 Self, Attitude and Motivation according to gender and proficiency level

		Female			Male		
		Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
WTC	Low-intermediate	50.63	22.10	33	51.32	25.48	20
	Intermediate	56.35	14.62	33	63.22	16.65	64
	Up-intermediate	48.15	19.15	9	62.21	20.21	6
Ideal L2 Self	Low-intermediate	4.40	.831	33	4.69	.966	20
	Intermediate	4.55	.774	33	4.75	.876	54
	Up-intermediate	5.22	.608	9	5.10	.654	6
Attitude	Low-intermediate	5.85	.892	33	5.27	1.25	20
	Intermediate	5.84	.692	33	5.82	.791	54
	Up-intermediate	6.33	.671	9	6.23	.463	6
Motivation	Low-intermediate	4.85	.757	20	4.13	1.00	20
	Intermediate	4.88	.980	33	4.64	.993	54
	Up-intermediate	4.94	.971	9	4.78	.987	6

*Missing data were excluded listwise for MANOVA

When learners' WTC scores were examined in detail, it was revealed that at the low-intermediate level, both females and males had similar scores for their WTC levels. However, male students achieved a significant and larger increase at intermediate level than females. This interaction seems significant. Also, at upper-intermediate level, while male students almost maintained their level of WTC in English, females experienced a dramatic and larger drop in their level of WTC (low-intermediate level female= 50.63; intermediate level female = 56.35; upper-intermediate level female =48.15; low-intermediate level male = 51.32; intermediate level male = 63.22; upper-intermediate level male = 62.21). It appears that the pattern of WTC changes along with proficiency level and intermediate and upper-intermediate level male students appear to have a higher WTC in English than female students. Although these differences are significant, no interaction effect between gender and proficiency level was identified for WTC in English ($F = .809$, $p > .01$). This effect of proficiency level and gender on WTC scores can be seen in Figure 1 below.

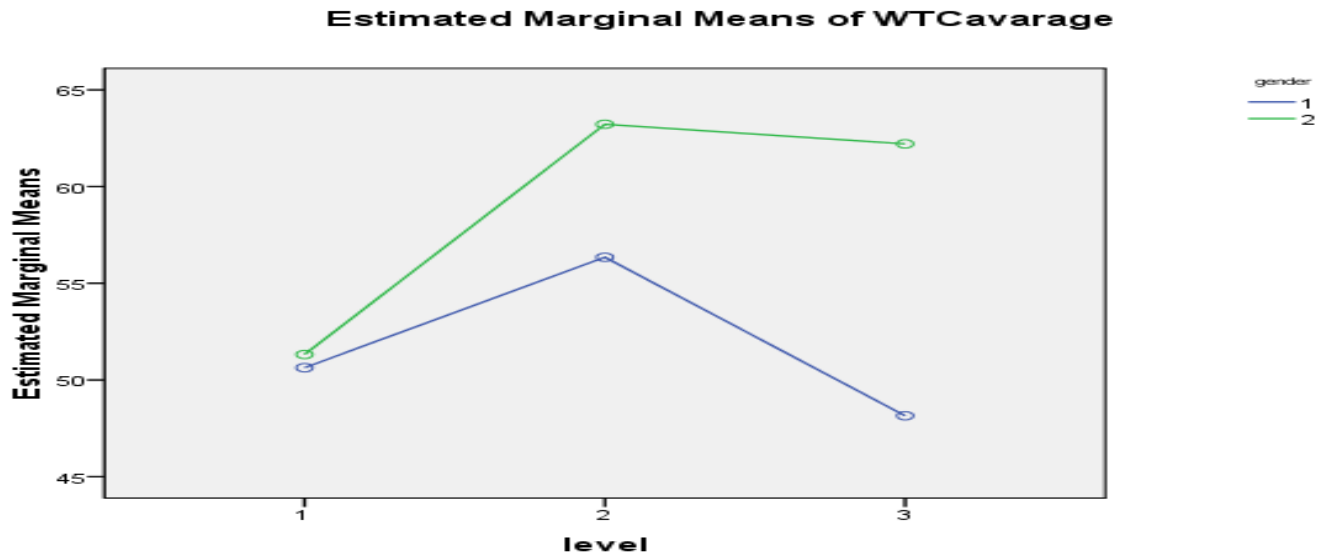


Figure 1 Gender and Proficiency Effect on WTC

When gender-related effects on ideal L2 self images were examined, no significant interaction effect was revealed ($F = .342, p > .05$). At the low-intermediate level, females and males had different scores for their ideal L2 self images. However, male students seem to have a higher image of ideal L2 self. At intermediate level, both females and males got closer in their ideal L2 self images and at upper-intermediate level, female students experienced a sharp and larger increase than male students; as a result they also had a similar level of ideal L2 self at upper-intermediate level (low-intermediate level female = 4.40; intermediate level female = 4.55; upper-intermediate level female = 5.22; low-intermediate level male = 4.69; intermediate level male = 4.75; upper-intermediate level male = 5.10). Although these differences are significant, no interaction effect was identified for ideal L2 self. So it can be stated that, students appear to get more similar in their ideal L2 self images as they become more advanced in English. This effect of proficiency level and gender on WTC scores can be seen in Figure 2 below.

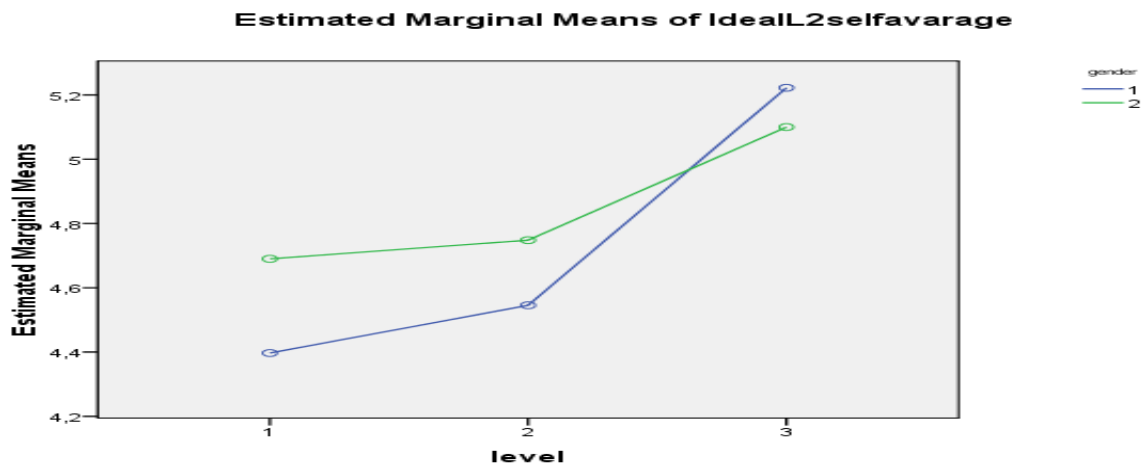


Figure 2 Gender and Proficiency Effect on Ideal L2 Self

When gender-related effects on attitude toward learning English was examined, no significant interaction effect was revealed ($F = 1.695, p > .05$). At the low-intermediate level, females and males had different level of attitude, females with higher attitude than male students. However, male students experienced a dramatic increase in their attitude level while female students maintained their attitude level at intermediate level, so they got closer in their level of attitude. At upper-intermediate level, both female and male students experienced a linear increase; so they also had a similar level of attitude toward learning English (low-intermediate level female = 5.85; intermediate level female = 5.84; upper-intermediate level female = 6.33; low-intermediate level male = 5.27; intermediate level male = 5.82; upper-intermediate level male = 6.23). Although these differences are significant, no interaction effect was identified for ideal L2 self. So it can be stated that, students appear to experience higher level of

attitude toward learning English as they become more advanced in English. This effect of proficiency level and gender on WTC scores can be seen in Figure 3 below.

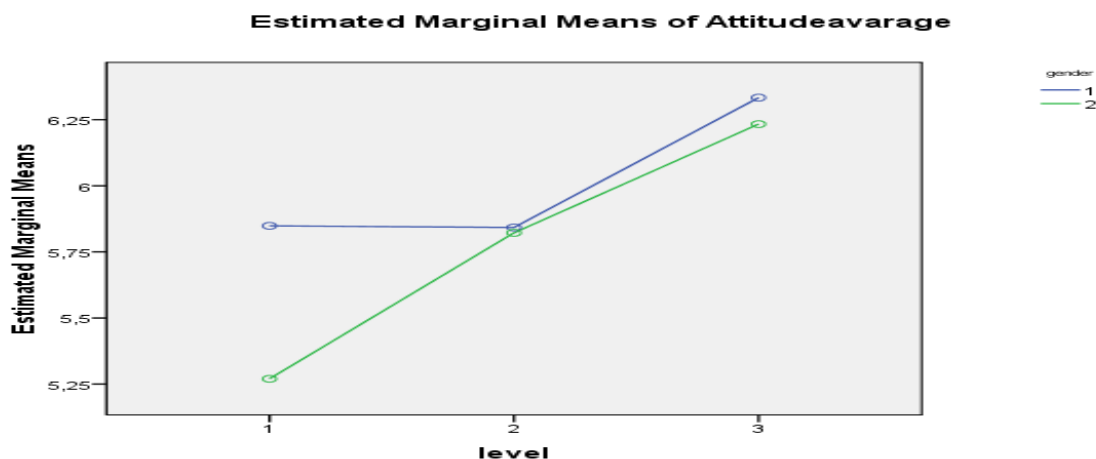


Figure 3 Gender and Proficiency Effect on Attitude toward Learning English

When gender-related effects on motivation for learning English was examined, no significant interaction effect was revealed ($F = 1.109, p > .05$). At the low-intermediate level, females and males have different level of motivation, females with higher level of motivation than male students. However, male students experienced a dramatic increase in their motivation level while female students almost maintained their attitude level at intermediate level, so they got closer in their level of motivation. At upper-intermediate level, both female and male students experienced a linear increase; so they also had a similar level of motivation for learning English (low-intermediate level female= 4.85; intermediate level female = 4.88; upper-intermediate level female =4.94; low-intermediate level male = 4.13; intermediate level male = 4.64; upper-intermediate level male= 4.78). Although these differences are significant, no interaction effect was identified for ideal L2 self. So it can be stated that, students appear to experience higher level of attitude toward learning English as they become more advanced in English. This effect of proficiency level and gender on WTC scores can be seen in Figure 4 below.

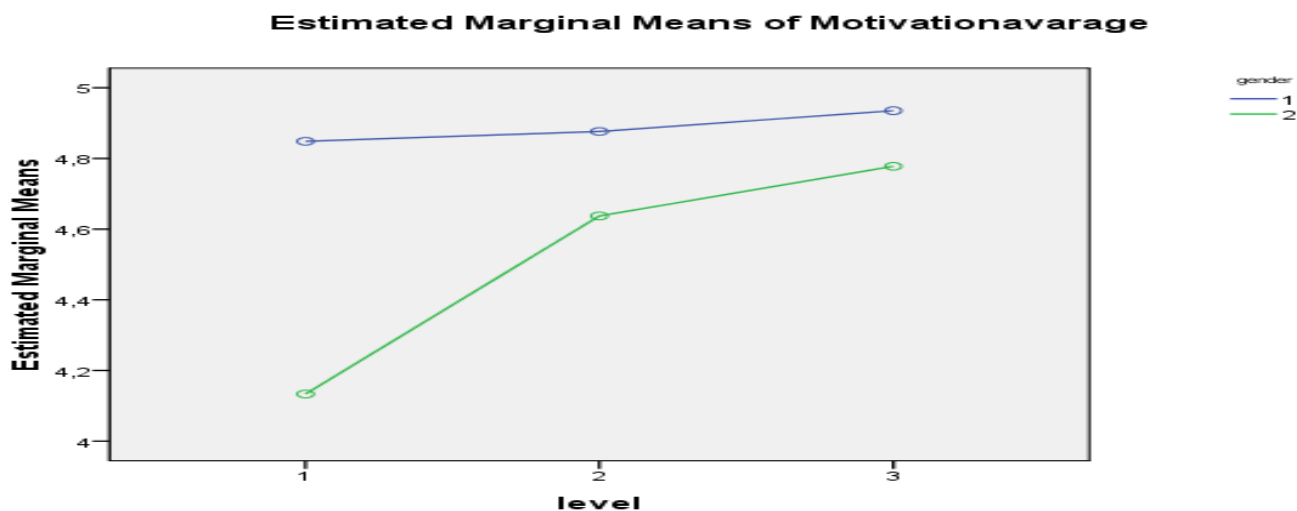


Figure 4 Gender and Proficiency Effect on Motivation for Learning English

4.4. The nature of the relationship between learners' WTC in English and individual affective factors

The next research question focused on the relationship between learners' WTC in English, ideal L2 self, attitudes and motivation.

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated after the preliminary statistical analyses, and the following steps were followed to calculate the preliminary statistical analyses before performing Pearson correlation coefficients. Firstly, sample size was checked. Sample size was large enough for generalisibility. There were three independent variables and sample size of the study was = $N > 50 + 3IV$.

Next, multicollinearity and singularity were checked. The correlation table revealed that the independent variables were not highly correlated ($r < .9$). Also, none of the independent variables was a combination of other independent variables. As a result, it can be stated that there is no violation regarding the multicollinearity and singularity. After that, the data were checked in terms of outliers using Normal P-P plot, Scatterplot and Mahalanobis distances. Some outliers were detected and cleared from the data. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007, p. 75) suggests that cases with values larger than 1 for Cook's Distance are likely to cause problems. Considering this, some outliers were removed from the data. Finally, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals were controlled. Histogram, q-q plot and scatter plot indicated that the data were normally distributed. The residuals were normally distributed about the predicted DV scores, the residuals had a straight-line relationship with predicted DV scores, and the variance of the residuals about predicted DV scores were the same for all predicted scores.

After doing these preliminary analyses, a Pearson correlation coefficients analysis was conducted to reveal the relationship between learners' WTC scores and their motivation, attitudes and ideal L2 self. Table 4 demonstrates the relation between them.

Table 4

Correlation between learners' WTC in English and individual affective variables

		1	2	3	4
1	WTC in English	1.00	.368	.262	.196
2	Ideal L2 self	.368	1.00	.497	.390
3	Attitude toward learning English	.262	.497	1.00	.579
4	Motivation in learning English	.196	.390	.579	1.00

* $p < .05$

A closer analysis of Table 4 shows that these concepts are related to each other. There appears to be a moderate positive correlation between learners' WTC in English and Ideal L2 self images ($r(153) = .368$, $p = .001$), followed by a weak relation between WTC in English and attitude toward learning English ($r(151) = .262$, $p = .349$) and motivation in learning English ($r(151) = .196$, $p = .835$). Therefore, it can be stated that learners' WTC in English is moderately correlated with their ideal L2 self; so as their ideal L2 self image improves, their WTC in English increases as well. However, there are no significant relationships between learners' WTC in English and their attitude and motivation in learning English.

4.5. Predictors of learners' WTC in English

The final research question focused on predictors of learners' WTC in English and aimed to reveal predicting effects of ideal L2 self, attitude and motivation on participants' WTC in English. The dependent variable was the mean value of willingness to communicate and the independent variables comprised ideal L2 self, attitudes and motivation on participants' WTC in English. The data were controlled for the required assumptions to carry out Standard multiple regression, and after making sure that the assumptions are not violated, a standard multiple regression analysis was performed on the data.

Table 5

Predictive power of the variables WTC in English

	Standardized Coefficients			Correlations		
	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part
Ideal L2 self	,314	3,530	,001	,368	,280	,269
Attitude toward learning English	,094	.939	,349	,262	,077	,072
Motivation in learning English	,020	.209	,835	,196	,017	,016

$R^2 = .14$ (predictors = ideal L2 self, attitude toward learning English, motivation in learning English)

When table 5 is closely examined, it was revealed that not all three independent variables correlated significantly with the dependent variable. Standard multiple regression test indicated that the model which included the control of three different individual affective factors on WTC in English explained a total of 14% of variance ($R^2 = .144$, $p = .000$). However, according to Table 5, reflecting the partial

correlations between independent variables and the dependent variable, only one variable, Ideal L2 Self, ($\beta = .314$, $p = .001$) emerged as the significant predictor. The other two independent variables did not qualify as significant predictors of willingness to communicate (attitude toward learning English ($\beta = .094$, $p > .05$), and motivation in learning English ($\beta = .020$, $p > .05$)).

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study was set out to explore to the extent tertiary-level learners in an EFL context are willing to communicate in English and its relationship with individual affective factors, including learners' motivation in learning English, attitude towards learning English and ideal L2 self. The study also attempted to investigate any possible gender and gender-related proficiency effect on learners' WTC, ideal L2 self images, motivation and attitudes. The primary findings of the research include 1) students had moderate levels of WTC in English, quite high motivation for learning English, highly positive attitudes toward learning English and high ideal L2 self images as language learners; 2) participants' gender had a significant effect on learners' WTC and motivation, but not on their ideal L2 self images and attitudes; 3) although there are significant main effects of gender and on the scores of participants of this study in WTC, ideal L2 self, attitudes and motivation indicating a small effect size, no interaction effect between proficiency and gender was revealed; 4) a medium positive correlation between learners' WTC in English and Ideal L2 self images was revealed, followed by a weak relation between WTC in English and attitude toward learning English and motivation in learning English; 5) Ideal L2 Self emerged as the significant predictor of WTC, but the other two affective factors, attitude and motivation, did not qualify as significant predictors of willingness to communicate.

The first research question focused on learners' perceptions of their WTC in English, motivation for learning English, attitudes toward learning English, and ideal L2 self images as language learners. The findings of the study regarding learners' perceptions of their WTC, motivation, ideal L2 self and attitudes were in line with some other studies. In the present study, learners' average level of WTC was moderate ($M = 56.57$, $SD = 19.49$). In a recent study, Şener (2014) revealed that students had willingness to communicate that is between moderate and high. In addition, Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2007) concluded that the students were somewhat willing to communicate in English. In addition, learners were revealed to have a moderate motivation level. When learners' attitudes were examined, it was seen that learners had highly positive attitudes toward learning English. This result was also supported by other research studies in the literature (Karaş, 1996; Elyıldırım and Ashton, 2006; Bektaş-Çetinkaya, 2007; Yu, 2009; Jung, 2011; Şener, 2014).

The second research question of the present study focused on the gender effect on learners' WTC, motivation, attitude and ideal L2 self scores. As a result of the analyses carried out, the present study revealed a gender effect on learners' WTC levels and motivation levels, but no effect was found out for their attitude and ideal L2 self. These results have similarities and differences with the research studies in the literature. In the present study, male students achieved a higher WTC in English and motivation for learning English than female students. Similarly, Öz, Demirezen and Pourfeiz (2015) indicated that male students had higher mean scores on WTC. However, contrary to the findings of the present study, the study of Öz et al. (2015) indicated female students had higher mean scores for motivation for learning English. Similar to our study in that there are no gender effects on learners' attitude toward learning English, Saracaloğlu (1996) conducted a study on Physical education students and revealed no significant gender effect on learners' attitudes. The study of Karaş (1996) also showed no significant difference in learners' attitudes between male and female students. However, İnal, Evin and Saracaloğlu (2005) revealed a gender effect on attitudes toward learning a foreign language and concluded that females had more positive attitudes compared to males. Contrary to the findings of the present study where no gender effect was revealed on ideal L2 self images, Öz et al. (2015) found out a gender effect on learners' ideal L2 self, with females achieving higher mean scores. Although the present study revealed a significant gender effect on these individual variables, no gender-related interaction effect was revealed in the study.

The next concern of the present study was the correlation between WTC in English and the three individual affective factors. The results indicated a moderate positive correlation between learners' WTC in English and Ideal L2 self images ($r(153) = .368$, $p = .001$), followed by a weak relation between WTC in English and attitudes toward learning English ($r(151) = .262$, $p = .349$) and motivation in learning English

($r(151) = .196, p = .835$). In line with this result, in the study of Kanat-Mutluoğlu (2016) the strongest correlation was found to be between WTC and the ideal L2 self, indicating a moderate correlation. In relation with this finding, the final research question attempted to identify the best predictor of WTC in English among the three individual affective factors. The present study indicated ideal L2 self as the only predictor of WTC behaviours among three individual affective factors, including ideal L2 self, motivation, and attitude. Similarly, in another study, Kanat-Mutluoğlu (2016) explored the relationship between WTC and three self-guided motivational units, including ideal L2 self, academic self concept and intercultural communicative competence and concluded that ideal L2 self was found out to be the only predictor of L2 WTC. In another study, Öz et al. (2015) did not reveal a direct relationship between learners' WTC and motivation. He indicated that motivation was indirectly correlated with the concept of WTC through the mediation of self-perceived communication competence and communication apprehension. Similar to the results of Öz et al. (2015) and the present study, motivation was not revealed to be a direct predictor of WTC in Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2007) either.

6. Limitations of the study

The present study has some limitations. Firstly, the research was conducted through different scales as the main instrumentation. It might be a good idea to support the results by conducting interviews, classroom observations, think aloud protocols or etc. The limited number of the participants, 158, from three proficiency levels is the next limitation since participants are not equal in total number in each proficiency level and this may not represent the whole population. Also, since the concepts examined within the frame of this study are all dynamic concepts, it is not possible to make generalizations by just looking at the present results which were obtained in a specific EFL context. In addition, as this study was not based on experiments, it is not possible to assert causal relationships between the concepts examined directly.

7. Pedagogical Implications

The results indicated learners had moderate levels of WTC and motivation, and high ideal L2 self images and attitudes towards learning English in general. It may be plausible to suggest that teachers must consider increasing learners' WTC by indirectly enhancing their motivation, ideal L2 self and attitudes in the learning process. In addition, since the participants of this study are in EFL context and do not have many opportunities to contact foreigners in their daily life, it becomes more essential for teachers to create an atmosphere which fosters communication in the target language. The path to achieve this communicative competence end could be based on learners' motivation, attitudes, and ideal L2 self images. If learners feel more positive about learning English, feel more motivated in the process and have higher ideal L2 self images as language learners, they will also probably be more willing to communicate. Thus, it is a good idea for teachers to make use of motivating language activities that create a positive learning atmosphere, make learners more aware of themselves as language learners and are favoured by learners most and incorporate them into their syllabus.

8. Further research

As this study was limited to the use of questionnaires as data collection tools, a further study can utilize interviews, classroom observations, think aloud protocols as well to investigate learners' WTC, ideal L2 self, motivation and attitude toward learning another language. Also, this study comprises only three possible predictors of WTC, which are ideal L2 self, attitudes toward learning English and motivation for learning English. Other variables that are likely to have an effect on WTC could be involved in order to understand the complex nature of the WTC construct better. In addition, in this study the concept of WTC is only explored in speaking mode, so WTC can be investigated in different modalities of communication (listening, speaking, reading or writing) and the correlation between WTC in different modes of communication and motivation, ideal L2 self, and attitude could be investigated.

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