

## The Impact of the Kurdish University EFL Learners' Personality Traits on their Willingness to Communicate

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### **Abstract:**

The target of teaching English has already changed from structural to the ability for communicative language usage. Consequently, considering what could influence learners' inclinations to communicate in English is pivotal. This study aimed to characterize the personality types of Kurdish EFL university students, find any significant differences among their willingness to communicate (WTC), investigate any significant relationships between personality types and WTC, and explore the perceived levels of WTC among them. For this purpose, a binary survey-correlational approach was served to 213 participants. Pearson correlation, One-way ANOVA, and Linear Regression were run to analyze the data. The results indicated that the subjects were moderately willing to communicate in the target language, and more inclined to correspond with group talks and people they know. Furthermore, there are significant and positive correlations between personality traits and WTC. Moreover, the sample had a moderate level of WTC. Lastly, the findings will help researchers build on an increasing trend of learner diversity and will enable educators to employ the findings to match learning and teaching with individual differences.

**Keywords:** Personality Traits, Willingness to Communicate, Agreeableness, Extroverted, Introverted.

### **الملخص:**

تحول هدف تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية من تدريس قواعدها إلى الفدرة على استخدامها في الحياة اليومية. لذلك من المهم مراعاة العوامل التي تؤثر على ميل المتعلمين للتحدى بها أيتها أتيحت لهم الفرصة. في هذا السياق ونظراً لأهمية "الرغبة في التواصل" في مجال تعلم اللغة الثانية، فإن الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو التعرف على نوع شخصية المتعلمين الكرد الذين يدرسون اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الجامعات. تعمّر أيضاً إجراءً تحقيقاً معمقاً للعثور على مصادر العلاقات المهمة بين سمات الشخصية و"الرغبة في التواصل"، وأخيراً التحقيق في إمكانية تحديد نوع الشخصية الأكثر تقبلاً بالتحدي بلغة أجنبية. لهذا الغرض، تم استخدام طريقة مسح الإرتباطات الإيجابية على المشكلات التي تم التحقيق فيها من خلال الدراسة. يستخدم الباحث في هذه الرسالة مسحاً ثالثاً الأبعاد. بالتوالي، شارك في هذه الدراسة (213) طالباً جامعياً كوردياً كعبياتٍ وموادٍ بحثيةٍ في ملءٍ والإستجابة للمعيارين لإيجاد مستوى "الرغبة في التواصل"، والمعايير العشرة لتحديد أنواع الشخصية. تم استخدام إرتباط بيرسن وآنوفاً أحدادي الإتجاه والإندار الخطي لتحليل البيانات. أظهرت البيانات الإحصائية من الاستبيانين أنَّ المتعلمين يتميلون بشكلٍ مُعتدلٍ إلى التحدي باللغة الإنجليزية، لكنهم كانوا يفضلون التحدي من داخل مجموعةٍ بدلاً من التحدي مع الأفراد، و كانوا أكثر عرضةً للتحدي مع الأصدقاء والمعارف. تشير النتائج إلى وجود علاقة إيجابية مُهمةٍ بين أنواع الشخصية مع "الرغبة في التواصل". من بين النتائج، تم سرد السمة الشخصية السائدة، وأخيراً، ستساعد البيانات التي تم جمعها و النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها في هذه الدراسة الباحثين الآخرين على تطوير فهم إضافي لاختلافات الفردية بين المتعلمين. في الان نفسه، سيكون هذا البحث نافعاً للمعلمين وأساتذة و مطوري المناهج الدراسية لتعكس هذه النتائج بطريقة تجعل التعلم و التعليم في نهاية المطاف متناسقاً مع السمات الشخصية بين المتعلمين الكرد.

**الكلمات المفتاحية: أنواع الشخصية، الرغبة في التواصل، المرضي، المنفتح، الانطوائي****پوخته**

له نیستا دا ئامانجى فيركردنى زمانى ئىنگلىزى له فيركردنى رىزمان و رىساكانى زمانهوه گوردرادوه بۇ تواناي بەكارهينانى ئەم زمانه له ژيانى رۆژانەدا. بۇيە بە بايەخى زۆرمۇه پېویستە ئەم ھۆكارانە رەچاۋ بىرىن كە كارىگەربى دادەتىن لەسەر مەبىلى ئەنچەرەن بۇ ئاخاوتىن لە ھەر كاتىك و دۆخىيىدا كە بواريان بۇ بېرخىسىت. ھەر لەم سۆنگىمەمە، بەھۆى بايەخى زۆرى "ئامادەگى بۇ ئاخاوتىن" كە لە بوارى فيربوونى زمانى دووەم دا ھېمەتى، ئامانج لەم توېزىنەمەمە بەردىستان دەستىشان كردنى جۆرى كەمساپەتى فيرخوازى كوردە كە لە زانكۆكان زمانى ئىنگلىزى دەخوپىن وەك زمانى بىيانى، ھاواكت مەبەستمانە تېرامانى قول بە ئەنچام بىگەينىن بۇ دۆزىنەمە سەرەداوى پەيوەندى گىرنگ لە نىوان جۆرەكانى كەمساپەتى و ئامادەگى بۇ ئاخاوتىن، دواجار ئىكۆلەنەمە دەكەين لە ئەگەرى ئەمە كامە جۆرە كەمساپەتى پېشىنى زىاتىلى لى دەكىرىت بۇ ئاخاوتىن كردن بە زمانى بىيانى. بۇ ئەم مەبەستە، شىوازى راپرسىنامە پەيوەندى بەكارھەندي دوو رەھەندى بەكارھەنداوە لەسەر (213) فيرخوازى كوردى زانكۆكان كە وەك كەرسەتە ئىكۆلەنەمە بەشداربىان كردووه لەپەركەردنەمە وەلامدانەمە ئەم دوو پېوەرى دۆزىنەمە ئامادەگى بۇ ئاخاوتىن و ھەروەھا پېوەرى (10) دانىبىي دىارىكىردنى جۆرى كەمساپەتى. بۇ شەن و كردنى داتا و بەلگە بەدەستھاتوو مەكان، ھەر يەكە لە رېگەكانى (Correlation, One-Way ANOVA, and Line Regression) پېياده كراون. زانيارىبىي ئامارىبىيەكانى دوو راپرسىنامە كە دەرىيەنخستووه كە فيرخوازان بە شىۋى دېكىي مامناؤەند مەبىلى ئاخاوتىنەمە بە زمانى ئىنگلىزى، بەلام زىاتر ئارەزۇوي ئاخاوتى دەكەن لە نىو كۆمەلە دا، نەمەك لەگەل تاكەكەس، زىدەتەر مەبىلى ئاخاوتىنەمە لەگەل كەسانى ھاۋىرى و ئاشنا. ئەنچامەكان ھىما بۇ ھەبۇونى پەيوەندى گىرنگ و ئەرىيىنى دەكەن لە نىوان جۆرەكانى كەمساپەتى و ئامادەگى بۇ ئاخاوتىن. ھەر لە نىو دەرەنچامە توېزىنەمە يارمەتىدەر دەبىت بۇ توېزەرانى دېكە بۇ ئەمە تىگەيشىتى زىدەتەر يان لە لەلە بېت سەبارەت بە جىاوازىبىي تاكەكەسىيەكانى فيرخوازان. لە ھەمان كاتىشدا ئەم توېزىنەمە ھاواكت و مايەمى سوود دەبىت بۇ مامۆستايىان، فيرکاران و دارىزەرانى پرۇڭرامى خوپىن بۇ ئەمە دۆزىنەمە و دەرەنچامانە بە جۆرىيەك بەرچەستە بەكەن تاكو دواجار فيربوون و فيركردن و وانە وتنمۇھ ھاوتەریب بن لەگەل بەرپلاوەتىن جۆرەكانى كەمساپەتى فيرخوازى كورد.

**كىلىلە وشە:** جۆرەكانى كەمساپەتى، ئامادەگى بۇ ئاخاوتىن، لەخۆرەزىبى، دەرەمەگەر، خۆرگۈر.

## 1. Introduction

Due to the increasing focus of the current language education on the meaningful communication, willingness to communicate (WTC) in second language (L2) has lately become an essential notion in second language acquisition (SLA) and communication (Dörnyei, 2005; 2006). WTC, which vastly contributes to learning an L2 is regarded as a complicated construct that is affected by other individual differences (IDs) including personality traits (Seliger, 1977; Cao and Philp, 2006; MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, and Donovan, 2003; MacIntyre and Charos, 1996; and MacIntyre, Clement, Dörnyei, and Noel, 1998).

Personality is the most unique feature of an individual (Dörnyei, 2006) which can be defined as consistent “psychological qualities that contribute to an individual’s enduring and distinctive patterns of feeling, thinking, and behaving” (Cervone and Pervin, 2013, p. 8). Particular personality dimensions have proved to make a learner more willing to communicate in an L2 (MacIntyre et al., 2003). The conception of WTC was originally established by McCroskey and colleagues as an expansion of Burgoon’s (1976) work on the *unwillingness to communicate* (MacIntyre, Babin, and Clement, 1999). WTC is a person’s willful tendency to actively engage in the act of communication in a certain context which varies in accord with the interlocutor(s), subject, and conversational setting, among other relevant contextual factors (Kang, 2005).

Variety of environmental and behavioral factors influences WTC. According to the pyramid structure of MacIntyre et al. (1998), personality is among those factors. However, very few studies investigated possible correlations of the mentioned variable with the WTC (e.g., Šafranj and Katić, 2019; Takač and Požega, 2011; Požega, 2010; and Kim, 2010). Yet, the context of this region was not among the existing research, on the other hand, the WTC with its correlates widely varied (Shirvan, Khajavi, MacIntyre, and Taherian, 2019). As a result, the existing literature is inadequate for one who might handle or search for a deeper insight into the IDs chosen. This is a problem in the field of education and specifically in the domain of SLA.

In respect with personality types, Conrad (2006) revealed that personality traits are helpful predispositions for academic achievement and they probably have impacts on developing learners. According to Fallan (2006), learner’s personality type is linked to the most successful method of learning; therefore, any mismatching or disregarding may cause a conflict in the educational process. Threeton (2008) stated that almost learners have experienced tough times learning from a teacher at some point in their school or university academic career. It might have a pedagogical factor or it could have been a problem understanding an educational topic that didn’t quite fit their personalities.

Knowing about our Kurdish EFL learners’ personality types and their correlation with WTC is of great importance not only for educators, but also for learners, curriculum developers, and after all, for the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. All the bodies will get benefits from possible findings of this study to create an ideal environment that most fit learners’ personality and ways of learning, and last but not least, the results positively affect the learner-centeredness approach. Therefore, the current study attempted to examine the relationship between learners’ WTC and personality types and the dominant personality type among the sample.

To account for the inadequacies in research studies the present study tried to answer the following questions:

**Research Question 1:** What are EFL learners' anticipated levels of WTC in a second language?

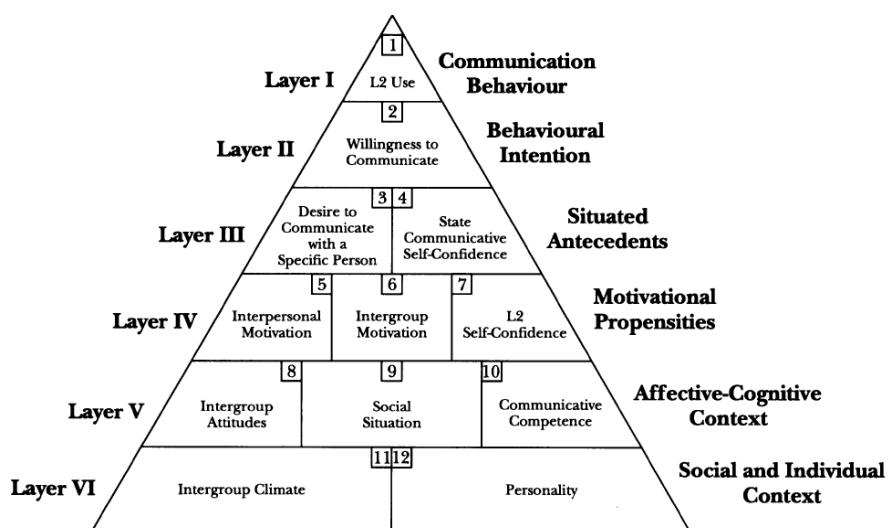
**Research Question 2:** Which personality type is dominant among Kurdish EFL university students?

**Research Question 3:** Is there any significant relationship between personality types and WTC?

## 2. Review of Literature

L2 WTC as an individual different variable is defined as a “readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547). Like other individual differences, WTC in L2 is known to have dual characteristics which are trait-like WTC and situational WTC (Dörnyei, 2005). The view of trait-like was founded on the works by McCroskey and Baer (1985), and McCroskey and Richmond (1990, 1991). McCroskey and associates developed the WTC construct with relation to L1 and communication and conceptualized WTC as the inclination to start communication when free to do so. WTC was seen as a trait-like, a predisposition based on individual personality which tends to be consistent across contexts and with various interlocutors. Perceived communication competence and communication apprehension are regarded to be the strongest WTC predictors (Baker and MacIntyre, 2000; and MacIntyre, 1994).

The trait-based view of WTC has been questioned by several researchers. First, it was further developed to link the idea of WTC with the settings of L2 communication (MacIntyre and Charos, 1996), then a new tendency was established by MacIntyre et al. (1998) claiming that there are contextual factors affecting individual WTC. MacIntyre and his fellow researchers proposed a heuristic pyramid-shaped model (Figure 1). The first three levels of the model show an individual's L2 communication in transitory, dynamic, and situation-specific ways. While the lowest three levels of MacIntyre et al. (1998)'s structure describe more constant or trait-like elements influencing learners' WTC in L2. In other words, the model depicts factors that affect language learners' WTC both permanently and transitory as in the following figure:



**Figure 1:** Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547)

Since late 1990s, several factors have been explored for their influence on WTC; however, MacIntyre and Doucette (2010) have regarded Action Control Theory which was developed by Kuhl in 1994 a forerunner for WTC. Huge number of research (e.g., McCroskey, 1977; McCroskey and Richmond, 1987; MacIntyre and Caros, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 2001; Baker and MacIntyre, 2000; MacIntyre et al., 2003; and Hashimoto, 2002) identified two major factors that affect WTC, particularly are communication apprehension and perceived competence.

Communication anxiety and perceived competence, the two essential communication-related factors that have been proven to be relevant in both native and L2 communication, are both at the heart of WTC (MacIntyre et al., 2003), and the factor pertains to the degree of fear linked with actual or expected communication (McCroskey, 1977). Similarly, Ortega (2013) maintained that “the two traits of communicative anxiety and self-perceived competence, while stable, are shaped by past experience through contacts with L2 speakers, and both contribute to the degree of L2 communicative confidence” (p. 203).

Many researches focused on the impacts of WTC in L2 learning and education (Shirvan et al., 2019; MacIntyre et al., 1998; MacIntyre, 2007; Kang, 2005, Cao and Philp, 2006; and MacIntyre et al., 2001). For example, MacIntyre (2007) pointed out that the WTC in L2 contributes significantly in acquiring a second/foreign language. Additionally, Kang (2005) summed up that “WTC needs to be an important component of SLA and L2 pedagogy” (p. 291). Dörnyei declared that personality forms an impact part of the basic layer of the construct in L2 especially with WTC (Dörnyei, 2005). Interestingly, MacIntyre and Charos (1996) claimed that each of the Big-Five personality traits plays a significant role in motivating language learning, WTC in L2, or both.

It has been found that personality factors influence L2 communication and learning. According to MacIntyre and Charos (1996), participants with a greater level of openness to experience may regard themselves more knowledgeable and skilled L2 learners as well as more capable in L2 communication use since openness to experience can lead to perceived communicative competence (MacIntyre and Charos, 1996). Agreeable and lovely learners are more likely to connect amicably with the local or global population (Ibid). The same is true for extroversion, which paves the way for social contact and significantly reduces language anxiety (MacIntyre and Noels, 1997). According to (MacIntyre and Charos, 1996; Takač and Požega, 2011, and Požega, 2010), kind, helpful, and straightforward individuals with a higher level of agreeableness are likely to be more eager to communicate with people.

Finally, the five dimensions of personality either facilitate or debilitate language learning process and academic achievement (Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham, 2003; Bickle, 1996; Ackerman and Heggested, 1997; and Sanchez, Rijano, and Rodriguez, 2001). To give one example, Šafranj and Katić (2019) reported that the Big Five dimensions of personality are significant predictors of WTC. They demonstrated that small correlation between WTC and agreeableness was noticed while moderate to high association was seen between WTC and Extroversion. In contrast, Adelifar, Jafarzadeh, Abbasnejhad, and Hasani (2016) concluded that Agreeableness was negatively associated with learners' WTC. Additionally, they stated that other traits like Extroversion, Openness to new experience had no relation to WTC in L2. Opposite to previous studies, introverted individuals who are anxious, shy, and unwilling to start a talk; however, they found Introversion personality trait to

have a direct and positive link to WTC in EFL context. Therefore, Sanchez et al. (2001) recommended educators and administrators to be mindful of the possible correlation since the impacts of personality traits on academic and professional performance can be boosted if they are considered.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Participants

Participants of the current study were 213 Iraqi-Kurdish EFL learners including 58 males (27.2%) and 155 females (72.8%) at 5 different universities in 3 provinces of the Kurdistan region of Iraq studying at the English department of both College of Education and College of Basic Education. The participants' age ranged from 19 to 27 years (mean age was 21.43) whose mother tongue was Kurdish. The choice of the subjects was based on convenience non-random sampling. In other words, the surveys were contributed during a lecture period. Furthermore, a group of university EFL students (15 males and females) with almost similar diagnostics as the target sample enrolled in the piloting stage of the study for the purpose of checking the reliability of the instruments. In addition to the researcher, three qualified and proficient English language teachers Ph.D. and MA holders offered their help. They were watching the process, instructing and responding to participants' inquiries while students were filling in the questionnaires.

#### 3.2 Instruments

A package of two questionnaires was utilized to collect data from the sample. The tools were as follows:

**3.2.1 The Willingness to Communicate Scale (WTCS):** This questionnaire which was originally developed by McCroskey and Baer (1985) was used to measure participants' willingness and unwillingness to speak. The scale has 20 items in terms of three types of receivers, namely friends, acquaintances, and strangers in four situations including public speaking, talking in a group, group discussion, and interpersonal conversation. The participants of the current study showed the percentage of the time, ranging from 0% to 100%, that they would be willing to communicate in each situation.

**3.2.2 Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI):** This scale was created by Gosling et al (2003). The TIPI is a very brief 10-item inventory, with one item representing each pole of the Five Factor Model (FFM) dimensions. They claimed that to make things simpler to grasp and to enable him and his associate to double the number of items on the inventory without lengthening the time it takes to complete, they decreased the length and complexity of the items (Ibid). Each item consists of two descriptors, separated by a comma, using the common stem, "I see myself as:". Each of the five items was rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 "disagree strongly" to 7 "agree strongly".

### 3.3 Procedure

The researcher utilized a quantitative research design and survey methodology to collect data. Participants provided anticipations of their personality traits, L2 WTC, and sociodemographic information.

### 3.4 Design and data analysis

This is a quantitative descriptive correlational study which tries to statistically explore correlation between and among the variables. To analyze the data, three statistical techniques were adopted. Additionally, the averages and standard deviations of the data are evaluated. The values of kurtosis and skewness of the data which ranged between -1.96 and +1.96 are examined to detect whether the data set has a normal distribution or not. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the predictive power of personality traits, and learning styles vis-à-vis WTC in L2.

## 4. Results

The statistical techniques of One-Way ANOVA, Pearson Correlation as well as Linear Regression were employed to analyze the data collected through this study. The normality of the data is the core assumption of these statistical methods. Table 4.1 shows the skewness and kurtosis statistics and their ratios over their respective standard errors. As shown in Table 4.1, all ratios were lower than  $\pm 1.96$  (Raykov & Marcoulides 2008; Coaley, 2010; Field, 2018; and Abu-Bader 2021). Table 1 shows the normality of the data.

**Table 1, Skewness and Kurtosis Indices of Normality**

	N		Skewness			Kurtosis		
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio	
WTC	213	-.306	.167	-1.83	-.311	.332	-0.94	
Extroverted	213	-.077	.167	-0.46	-.049	.332	-0.15	
Critical	213	-.151	.167	-0.90	.343	.332	1.03	
Dependable	213	.222	.167	1.33	.037	.332	0.11	
Anxious	213	-.045	.167	-0.27	-.484	.332	-1.46	
Open to New Experiences	213	.094	.167	0.56	.066	.332	0.20	
Reserved	213	-.044	.167	-0.26	-.267	.332	-0.80	
Sympathetic	213	-.110	.167	-0.66	-.156	.332	-0.47	
Disorganized	213	.125	.167	0.75	-.076	.332	-0.23	
Calm	213	.155	.167	0.93	.025	.332	0.08	
Conventional	213	-.022	.167	-0.13	.173	.332	0.52	

Table 4.2 displays the KR-21 reliability indices for the WTC and total personality questionnaire. The two instruments enjoyed reliability indices of .82 and .89 respectively.

**Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics and KR-21 Reliability Indices**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	KR-21
WTC	213	31	87	60.41	11.187	125.158	.82
Personality	213	129	281	197.07	28.978	839.703	.89

#### 4.1 Exploring First Research Question

What are EFL learners' anticipated levels of WTC in a second language?

Regarding the WTC interpersonal talk, group talks (small and large), friends, and strangers, the result of this study indicated that the total willingness to communicate score (60.41%) was higher than the average ( $X=51.56$ ,  $SD=14.03$ ). In group discussions participants were noticed to be much eager to interact in small group talks (62.86%) to large group talks (46.53%) while friend talk recorded higher levels than stranger talk (67.13% to 43.32%). Interpersonal communication tendencies with strangers were shown to be less common.

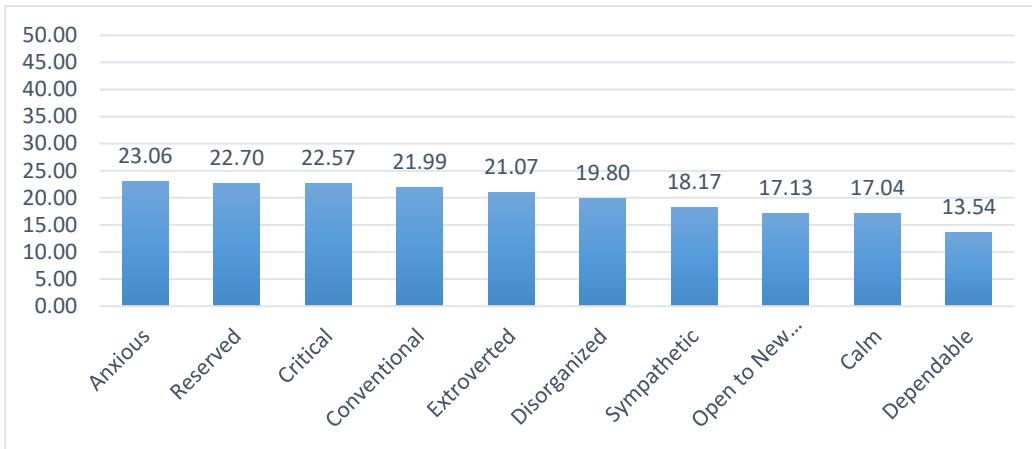
#### 4.2 Exploring Second Research Question

Which personality type is dominant among Kurdish EFL university students?

Table 4.3 displays the ten personality types. The Kurdish university students had the highest mean on anxious personality type ( $M = 23.06$ ). This was followed by reserved ( $M = 22.70$ ), and critical ( $M = 22.57$ ). On the other hand; they had the lowest means on open to new experience ( $M = 17.13$ ), calm ( $M = 17.04$ ), and dependable ( $M = 13.54$ ). Figure 2 shows the means discussed above.

**Table 4.3 Descriptive Statistics of Personality Types**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Anxious	213	23.06	3.947	15.582
Reserved	213	22.70	4.196	17.606
Critical	213	22.57	4.163	17.331
Conventional	213	21.99	4.235	17.938
Extroverted	213	21.07	3.637	13.226
Disorganized	213	19.80	3.603	12.983
Sympathetic	213	18.17	3.215	10.339
Open to New Experiences	213	17.13	3.332	11.102
Calm	213	17.04	3.225	10.399
Dependable	213	13.54	2.492	6.211



**Figure 1, Means on Personality Types**

#### 4.3 Exploring Third Research Question

Is there any significant relationship between personality types and WTC?

Table 4.4 shows the Pearson correlations between personality types and WTC. Based on these results it can be concluded that WTC had significant ( $p < .05$ ) and large<sup>1</sup> correlations with personality types; i.e. extroverted ( $r (211) = .608$ ,  $p < .05$ ), critical ( $r (211) = .530$ ,  $p < .05$ ), dependable ( $r (211) = .603$ ,  $p < .05$ ), anxious ( $r (211) = .584$ ,  $p < .05$ ), open to new experience ( $r (211) = .644$ ,  $p < .05$ ), reserved ( $r (211) = .637$ ,  $p < .05$ ), sympathetic ( $r (211) = .623$ ,  $p < .05$ ), disorganized ( $r (211) = .581$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and calm ( $r (211) = .613$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

**Table 4.4, Pearson Correlations Personality Types with Willingness to Communicate**

		WTC
Extroverted	Pearson Correlation	.608**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	213
Critical	Pearson Correlation	.530**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	213
Dependable	Pearson Correlation	.603**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	213
Anxious	Pearson Correlation	.584**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	213
Open to New Experiences	Pearson Correlation	.644**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	213
Reserved	Pearson Correlation	.637**

<sup>1</sup> Pearson correlation itself is an index of effect size, and can be reported using the following criteria; .10 = Weak, .30 = Moderate, and .50 = Large (Gray and Kinnear (2012, p 407) Pallant (2016, p 159), and Field (2018, p 179)).

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	213
Sympathetic	Pearson Correlation	.623**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	213
Disorganized	Pearson Correlation	.581**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	213
Calm	Pearson Correlation	.613**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	213
Conventional	Pearson Correlation	.532**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	213

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

## 5. Discussion

Concerning the anticipated level of WTC in second language, the sample of this study was more inclined to group talks rather than one-to-one talks; on the other hand, they had more tendencies to communicate with familiar people. Therefore, they were seen to be nervous and reserved towards strangers and interpersonal talk. However, learner's sub-scores from communicating with friends and giving presentation to the friend groups appeared to be above the mean. This can be explained that people feel safer and more at ease among people they know. In other words, the degree of familiarity played a vital role among the participants.

Accordingly, the above findings were in line with the work of (Požega, 2010; Takač and Požega, 2011; and Riasati, 2012) who found public performance group as dominant, and the interpersonal talk had low WTC rate. However, the findings of this study are inconsistent with Požega in terms of familiarity with interlocutor(s) since her participants were more willing to communicate with strangers than their friends. In other words, the participants of Požega (2010) were more confident in communicating with unfamiliar individuals and unknown group talks. Meanwhile, the results of this study were in harmony with Karadağ and Kaya (2018) and Oz (2012) in terms of familiarity with interlocutor(s) and the findings of Šafranj and Katić (2019) who reported that their sample obtained low score levels with strangers (33.7%).

In respect to the second research question that investigated which personality type is dominant among Kurdish EFL university students, the sample had the highest mean on anxious (Neuroticism) personality type, reserved, and critical respectively. On the other hand, the participants had the lowest means on open to new experience, calm, and dependable. These findings are inconsistent with those of Takač and Požega (2011) and Požega (2010) who found 44.14% of her sample was inclined to Open to New Experiences. Meanwhile, the findings of this study were not in line with those of Ahmed, Ramazan, Sheikh, and Ali (2020) in which Openness took the top of the list and followed by Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Introversion, and Extroversion respectively.

When it comes to correlations between different personality qualities and willingness to communicate, the results of the present study proved strong positive associations between the variable and the inclination to initiate talk in a foreign language. Based on the findings WTC had significant and large correlations with personality types: i.e. extroverted, critical, dependable, anxious, open to new experience, reserved, sympathetic, disorganized, and calm.

These findings were partially confirmed by a notable number of researchers (MacIntyre and Charos, 1996; Požega, 2010; Šafranj and Katić, 2019; Adelifar et al., 2016; Beatty, McCroskey and Heisel, 1998; Çetinkaya, 2005; Karadağ and Kaya, 2018, and Oz, 2014). On the other hand, the results of this study were inconsistent with those of (Kim, 2010) and Alemi, Tajeddin, and Mesbah (2013) who found no significant correlation between personality dimensions and WTC.

The results of this study supported those of other studies, highlighting that in the domain of individual differences in psychology, a person may be characterized in terms of the personality traits or other subcategory dimensions of those qualities.

This study attempted to merge several issues that arise in terms of language learning and communication. The main purpose of this study was to investigate how personality characteristics and willingness to communicate interrelate with each other. The study findings suggest a connection between the two research variables, and these findings allow for the drawing of many inferences. The findings firstly indicate that there are statistically significant positive connections between communication readiness and personality qualities such as extraversion, criticality, dependability, anxiousness, openness to new experiences, reserved, and sympathetic. These are all correlated positively. In other words, learners who score well on sympathetic (friendliness, trusting, cooperation) and openness (creativity, originality) will also score highly on their inclination to speak. By identifying individuals who have these two characteristics, then the researcher can anticipate that they will be outgoing and unafraid to talk during English class. Additionally, if the learners lack these traits, the researcher of the present study may infer that their WTC will likely be lower than their mates. One-to-one communication and personality qualities do not significantly correlate. Based on the research findings, the connection between interpersonal communication and communication inclination is less common. In other settings, educators had better decrease interpersonal class communication and depend on group discussion as possibly they could so that they can have lively active class periods.

Personality quality is a vital aspect of individual differences. Since willingness to initiate a talk is a crucial component of SLA, the variable has significant impacts on WTC. These results suggest that when rating students' desire to participate in classroom activities and when assessing their speaking abilities, teachers should take into account the personality qualities of the students. When using various strategies and tactics, structuring their courses, as well as when speaking to each student individually, teachers should be aware of the traits and other individual differences. To make the learning process more productive, EFL teachers must be able to identify, comprehend, and use the unique distinctions among their students.

## 6. Conclusion

As it is argued that the primary goal of learning an L2 is to boost learners' WTC to engage in real-life conversations, and students must communicate to learn the target language efficiently. Thusly, in light of the findings of the present study that partially confirmed the results of previous researches, it is indispensable for educators, syllabus designers, directorates of educations, and after all, both Ministries of Education and Higher Education to adjust their efforts to be in concrete harmony to the learners' personalities. To be more specific, the more teachers, curriculum designers, and educational administrations understand the nature of their learners, the more they can re-adjust teaching and strategies to have better outcomes.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings of the present study support the idea that students should be grouped according to their individualities or personal characteristics, with more or less expressive students in L2, different personality types. This is because some learners are ready to communicate while others avoid it. Activities for teaching and learning should use this environment. The inclination to categorize people based on their personality traits can therefore be seen, and it is important to personalize instruction on this basis.

Finally, some future research should look at the issue of WTC in the EFL context using other variables that are interrelated with global personality traits. It is hoped one day we shall be much closer from further findings by applying mixed-method studies with larger samples and additional surveys would probably provide more detailed findings as well. Further future research might examine whether the impact of the variables is as strong among group of sample who would have the overseas opportunity and higher language proficiency.

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