

Thesis Title:

“Willingness to Communicate: A Comparison between Austrian and Serbian Students”

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Abstract

The ability of learners to use language in real-life situations became paramount for both learners and teachers since the emergence of the Communicative Approach to language teaching. During this period, due to its inevitable immediateness, speaking has occupied the position of an indicator of overall language competence. However, the idea of performance being a one-to-one representation of one’s competence has been questioned considerably by the research done on the complexity of speaking. This can particularly be seen in the extensive research done on Willingness to Communicate, which has shown that a range of different factors apart from language competence affect how much people engage in communication, and speaking in particular. Therefore, rather than trying to identify additional factors that may possibly prove influential on individuals’ willingness to communicate, the main goal of this study is to determine whether and to what extent already recognized factors affect students from two different school types – vocational schools and grammar schools with special focus on modern languages. In order to additionally confirm or dismiss the universality of these findings, the current study looks at the results from a cross-cultural perspective by including participants from Austria and Serbia. The study offers a valuable insight into the current situation and opens up a discussion of related issues.

Keywords: *WTC, Austria, Serbia, grammar school, vocational school*