

Thesis Proposal prepared by:

Topic: Applied Linguistics

Supervisor:

Thesis Proposal

Thesis Title: Situation-specific influences on L2 learners' willingness to communicate

A nyelvtanulók társalgás kezdeményezését befolyásoló helyzet-specifikus tényezők

It has become highly important, for both theoretical and pedagogical purposes, to investigate the factors that determine L2 learners' willingness to communicate (WTC) in order to be able to predict their communicative behaviour (MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément & Noels, 1998). According to MacIntyre et al. (1998), the various components that determine language learners' WTC can be arranged into a pyramid model consisting of six layers. These layers can be further divided into two categories depending on whether the components have a long-term (enduring) or short-term (situational) effect on WTC. In my thesis, I will synthesize some of the recent studies that have focused on the third layer – the most immediate situational components determining WTC: learners' desire to communicate with a specific person and learners' state communicative self-confidence.

For these purposes, I will synthesize the studies of MacIntyre (2007); MacIntyre, Burns, and Jessome (2011); and MacIntyre and Legatto (2011) along the lines what the authors' observations are about WTC and how it is influenced by the immediate communicative situation. MacIntyre (2007) claims that language learners' willingness or unwillingness to communicate at a certain time in a certain situation is a volitional act that is influenced by driving and restraining forces. These forces have an important role in language

learners' process of deciding whether or not to initiate conversation. Therefore, I will attempt to shed light on the relationship between them and learners' desire to communicate with a specific person. I will synthesize these findings with MacIntyre et al.'s (2011) qualitative study about French immersion students' WTC, based on the similarities and differences regarding the role different communicative partners took in the participants' state communicative self-confidence.

In their qualitative study about the changes in WTC, MacIntyre and Legatto (2011) recorded six L2 learners' oral task performance, asked them to rate the changing of their WTC during the tasks, and to evaluate the changes retrospectively. I will examine the results of this research and synthesize them with the two previous studies based on the connection between the participants' change of WTC and their state communicative self-confidence.

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