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THE INFLUENCE OF ORIENTATION AND PERCEIVED LANGUAGE COMPETENCE ON ESP STUDENTS' WILLINGNESS TO READ

Abstract

Willingness to communicate in a foreign language is a construct that is affected by a number of interrelated variables ranging from the learner's personality and intergroup climate to the situational context. Orientation towards learning a foreign language and perceived language competence have been proven to be two factors that strongly underlie willingness to communicate. The present paper explores willingness to read in English as a foreign language between two groups of ESP students: students of humanities and students of sciences. The aim of the study is twofold: to determine to what extent the two groups are willing to read inside and outside the classroom, and to investigate if orientation and perceived language competence influence the students' willingness to apply this receptive skill. The obtained results suggest that the students' willingness to read is considerably high and positively correlated with perceived language competence, while the correlation between this variable and orientation for learning English proved to be negative.

64

Key words

willingness to communicate, reading, orientation towards learning a foreign language, perceived language competence, ESP.

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Sažetak

Spremnost za komunikaciju na stranom jeziku predstavlja konstrukt na koji utiče niz međusobno povezanih faktora, kao što su, između ostalog, tip ličnosti učenika, atmosfera unutar grupe i situacija u kojoj se učenje odvija. Orijehtacija ka učenju stranog jezika i samoprocena jezičkog znanja predstavljaju faktore za koje je utvrđeno da značajno utiču na spremnost za komunikaciju na stranom jeziku. Ovaj rad ispituje spremnost za čitanje na engleskom jeziku kod dve grupe studenata koji slušaju nastavu engleskog jezika struke: studenata društvenih i studenata prirodnih nauka. Cilj rada je da se ispita nivo spremnosti za čitanje unutar i van učionice kod pomenutih grupa studenata i da se utvrdi da li i u kojoj meri njihova orijentacija ka učenju engleskog jezika i samoprocena jezičkog znanja utiču na pomenutu varijablu. Dobijeni rezultati pokazuju da obe grupe ispoljavaju visok stepen spremnosti za čitanje i da postoji značajna korelacija između ove varijable i samoprocene jezičkog znanja, dok je korelacija između spremnosti za čitanje i orijentacije ka učenju engleskog jezika negativna.

Ključne reči

spremnost za komunikaciju, čitanje, orijentacija ka učenju stranog jezika, samoprocena jezičkog znanja, engleski jezik struke.

1. INTRODUCTION

Modern foreign language teaching emphasizes the importance of the learner and their attitude towards learning. Individual factors of both cognitive and affective nature play an important role in the language learning process and strongly influence the learning outcomes (Brown, 2007; Ellis, 1994; Skehan, 1989). In addition to affective factors like motivation, L2 self-confidence and apprehension (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998), orientation towards language learning and perceived language competence have frequently been reported to correlate with learners' willingness to communicate in L2 (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Hashimoto, 2002; Peng, 2007; Yashima, 2002).

The practice of learning and teaching languages for specific purposes strongly relies on the learner-centred approach as it is based on learners' needs, wishes and demands to communicate in L2 (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In the context of university education, the ability to read textbooks and other academic texts written in English is one of the greatest needs of students (Jordan, 1997). Bearing this in mind, the present paper explores willingness to read in English as a foreign language between two groups of university students: students of

humanities and students of sciences. The aim of the study is twofold: to determine to what extent the two groups are willing to read inside and outside the classroom, and to investigate if orientation and perceived language competence influence the students' willingness to apply this receptive skill. The results presented here are part of a larger study that explores and compares willingness to communicate in all four skills in ESP students of different professional orientations.

2. ORIENTATION TOWARDS LANGUAGE LEARNING

The terms *orientation towards language learning* and *motivation* are closely related. According to Gardner's socio-educational model (1985), one of the most influential models dealing with motivation for language learning, orientation is incorporated into motivation and its role is to create motivation. In other words, the learner's motivation is affected not only by their attitude towards L2 learning and its speakers but also by orientation for acquisition of the second language. Gardner (1985) identifies two types of orientation: integrative orientation and instrumental orientation. Integrative orientation involves the learners' attitude towards the L2 community and their desire to interrelate with the members of this community and become a part of it. Instrumental orientation, on the other hand, encompasses practical reasons for learning a foreign language, such as job prospects or credits for a course. Although the two concepts have been very useful in identifying L2 learners' orientations, they are rather broad and may not fully account for the influence of linguistic environment on an individual's motivation (Clément & Kruidenier, 1983). As a result, more recent studies within L2 learning have introduced broader classifications of orientation towards language learning. Thus, Clément and Kruidenier's (1983) large-scale study investigating a large number of language learning orientations resulted in the identification of four orientations: job, friendship, travel and knowledge orientations, which appeared to sustain motivation in all eight groups of Canadian high school learners they surveyed.¹ These orientations were also found later in a study by Noels, Pelletier, Clément and Vallerand (2000). To this list, MacIntyre, Baker, Clément and Conrod (2001) added a fifth language orientation, school/college achievement, which they also found relevant given that the context of their study was a late immersion

¹ Each group in this study represented a different learning context. The eight groups were obtained by combinations of three factors: the learners' ethnicity – English-speaking or French-speaking; the learning milieu – monocultural or multicultural; and the target L2 – French, English, or Spanish (Guilloteaux, 2007). Guilloteaux (2007) points out that in the mentioned study Clément and Kruidenier also identified a fifth orientation, termed sociocultural orientation, among unicultural-setting students learning Spanish as an L2 (an ethnic minority language in Canada). A sociocultural orientation refers to “seek[ing] greater knowledge of the cultural and artistic production of the target [language] group” but implies “a rather distant or ‘bookish’ interest,” therefore lacking the affective connotation that is an inherent aspect of integrative orientation (Clément & Kruidenier, 1983).

programme. Even though the context of the present study is different, all five types of orientation were taken into account as the research instrument was based on MacIntyre et al.'s (2001) survey. Job and school/college achievement were taken to be types of instrumental orientation, while travel, friendship and increased knowledge were types of integrative orientation.

Positive correlation between orientation towards L2 learning and willingness to communicate (WTC) has been reported in several studies (MacIntyre et al., 2001; Peng, 2007; Zarrinabadi & Abdi, 2011). In their study with immersion students, MacIntyre et al. (2001) found that the five language orientations positively correlated with willingness to communicate both inside and outside the classroom, which lent support to viewing WTC as a traitlike quality (as initially suggested by McCroskey and Richmond [1991] and contra MacIntyre et al.'s [1998] "situated" model of WTC). Seeking to pinpoint the relationship between Iranian students' language learning orientations and WTC both inside and outside the classroom, Zarrinabadi and Abdi (2011), on the other hand, reported that language orientations showed a stronger correlation with willingness to communicate outside the classroom than inside it and concluded that orientations for language learning are more correlated with WTC outside the classroom, irrespective of the culture or first language.

As learning languages for specific purposes implies strictly defined reasons or motives for acquiring a language, orientation towards L2 learning appears as an important construct in this field of applied linguistics. In spite of expecting dominance of instrumental over integrative orientation among ESP students, a number of studies have pointed to a very high degree of both instrumental and integrative orientation among ESP students (Đurović & Silaški, 2014; Radojičić, 2007; Vuković-Vojnović & Knežević, 2007). Analyzing the motivation of students of economics, Đurović and Silaški (2014) found that this group of ESP students showed a high level of both integrative and instrumental orientations for acquiring good command of the language. Similar results are reported by Vuković-Vojnović and Knežević (2007), who found almost equal percentage of both instrumental and integrative orientations reported by students of sciences. Because of the reasons stated above, the present study aims at identifying whether orientation towards learning English has an impact on ESP students' willingness to read inside and outside the classroom.

3. PERCEIVED LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

Apart from orientation, self-perceived competence is another factor that is closely associated with willingness to communicate in a foreign language (Burroughs, Marie, & McCroskey, 2003; Knell & Chi, 2012; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan, 2002). Perceived communication competence (PCC) is the second key variable which underlies willingness to communicate, according to MacIntyre

(1994). Baker and MacIntyre (2000) also argue that it is the person's perception of competence that will affect willingness to communicate. "Since the choice of whether to communicate is a cognitive one, it is likely to be more influenced by one's perceptions of competence (of which one is usually aware) than one's actual competence (of which one may be totally unaware)" (McCroskey & Richmond 1997: 27 as cited in MacIntyre et al., 2002: 540). Therefore, it is not the actual language competence or skill which is most pertinent, but the learner's perception of competence that affects willingness to communicate (Knell & Chi, 2012).

Some learners, in spite of being highly proficient in a second language, may feel unwilling to communicate as they believe their language skills and knowledge are insufficient. Kitano (2001), for example, conducted research with 212 Japanese FL learners at various levels of proficiency and found that students feel more anxious in the foreign language classroom if they perceive their own FL ability as poorer than that of their peers or native speakers. On the other hand, there are learners who might overestimate their L2 competence and thus take every opportunity to communicate in L2. This, in turn, implies that perceived competence and anxiety are reciprocally related in second language acquisition in that anxious speakers tend to underestimate their language competence, but relaxed speakers usually overestimate their ability to communicate in the target language (MacIntyre, Noels, & Clément, 1997). Therefore, perceived competence is also linked to personality types. Dewaele (2012) notes that there has been rather limited interest in individual differences and second language acquisition (SLA) but gives a very thorough overview of much of the SLA research linked to both higher-order and lower-order personality traits and stresses that foreign language classroom anxiety affects all foreign language users when they use the target language but that it is highest for speaking (as previously established by MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994). MacIntyre et al. (1997) further found that the perception of competence in the L2 can be biased by language anxiety and that individuals who are highly anxious about communicating tend to perceive their communication competence to be lower than it is rated by a neutral observer.

In this study, perceived communication competence is investigated as a possible predictor of willingness to communicate/read within the context of learning languages for specific purposes.

4. WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE

A widely accepted definition of willingness to communicate in the context of second language acquisition is the one provided by MacIntyre et al. (1998), who perceive it as readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person/persons, using a second language. The concept was introduced into second language acquisition as an attempt to answer the question why some students tend to avoid communication and rather remain silent in spite of their high language

proficiency. The construct is closely related to the notions of language anxiety and perceived language competence discussed above and, alongside individual characteristics like introvert/extrovert personality, includes a number of situational and social factors such as the topic of conversation, the relationship between the communicators, social and cultural norms, etc. In this way, WTC in L2 is perceived as a construct affected by a number of interrelated variables. The most influential model of L2 WTC is the six-layer pyramid model proposed by MacIntyre et al. (1998). The model describes the combined effect of the learner's personality and intergroup climate on the one hand, and more dynamic and less stable influences referring to the situational context on the other hand. MacIntyre and Legatto (2011) also describe WTC in L2 as a dynamic system. Employing an idiodynamic method to study fluctuations in students' WTC, they conclude that there is a complex interconnectedness between L2 WTC and social, linguistic, cognitive and emotional factors resulting in dynamic changes in a student's WTC over time.

As already mentioned, research into L2 WTC has mostly focused on the influence of individual variables, such as motivation and perceived communication competence. However, to the best of our knowledge, none of the studies so far have focused on L2 WTC within an ESP context. Describing the context of studying English for specific purposes, two general settings are distinguished: learning English for study purposes (this being the case with the present research) and learning English for work purposes. Referring to the first situation, the aim of teaching is to make students familiar with the characteristics of English used for describing the subject of their study and to develop certain skills necessary for studying in the formal educational context. As a large body of academic literature is nowadays published in English, one of the skills that is usually seen as a priority to students is reading academic texts in English (Jordan, 1997; Robinson, 1991). Efficient reading involves the application of a number of strategies and sub-skills, such as selecting relevant information depending on the reading purpose, skimming and scanning, identifying organizational patterns, predicting, inferring and guessing, identifying main and supporting ideas, processing and evaluating the information during reading (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998).

Since the participants in this research are two groups of ESP students, and it has already been mentioned that reading in English is a priority skill for this population, the central issue of the study is to examine the students' willingness to read inside and outside the classroom and to investigate if their orientation and perceived language competence correlate with this variable.

5. THE STUDY DESIGN

The present study was conducted with 215 students of the University of Novi Sad in the academic year 2013/14. The students were divided into two groups,

depending on their subject of study. There were 117 students of sciences (mathematics, chemistry, biology) and 98 students of humanities (languages, psychology, pedagogy, history). At the time of the research, all of the students attended an ESP course in their first or second year of studying, with 4 classes of English per week. In both settings, the ESP course combines the elements of general academic English and subject-specific language expressed through topics related to the students' academic subjects. The teaching material is based on authentic texts and activities focusing on the integrated four core skills and a number of sub-skills relevant for studying, such as summarizing, note-taking, drawing inferences and conclusions, etc. Prior to the course, the research participants' English language competence was tested (*Quick Placement Test*, OUP, 2001) and assessed as B1-B2 (according to CEFR, Council of Europe, 2001). All the research participants were aged between 19 and 22 years. Their distribution with respect to sex is given in Table 1 below:

	M	F	Total
Students of humanities	12.3%	32.7%	45.0%
Students of sciences	10.9%	44.1%	55.0%
Total number of participants	23.2%	76.8%	100.0%

Table 1. Distribution of research participants (N=215) according to sex

The aim of the research was to investigate the students' willingness to read inside and outside the classroom and to examine if this variable depends on the students' orientation towards learning English and their self-perceived competence. Considering the aim of the study, the following hypotheses were set at the beginning of the research:

- H1. The students' willingness to read is considerably high, since the skill is relevant for their studies and professional development;
- H2. Willingness to read is influenced by the students' orientation for learning English, and instrumental orientation (job-related and college achievement) correlates more strongly with willingness to read than integrative orientation;
- H3. Willingness to read is also dependent on the students' perception of their own English language competence.

The measuring instrument was a three-part questionnaire based on a slightly modified version of the WTC Scale developed by MacIntyre et al. (2001). The first part of the instrument was a questionnaire that focused on some background information, such as the students' course of study and the year of studying, and it also included the information on the participants' self-perceived English language

competence. The students were required to assess their L2 language competence on a three-point scale: poor – fair – excellent.

The second part of the instrument was a shortened version of the WTC scale by MacIntyre et al. (2001), as it focused on WTC in relation to only one language skill – reading. There were six items focusing on reading inside the classroom and six items on students' willingness to read outside the classroom. Students' responses were elicited using a five-point Likert scale, with number 1 denoting the lowest degree of WTC (almost never willing to read) and number 5 denoting highest WTC (almost always willing). The items were identical in these two sections of the questionnaire (willingness to read inside and outside the classroom). The reliability coefficient for the six items regarding willingness to read inside the classroom is $\alpha=0.860$, while for willingness to read outside the classroom this coefficient was $\alpha=0.901$.

Finally, the third part of the instrument, adapted from MacIntyre et al. (2001), examined the students' orientation towards learning English in relation to five types of orientation (job, travel, friendship, knowledge, achievement). A six-point Likert scale was applied for recording students' responses, this time number 1 denoting the highest level of orientation (Strongly agree) and number 6 referring to the lowest orientation (Strongly disagree). The reliability of the orientation scale was $\alpha=0.84$. The questionnaire is given in the Appendix.

6. RESULTS

The results obtained in the survey were analysed using the SPSS Statistics 20.0 software. The independent sample t-test was applied for assessing the participants' willingness to read while the influence of orientation and self-perceived competence on willingness to read was obtained by the bivariate (Pearson's) correlation test. The significance level was set at 0.05, i.e. $p<0.05$. The results are presented here in three segments: the results on willingness to read inside and outside the classroom, the correlation between orientation towards learning English and willingness to read and, finally, the results on correlation between self-perceived competence and willingness to read.

6.1. Willingness to read inside and outside the classroom

The students' willingness to read inside the classroom is presented in Table 2. The results are given in parallel for students of sciences and students of humanities.

WILLINGNESS TO READ INSIDE THE CLASSROOM				
Item	Students of	Mean	t	P
1	Sciences	3.47	3.245	.001
	Humanities	4.10		
2	Sciences	4.22	1.645	.102
	Humanities	4.45		
3	Sciences	4.04	3.120	.002
	Humanities	4.52		
4	Sciences	4.54	-.524	.601
	Humanities	4.46		
5	Sciences	4.06	3.282	.001
	Humanities	4.57		
6	Sciences	3.76	3.944	.000
	Humanities	4.45		
Total	Sciences	4.02	3.315	.001
	Humanities	4.43		

Table 2. Scores for willingness to read inside the classroom

As it can be seen in the table above, the participants' willingness to read inside the classroom is rather high, as the total means are 4.43 and 4.02 (on a scale ranging from 1 to 5). The lowest willingness to read is recorded in item 1 (*Read a novel*), while the highest values are observed in items 4 for students of sciences (*Read personal letters or notes written to you in which the writer has deliberately used simple words and constructions*) and 5 for humanities students (*Read an advertisement in the paper to find a good bicycle you can buy*).

The results also indicate that willingness to read is generally higher in students of humanities than in their colleagues studying sciences. With the exception of item 4, all other values illustrating willingness to read inside the classroom are greater in students of humanities, the difference being significant in four of the six items (items 1, 3, 5 and 6), as well as in the total result.

Similar results were obtained for willingness to read outside the classroom, as Table 3 illustrates below.

WILLINGNESS TO READ OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM				
Item	Students of	Mean	t	P
1	Sciences	3.65	3.045	.003
	Humanities	4.24		
2	Sciences	4.19	2.904	.004
	Humanities	4.61		
3	Sciences	3.96	4.305	.000
	Humanities	4.61		
4	Sciences	4.47	1.517	.131
	Humanities	4.67		
5	Sciences	4.06	2.725	.007
	Humanities	4.52		

6	Sciences	3.83	3.952	.000
	Humanities	4.51		
Total	Sciences	4.03	1.872	.063
	Humanities	4.34		

Table 3. Scores for willingness to read outside the classroom

The total values are generally high, equaling 4.34 for students of humanities and 4.03 for students of sciences. For both groups of participants, the smallest values are recorded in item 1 (*Read a novel*) and the highest in item 4 (*Read personal letters or notes written to you in which the writer has deliberately used simple words and constructions*).

Students of humanities again prove to be more willing to read than science students, but contrary to the previous results, the difference in relation to the total results is not significant ($p=0.63$). A significant difference, however, exists between the values recorded in five of the six items (all but item 4), supporting thus the view that willingness to read outside the classroom is stronger among students of humanities.

6.2. Correlation between orientation towards learning English and willingness to read

The results presented in this segment show the obtained correlation coefficients between the five types of orientation (job, travel, friendship, knowledge, achievement) and willingness to read inside the classroom (Table 4) and outside the classroom (Table 5).

READING INSIDE THE CLASSROOM		JOB	TRAVEL	FRIENDSHIP	KNOWLEDGE	ACHIEVEMENT
Students of sciences	r	-.211	-.412**	-.315**	-.188	-.301*
	p	.076	.000	.007	.144	.010
Students of humanities	r	-.194	-.185	-.108	-.009	.040
	p	.057	.069	.294	.931	.695
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.						
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.						

Table 4. Correlation between orientation and willingness to read inside the classroom

READING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM		JOB	TRAVEL	FRIENDSHIP	KNOWLEDGE	ACHIEVEMENT
Students of sciences	r	-.219	-.364**	-.285*	-.159	-.291*
	p	.065	.002	.015	.183	.013
Students of humanities	r	-.290**	-.191	-.103	-.091	-.104
	p	.004	.060	.316	.375	.309
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.						
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.						

Table 5. Correlation between orientation and willingness to read outside the classroom

As the above results show, there is a negative correlation between the students' willingness to read and their orientation for learning English. Except for one item (the correlation between willingness to read inside the classroom and college achievement in students of humanities), all other correlation values are negative. The results therefore clearly indicate that the degree of students' willingness to read does not depend on their orientation towards learning this language.

What is more, the negative correlation proves to be significant in three items regarding willingness to read inside the classroom (travel, friendship, and achievement in science students) as well as in four items related to willingness to read outside the classroom (travel, friendship and achievement in science students, and job in the case of students of humanities). In this respect, there is a difference between the two groups of participants, as the significant negative correlation is more frequent in science students (three out of five items) than in their colleagues studying humanities (only one item).

6.3. Correlation between perceived language competence and willingness to read

The results referring to the influence of self-perceived language competence on students' willingness to read inside and outside the classroom are presented in Tables 6 and 7.

READING INSIDE THE CLASSROOM		PERCEIVED LANGUAGE COMPETENCE
Students of sciences	r	.545**
	p	.001
Students of humanities	r	.360**
	p	.001
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.		
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.		

Table 6. Correlation between perceived competence and willingness to read inside the classroom

READING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM	PERCEIVED LANGUAGE COMPETENCE	
Students of sciences	r	.476**
	p	.000
Students of humanities	r	.297**
	p	.005
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.		
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.		

Table 7. Correlation between perceived competence and willingness to read outside the classroom

Contrary to the previous variable, self-perceived competence positively correlates with both reading situations. Moreover, in all cases the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, pointing to a very high level of dependence between the two variables. The obtained results, therefore, clearly demonstrate that the participants' willingness to read in English positively correlates with their perceived language competence.

7. DISCUSSION

Considering the results presented in the previous section, one may conclude that the participants in this research have shown a high level of willingness to read both inside and outside the ESP classroom, as the obtained means are greater than 4 (on a scale with values ranging from 1 to 5). The results thus support the first of the three hypotheses set at the beginning of the investigation (H1: The students' willingness to read is considerably high, since the skill is relevant for their studies and professional development). Of the six items focusing on reading inside the classroom and six items on students' willingness to read outside the classroom, the lowest recorded values for both groups of research participants refer to willingness to read a novel in English, inside and outside the classroom likewise. As this task involves extensive reading for pleasure, rather than reading something that is closely linked with one's studies and it requires genuine interest, it does seem demanding, which is why the obtained results are not surprising.

On the other hand, students' willingness to read proves to be highest in the context of reading personal communication such as letters and notes (item 4) among students of sciences, whereas students of humanities appear to be even slightly more willing to read advertisements in the papers (item 5), but only inside the classroom. It is noteworthy to mention in this respect that reading personal communication in the classroom is the only item where the scores of students of sciences are higher than those of students of humanities, suggesting that this is the only situation in which science students are more willing to communicate in English than their colleagues majoring in humanities.

Considering that the use of modern technological devices has greatly intensified written communication, especially among the younger generation, and that the amount of material advertised has drastically increased, the results obtained are not very surprising, given that they reflect these trends. On the other hand, these findings also suggest that the research participants in general opt for short, mostly personal texts, which is in line with Liu's (2005) findings regarding reading behaviour in the digital age, who reports that with an increasing amount of time spent reading electronic documents, a screen-based reading behaviour is emerging. This behaviour is characterized by more time spent on browsing and scanning, keyword spotting, one-time reading, non-linear reading, and reading more selectively, while less time is spent on in-depth reading and concentrated reading. Additionally, decreasing sustained attention is also noted.

The overall results on willingness to read also suggest that students of humanities appear to be more willing to apply this skill than their colleagues majoring in sciences. The difference is observed in both reading situations, in eleven items. These results may be associated with the influence of situational factors, i.e. the different contexts of studying humanities and sciences – studying humanities usually implies a more creative interpretation of various texts and a wider range of reading tasks, as well as longer texts, which might have influenced the differences in the results presented above.

Comparing the data in Tables 2 and 3, we may also conclude that students are generally just slightly more willing to read in English outside the classroom – in seven out of twelve items the mean score is higher for reading outside of the classroom than reading inside the classroom (with students of sciences, item 5 has the same score for both reading inside the classroom and outside it). Students of sciences, however, prove to prefer reading inside the classroom articles from a paper and personal letters written in simple words. While the first case can be explained by the fact that the activity of reading scientific papers is still largely believed to pertain to the classroom and students are generally reluctant to do this outside the classroom, it remains unclear why students would prefer reading personal letters inside the classroom. Students of humanities are generally also much more willing to read outside of the classroom, with the exception of reading advertisements (item 5), where the scores for reading inside the classroom were slightly higher than the scores for performing this activity outside of the classroom.

With respect to the second research hypothesis, related to the correlation of students' willingness to read and their orientation to learn English, the expectation was that instrumental orientation (job-related and college achievement) would correlate more strongly with willingness to read than any of the integrative types of orientation. However, the results of the study do not confirm these expectations as one cannot generalize over orientation types. Looking at the correlations among the willingness-to-read scales and the individual language learning orientations in the two groups of students, using an alpha level of 0.01, one finds that with

students of sciences the college achievement, travel and friendship orientations show a consistently weak to moderate negative linear relationship which is statistically significant. The job and knowledge orientations also show a weak negative correlation with this group's willingness to read, but the results are not statistically significant. In the case of humanities students, in the overwhelming majority of cases (9 out of 10) orientation shows a negative correlation with willingness to read, both inside the classroom and outside it. Only the college achievement orientation appears to show a weak to moderate uphill linear relationship with willingness to read inside the classroom, but the same does not hold of reading outside the classroom. On the other hand, the negative correlations recorded in the case of this group of research participants are statistically significant in only one of the ten cases, with the job orientation and reading outside the classroom. The results presented in Tables 4 and 5 thus fail to support H2, as willingness to read is not shown to be influenced by the students' orientation for learning English, nor does instrumental orientation (job-related and college achievement) correlate more strongly with willingness to read than integrative orientation.

Regarding the third part of the questionnaire, which was aimed at establishing whether willingness to read is dependent on the students' perception of their own English language competence, the results presented in Tables 6 and 7 above confirm beyond doubt H3, since for both groups of research participants perceived competence shows a weak to moderate positive correlation with their willingness to read, both inside the classroom and outside of it. In other words, the more competent the research participants judged themselves to be in English, the more willingness they showed to read in this language both inside the classroom and outside of it. Though all four results in this part of the test were statistically significant, it must be noted that the value of the correlation coefficient was higher in students of sciences, both inside the classroom and outside it.

Regarding the current study's implications for teaching, there are two segments of the teaching process that the obtained results shed light upon. The first refers to the selection of reading materials used in the ESP classroom. As the results of the present research on students' willingness to read have shown, young generations of students show a great interest in shorter and less formal forms of communication, this being one of the main characteristics of modern electronic communication. This further implies that the reading content of ESP courses today should be enriched with more authentic digital age materials, such as e-mail communication, internet group discussions and forums, subject-specific topics discussed on various social networks, etc. The second implication of the study is related to the teaching approach that is to be implemented in the classroom. Since the results have clearly stressed the importance of the students' self-perceived competence, modern ESP teaching should pay more attention to the students' affective domain in addition to insisting on practical reasons and demands for acquiring L2. In this respect, encouraging students, praising their L2 endeavors

and raising the awareness of their L2 communication potentials should be an integral part of any ESP teaching approach, particularly in teaching ESP to students whose professional orientation does not include languages and communication in general.

8. CONCLUDING REMARKS

A large body of past research (MacIntyre et al., 1998; Yashima, 2002; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011) has shown that willingness to communicate in a foreign language, perhaps best defined as the intention to initiate communication, given a choice, is affected by a number of interrelated variables, among which are the learner's personality, intergroup climate and attitudes, the social situation, communicative competence, and others. According to numerous authors, orientation towards learning a foreign language and perceived language competence are the two factors that strongly underlie willingness to communicate (Burroughs et al., 2003; Knell & Chi, 2012; MacIntyre et al., 2001). In this context, the present paper explored willingness to read in English as a foreign language between two groups of research participants who study English for specific purposes: students of humanities and students of sciences. The aim of the study was to establish to what extent the two groups of participants are willing to read inside and outside the classroom and to investigate if orientation and perceived language competence influence the students' willingness to apply this receptive skill. However, the findings of this research should certainly not be generalized over other ESP students or EFL learners. Rather, the observed correlations between self-perceived language competence in English and two groups of ESP students' willingness to read, as well as the negative values obtained by correlating orientations for learning English and willingness to read support a search for broader connections between WTC and the host of variables that may affect it. At this point, however, one should take into consideration certain limitations of the present study: the findings concerning the students' WTC refer to only one language skill, i.e. reading. In addition to this, only two groups of ESP students took part in the investigation. Future research should therefore focus on ESP students of different courses of study (e.g. technical sciences, arts, law, etc.), at different universities in Serbia before drawing any general conclusions regarding the influence of orientation and perceived language competence on ESP students' willingness to read and communicate in any of the four language skills. For the time being, the results of this study shed light on the importance of the affective domain within ESP methodology, particularly the role of perceived language competence in the learning process and general outcome.

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Appendix

The questionnaire

This questionnaire is anonymous and its results will be used for assessing the influence of orientation and perceived language competence on ESP students' willingness to read. Please read the following statements carefully and answer them according to the instructions given.

Year of studying: _____ Course of study: _____
Years of learning English: _____
Self-perceived English language competence (please circle): *poor* *fair* *excellent*

81

WILLINGNESS TO READ IN ENGLISH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Directions: The questionnaire is composed of statements concerning your feelings about communication with other people, in English. Please indicate in the space provided the frequency of time you are willing to use English to communicate inside and outside the classroom.

- 1 = Almost never willing
- 2 = Sometimes willing
- 3 = Willing half of the time
- 4 = Usually willing
- 5 = Almost always willing

Reading in English inside the classroom (to yourself, not out loud)

1. Read a novel.
2. Read an article in a paper.
3. Read letters from a pen pal written in native English.
4. Read personal letters or notes written to you in which the writer has deliberately used simple words and constructions.
5. Read an advertisement in the paper to find, for example, a good bicycle you can buy.
6. Read reviews for popular movies.

Reading in English outside the classroom

1. Read a novel.
2. Read an article in a paper.
3. Read letters from a pen pal written in native English.
4. Read personal letters or notes written to you in which the writer has deliberately used simple words and constructions.
5. Read an advertisement in the paper to find a good bicycle you can buy.
6. Read reviews for popular movies.

ORIENTATIONS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

In this part of the questionnaire, we are interested in your reasons for studying English. Please indicate the extent to which you consider each of the following to be important reasons for you to study English. Write the appropriate number in the space provided.

- 1 = Strongly agree
- 2 = Moderately agree
- 3 = Mildly agree
- 4 = Mildly disagree
- 5 = Moderately disagree
- 6 = Strongly disagree

Studying English is important to me because:

1. It will be useful in getting a good job. _____
2. I would like to travel to England. _____
3. I would like to meet some English people. _____
4. It will help me understand the English and their way of life. _____
5. I will need English for my career in the future. _____
6. I would like to go to the USA. _____
7. I would like to be friends with some English people. _____
8. It will help me to be successful in business. _____
9. It will help me to get a better paying job. _____
10. It will make me a more knowledgeable person. _____
11. It will help me if I travel. _____
12. It will enable me to make friends more easily among English-speaking people. _____
13. It will help me acquire new ideas and broaden my outlook. _____
14. I would like to travel to an English-speaking area. _____
15. It will help me get to know English-speaking people. _____
16. It will help me learn about myself. _____
17. It will help me to get good grades. _____
18. It will help me get into better schools later in life. _____
19. It will give me a better education. _____
20. I will get high marks in this course. _____