



Willingness to Communicate in Social Media: An Investigation of the Long-term Effects

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Abstract

This study reports on the effects of using social media on Thai EFL students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in English. An intact class of 40 university students was asked to use one particular type of social media program, Instagram, to post pictures of what they did in class and to reflect on their learning experience in English. WTC questionnaires were administered and the responses were then analyzed to investigate participants' willingness to use English in their communication. The findings revealed that participants' WTC in English was greater when using social media, compared with their WTC during class time. These findings were confirmed in a follow-up study with the same participants, indicating that social media had a significantly positive impact on learners' WTC. In light of these findings, this study draws attention to the potential of social media in encouraging English communication and willingness to use the language to communicate ideas, feelings, and opinions. The study concludes with implications of the findings for future research, pedagogy, and practice.

Keywords: computer-assisted language learning, social media, Willingness to Communicate

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Introduction

In many English as a foreign language (EFL) environments, for example in Thailand, the language classroom appears to be the only place for target language exposure and use for most learners, with online opportunities more reserved for highly motivated learners. Although certain approaches such as communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based language teaching (TBLT) are employed, they may produce language learners who are *capable* of communicating but are not *willing* to try to use the target language to engage with others (MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, & Noels, 1998). As reported in the literature (e.g., Bennui, 2008; Kamprasertwong, 2010; Pattapong, 2013) and as experienced on a daily basis by most Thai teachers of English, it is typical to see Thai EFL learners being reluctant to use English in class. Also, it is not unusual to find Thai EFL learners who do not participate in English even though they might want to, or when they do, do not do so voluntarily (Wattana, 2013). Interaction in the second and foreign language (L2) has been argued to play a role in creating language learning opportunities (Long, 1996) and facilitating the process of language acquisition (Swain, 1985). It is therefore particularly important to ask how teachers can encourage learners to use the language as much as possible both in and, indeed, beyond the classroom. Due to a profound impact of recent developments in computer-assisted language learning (CALL), technologies have been quickly embraced by language teachers to transform the way that L2 is learned, and, importantly, to enable new opportunities for learners to use the language willingly. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the effects of one type of technology, the social media program *Instagram*, on WTC.

Review of literature

Willingness to communicate

WTC has recently become an important concept in second language acquisition (SLA). The construct is defined as an individual's 'readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2' (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547) and it is regarded as a final step before actual L2 use (MacIntyre et al., 1998). An increase in WTC has been found to

be important to L2 acquisition (Ellis, 2004), and, especially, L2 communication (Clément, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004). Dörnyei (2003) asserts that learners need to be not only *able* but also *willing* to communicate in L2. Accordingly, language instruction to improve learners' ability to communicate should be combined with opportunities to increase their WTC, and the encouragement of WTC should thus be a fundamental goal of L2 pedagogy (Dörnyei, 2001; MacIntyre et al., 1998).

Previous WTC studies (e.g., Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Yashima, 2012; Yashima et al., 2004) have placed a great emphasis on the exploration of variables that influence WTC. Meanwhile, a number of studies (e.g., Aubrey, 2011; Cao, 2006; Kang, 2005; Noon-ura, 2008; Pattapong, 2013; Wang, 2011) have used these findings and translated them into actionable implications for classroom teaching, revealing particular strategies teachers can employ to help their learners to become more willing to use the L2. One of the identified variables is the integration of technologies into the teaching and learning process, because they can play a key role in encouraging learners to feel free to communicate in ways and with means they are used to in their daily lives (Reinders & Wattana, 2014).

Jarrell and Freiermuth (2005) investigated the use of Internet chat as a means to increase 69 female Japanese L2 learners' interaction, motivation, and, consequently, WTC. The findings showed that the majority of their students preferred Internet chat to perform tasks to face-to-face interaction and they were more motivated to use English when communicating online. Students in this study also reported that they felt more relaxed and were able to use the L2 more. Given these findings, the authors emphasized the educational benefits of chat for increasing learners' WTC. In a related study (Freiermuth & Jarrell, 2006), by comparing the performing of tasks in the L2 during chat and face-to-face interaction among Japanese university students, both survey findings and analysis of the discourse produced convincing evidence that the majority of the students felt more intrinsically motivated to use English, less anxious about using English, produced more English, and, importantly, were more willing to communicate in English as a result of using chat.

In a recent study by Yanguas and Flores (2014), unlike other CMC studies which mainly involved the written mode, the authors made a challenging investigation of learners' WTC in the

oral mode. University students from two intact Spanish classes participated and were engaged in two decision-making tasks; one conducted via Skype and the other performed face to face. A descriptive analysis of the language production revealed that the majority of the participants actually produced a significantly greater number of turns, but not a greater number of words, in oral CMC. Although the quantity of L2 output was not greater, the findings could reflect learners' higher levels of WTC since their contributions were more frequent. The authors concluded that the significant increase in the number of turns in oral CMC might indicate that participants felt less anxious and more motivated.

Social Media and Language Learning

In the area of CALL, social media technologies have been said to offer great promise for language learning, as evidenced in numerous journal articles, book chapters (e.g., Blattner & Fiori, 2009; Brick, 2011; Forlano, 2009; Meskill & Quah, 2012), and dedicated volumes (e.g., Lamy & Zourou, 2013; Lomika & Lord, 2009). Because of the social nature of social media, the tools can encourage language socialization and engagement with communicative practice in a meaningful way (Mills, 2011; Stevenson & Liu, 2010). A wide range of social media tools are now available to teachers, such as blogs (e.g., WordPress), social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), Microblogs (e.g., Twitter), Wikis (e.g., Wikipedia), Video Podcasts, RSS Feeds, virtual worlds (e.g., online games), and Photo sharing sites (e.g., Instagram).

When supplementing traditional reading and writing courses, social media have been found to present pedagogical potential for practising language skills (Lee, 2010), developing language competence (Dieu, 2004), improving grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and language awareness (Wu & Wu, 2011). A number of studies have shown that, when used for the development of communicative skills, social media can provide opportunities for learners to interact with others using the L2 (Thorne, 2009; Toetenel, 2014). Toetenel (2014) examined the use of the social networking site *Ning* as a means of informal language practice in a classroom setting with 15 foreign college students in the UK. *Ning* sessions were carried out for an hour a day for a two-week period and students were asked to contribute to the site (by updating their status, posting comments, and responding to their friends), keep diaries, and complete two sets of questionnaires — one administered at the end of the first session and the other one during the

final session. The study found that using *Ning* in the classroom resulted in increased group cohesion, learner-to-learner interactions, and use of informal language.

Social media have been also investigated for other affective responses or attitudinal effects and showed some positive effects in increased confidence (Thorne, 2009; Wu & Wu, 2011), increased motivation (Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Lee, 2010), reduced anxiety (Stevenson & Liu, 2010), decreased shyness (Bosch, 2009), and more positive attitudes towards language learning (Thorne, 2009; Toetenel, 2014), which could positively affect their willingness to interact with other learners. Lloyd (2012) conducted a case study examining the use of *Livemocha* with eight university students taking 10-week elective language modules at a university in the UK. *Livemocha* was introduced to them as a means of practising their oral skills outside class time. Students were asked to complete two questionnaires (one examining the connection between learners' personality types and their WTC in the L2 with *Livemocha* language partners, and the other checking how often participants used social media), record what they actually did in *Livemocha*, and attend four focus-group sessions at two-week intervals discussing their experience in the site. The findings showed that social media was useful for language learners with different personality types. Even though some of the participants were found to be introverted, they were clearly quite willing to use the L2 when using social media. The study also showed higher levels of motivation for practising the L2 and an increase in learners' WTC in *Livemocha*.

Online games, such as 'massively multiplayer online role-playing games' (MMORPGs), have been found to offer potential benefits in fostering certain aspects of the variables influencing WTC because of their characteristics, which may help to lower anxiety while increasing confidence and motivation (deHaan, 2005; Peterson, 2010, 2011, 2012; Zhao & Lai, 2009). This is evident in a pilot study (Reinders & Wattana, 2012) investigating the use of the MMORPG *Ragnarok Online* in a Thai EFL class, and the effects gameplay had on learners' interaction and WTC. Fourteen university students were engaged in three computer game sessions and completed questionnaires gauging their WTC during gameplay. In addition to their positive questionnaire responses, their remarkably increased L2 use indicated that their WTC appeared to be enhanced by playing games. These findings were congruent with subsequent investigations (Reinders & Wattana, 2014, 2015; Wattana, 2013) which were carried out with a

greater number of students (N = 30), over a longer period of time (i.e., 6 computer game sessions in a 15-week semester), and using a wider range of data sources (questionnaires, observations of participant interactions within the game and interviews).

Despite the widespread use of social media for educational purposes, there appear to be no significant and consistent efforts examining the use of social media in language learning (Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Toetenel, 2014). Although previous studies have revealed benefits of the use of social media for achieving affective states that can influence L2 learning, more empirical research is needed to determine the impact social media has on different aspects of SLA, and in particular WTC. Our study therefore focused on the use of one particular type of social media, Instagram, to determine its effects on enhancing participants' WTC.

Methodology

The study employed a straightforward pre-test-post-test design. Participants were given questionnaires to determine their level of WTC before and after the treatment, which involved the use of Instagram in class. The research question was:

How does the use of Instagram influence Thai EFL learners' willingness to communicate in English?

Participants

The study was conducted in one intact class with 40 Thai university students. They were enrolled in a 15-week course of English for Information Technology 1, offered in semester 1, and of English for Information Technology 2, offered in semester 2. These two courses were taught by one of the researchers. Each course met weekly for two 90-minute sessions. All participants were third-year IT majors. Twenty-three of them were male and 17 were female, all aged between 20 and 25 years old. Participants had different English language proficiency levels and reported their limited use of and exposure to the target language. Prior to the study, all participants had experience in learning settings combining face-to-face teaching and technology-mediated language learning. They also reported that they normally used social media as part of

their leisure time, particularly Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. It is therefore reasonable to expect no or little novelty effect.

Research design

During the first phase conducted in semester 1, the study involved discovering participants' WTC in English beforehand. In the first week of the course, participants completed the first part of the WTC questionnaire, to determine their level of WTC particularly *inside* the language classroom. The study then involved engaging participants in the use of social media throughout the course (see the following section). After 15 weeks, when the course finished, the second part of the WTC questionnaire was administered. This asked specific questions about participants' WTC in English using *social media*. We then compared participants' WTC *in class* with their WTC in using *social media*. In the second phase of the study, conducted in semester 2, the same participants took part in the same type of social media use and after another 15 weeks again completed the second part of the WTC questionnaire. The purpose was to ascertain whether there were long-term effects of the use of social media on learners' WTC.

Intervention and how it was implemented

The intervention involved the use of one type of social media, Instagram, an online mobile photo- and video-sharing application which allows users to take photos and videos and share them on social networking sites. A major pedagogical objective for using this type of social media was to give participants opportunities to reflect on their learning experiences. Throughout the course they were required to take pictures during class time and share them with a one-sentence summary of their learning experience of that day's class. The teacher encouraged them to respond in English to the teacher's and their friends' posts. There was no restriction in the number and length of turns, as well as the nature of interaction which could be sharing ideas/opinions, providing information, giving comments, questioning, expressing agreement, or joking. Since the rules for participation were not explicit, the amount of discussion generated could vary from learner to learner. The other objectives of using social media in our teaching practice were to offer participants natural exposure to the target language and foster increased

opportunities to communicate in the target language outside the language class and, in turn, develop their WTC.

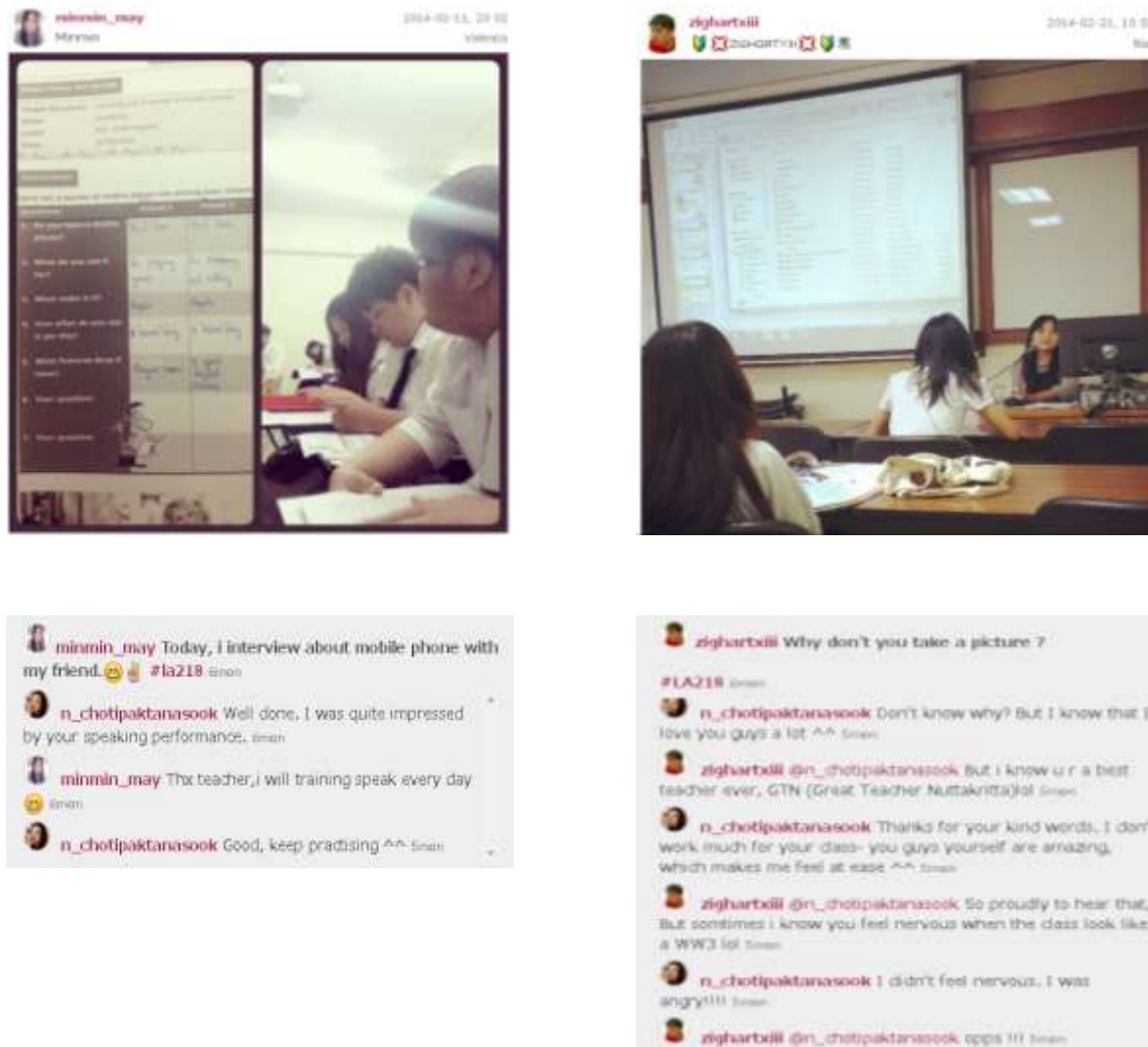


Figure 1 The use of Instagram (picture used with permission of the participants)

Measurement

WTC was operationally defined as students' *readiness to engage in communication in the target language at a particular moment and situation*. Guided by Wattana's (2013) study, such

readiness was determined through individual's a) perceptions of willingness to use English, b) communicative self-confidence (i.e., a combination of low communication anxiety and sufficient self-perceived communicative competence), and c) frequency of English use. Unlike in Wattana's study, these three aspects were included in both sets of WTC questionnaire. The first one gauged participants' WTC in *class* and was administered prior to the social media activity, to obtain baseline data. The second one measured their WTC in using *social media* and was administered twice; once after each of the two 15-week periods in the course. The overall reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha (α)) of the first WTC questionnaires was .891 and of the second questionnaire .914, suggesting that the questionnaires displayed acceptable levels of reliability.

Data collection and analysis

Questionnaire data was analyzed using SPSS for both descriptive and inferential statistics. Participants' 'positive' perceptions of WTC in English, 'high' communicative self-confidence, and 'high' frequency of target language use could suggest their 'high' willingness to engage in English communication, and vice versa. In order to determine the differences between learners' WTC in *class* and *social media*, a paired-samples t-test (with an alpha level of .05) was performed. To indicate effect size, Cohen's *d* (1988) was subsequently calculated. Effect sizes of 0.2, 0.5, and 0.8 were interpreted as 'small,' 'medium,' and 'large,' respectively.

We were primarily interested at this point in identifying the impact of the use of Instagram on WTC and for this reason used quantitative data and analysis. We did not include qualitative analysis at this point but hope to do so in a follow-up study.

Results

Perceptions of WTC in English in the classroom and in using social media

As shown in Table 1, the overall mean of 2.30 ($SD = .60$) indicated that participants perceived themselves to be somewhat unwilling to use English to complete communication tasks in *class*. However, their perceptions tended to be more positive after using Instagram for the first 15-week period; the results showed they felt somewhat willing to use English in using *social media* ($M =$

4.05, $SD = .25$). The paired-samples t-test results indicated that participants hold significantly more positive perceptions of their WTC in English in using *social media* ($M = 20.30$, $SD = 2.71$) than they did during *class* time ($M = 11.52$, $SD = 4.47$), $t(39) = 16.85$, $p < 0.001$. The effect size was large ($d = .76$).

Table 1
Participants' Perceptions of WTC in English in the Classroom and in using Social Media

Communication tasks	Classroom		Social Media I		Social Media II	
	M (SD)	Interpretation	M (SD)	Interpretation	M (SD)	Interpretation
Talk to my friends in English.	2.52 (1.32)	Neutral	4.22 (.69)	Somewhat willing	4.40 (.59)	Somewhat willing
Communicate ideas/ feelings/ opinions in English.	2.15 (1.07)	Somewhat unwilling	4.05 (.67)	Neutral	4.22 (.57)	Somewhat willing
Ask and answer questions in English.	1.32 (.72)	Very unwilling	3.62 (.62)	Somewhat willing	4.02 (.42)	Somewhat willing
Read comments/feedback given in English.	2.67 (1.11)	Somewhat unwilling	4.25 (.63)	Somewhat willing	4.50 (.50)	Very willing
Give explanations in English.	2.85 (1.00)	Neutral	4.15 (.69)	Somewhat willing	4.32 (.47)	Somewhat willing
Overall Mean	2.30 (.60)	Somewhat unwilling	4.05 (.25)	Somewhat willing	4.29 (.18)	Somewhat willing

The results after the second 15-week period (so 30 weeks from the start of the study), participants' perceptions towards WTC in English in using *social media* remained positive, and in fact increased somewhat ($M = 4.29$, $SD = .18$). One response in the questionnaire stood out for the dramatic change it represented; participants were now very willing to read comments in

English in using *social media* ($M = 4.50, SD = .50$). The paired-samples t-test results did confirm significantly more positive perceptions of their WTC in English in using *social media* after a 30-week period ($M = 21.47, SD = 1.92$) than they did during *class* time when their perceptions were measured in the first week of the semester 1 ($M = 11.52, SD = 4.47$), $t(39) = 17.86, p < 0.001$. Again, the effect size was large ($d = .82$).

Communicative self-confidence in the classroom and social media

Overall, participants showed low communicative self-confidence when using English in *class* ($M = 1.65, SD = .18$, see Table 2). Clearly, they were very anxious ($M = 1.69, SD = .18$) and did not perceive themselves as competent ($M = 1.60, SD = .19$) to communicate in English during *class* time. There was, however, a change when the results revealed the combination of low anxiety ($M = 4.62, SD = .08$) and high perceived communicative competence ($M = 4.15, SD = .27$), which reflected participants' high communicative self-confidence ($M = .38, SD = .31$) when using English in *social media* for one semester. According to the paired-samples t-test analysis, participants showed higher communicative self-confidence in using *social media* ($M = 43.90, SD = 3.72$) than during *class* time ($M = 16.52, SD = 5.10$). There was a statistically significant difference $t(39) = 31.86, p < 0.001$, with a large effect size (d) of .96.

Table 2*Participants' Communicative Self-Confidence in the Classroom and in using Social Media*

Statements	Classroom		Social Media I		Social Media II	
	M (SD)	Interpretation	M (SD)	Interpretation	M (SD)	Interpretation
Anxiety items						
I am not afraid of making mistakes.	1.62 (1.05)	Disagree	4.52 (.55)	Strongly Agree	4.67 (.47)	Strongly Agree
I am worried that I will not understand what my friends say in English.*	1.75 (.86)	Agree	4.55 (.55)	Strongly disagree	4.65 (.48)	Strongly disagree
I feel nervous about using English while participating in class (social media)*	1.42 (.63)	Strongly agree	4.70 (.46)	Strongly disagree	4.77 (.42)	Strongly disagree
I feel comfortable sharing my ideas/ feelings/ opinions with my friends.	1.82 (.98)	Disagree	4.70 (.46)	Strongly agree	4.77 (.42)	Strongly agree
In general, I find communicating in English in classroom (social media) relaxing.	1.87 (.72)	Disagree	4.65 (.48)	Strongly agree	4.75 (.43)	Strongly agree
<i>All anxiety items</i>	<i>1.69 (.18)</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>4.62 (.08)</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>4.72 (.05)</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>

Perceived communicative competence items

I find it difficult to communicate in English.*	1.40 (.84)	Strongly agree	4.55 (.50)	Strongly disagree	4.60 (.49)	Strongly disagree
I can say what I want to say in English.	1.50 (.81)	Disagree	4.00 (.67)	Agree	4.22 (.47)	Agree
I think my friends cannot understand me because of my poor English.*	1.87 (.85)	Agree	3.90 (.87)	Disagree	4.17 (.59)	Disagree
I know the words required for communicating in English.	1.50 (.87)	Disagree	4.00 (.59)	Agree	4.15 (.53)	Agree
I think participating in class (social media) help me develop my fluency.	1.75 (.63)	Disagree	4.32 (.57)	Agree	4.45 (.50)	Agree
<i>All perceived communicative competence items</i>	<i>1.60 (.19)</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>4.15 (.27)</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>4.31 (.19)</i>	<i>Agree</i>
Overall Mean	1.65 (.18)	Disagree	4.38 (.31)	Agree	4.52 (.25)	Strongly Agree

Note. *Responses for these items were reversed.

The results after the second 15-week period were similar; participants reported low anxiety ($M = 4.72$, $SD = .05$) and high perceived communicative competence ($M = 4.31$, $SD = .19$). This clearly reflects their high communicative self-confidence ($M = 4.52$, $SD = .25$). When statistical analysis was performed, participants, again, showed higher communicative self-confidence while using English in *social media* ($M = 45.22$, $SD = 2.99$) than they did in *class* ($M = 16.52$, $SD = 5.10$). This difference was statistically significant $t(39) = 34.81$, $p < 0.001$, with a very large effect size ($d = .96$).

Frequency of English use in the classroom and social media

The findings suggested that participants rarely used English during *class* time ($M = 1.67$, $SD = .27$) whereas they often used it in *social media* ($M = 4.00$, $SD = .25$), as shown in Table 3. The paired-samples t-test results confirmed that participants used English in *social media* ($M = 20.05$, $SD = 2.77$) more frequently than they did in *class* time ($M = 8.37$, $SD = 2.65$), $t(39) = 29.11$, $p < 0.001$. The effect size was very large ($d = .90$).

Table 3

Participants' Self-Reported Use of English in the Classroom and in using Social Media

Communication tasks	Classroom		Social Media I		Social Media II	
	M (SD)	Interpretation	M (SD)	Interpretation	M (SD)	Interpretation
I use English to communicate with my friends.	1.87 (.75)	Rarely	4.20 (.72)	Often	4.52 (.50)	Always
I use English to check meaning.	1.55 (.63)	Rarely	4.00 (.71)	Often	4.30 (.46)	Often
I use English to ask questions.	1.32 (.57)	Never	3.57 (.63)	Often	3.92 (.47)	Often
I use English for simple interactions.	1.60 (.54)	Rarely	4.20 (.64)	Often	4.45 (.50)	Often
I use English only when I participate in social media.	2.02 (.80)	Rarely	4.07 (.69)	Often	4.42 (.50)	Often
Overall Mean	1.67 (.27)	Rarely	4.00 (.25)	Often	4.32 (.23)	Often

After the second 15-week period, participants' responses suggested their high frequency ($M = 4.32$, $SD = .23$) of the use of English. The most observable was when participants reported

that they always used English only while engaged in *social media* ($M = 4.52$, $SD = .50$). The paired-samples t-test results exhibited participants' greater frequency of English use in *social media* ($M = 21.62$, $SD = 1.79$) than in *class* time ($M = 8.37$, $SD = 2.65$), $t(39) = 35.00$, $p < 0.001$. The effect size was very large ($d = .90$).

Discussion

Our study addressed the question how the use of CALL, and in particular the use of one type of social media application (Instagram), affects Thai EFL learners' willingness to use the target language. The results show that learners exhibited high WTC when engaging in the use of Instagram, felt positive about their willingness to use English, became confident to communicate in English, and self-reported that they frequently produced target language output. It is also verifiable from the findings that participants demonstrated a statistically greater WTC in *social media* than in *class*. This is consistent with previous CALL studies which also reported that learners interacting online were more willing to communicate than those engaging in face-to-face interaction (e.g., Freiermuth & Jarrell, 2006; Reinders & Wattana, 2014, 2015; Wattana, 2013; Yanguas & Flores, 2014). Thus, the findings of this current study can reaffirm and extend the usefulness of online interaction as activities for engendering learners' WTC. However, the exciting point of this study is that the increased level of WTC was also noticeable after our participants continually took part in social media use over an extended period of time. This suggests that the results we found were not due to novelty effects and that the use of Instagram can have long-term benefits. From a WTC perspective, social media can be a powerful tool for offering language learners opportunities to feel more confident and more willing to practise and use the target language. This is mainly due to the key affordances of social media environments – free communication of ideas, social interaction, and the presence of an authentic audience. By using social media in the language classroom, we can help our students to improve their WTC, which is a requisite for the success of any language program (Dörnyei, 2001; MacIntyre et al., 1998). Clearly, increased WTC is essential to L2 development since it can result in increased L2 production.

Several pedagogical implications pertaining to English language teaching and learning can be drawn from this study. Our findings first suggest that the use of Instagram can enhance

learners' WTC. Because the characteristics of Instagram that make it a type of social media are found in many such applications, their implementation in the foreign language classroom holds promise for increasing student engagement and WTC. Our findings may motivate teachers to adopt the use of social media to provide their learners with more opportunities for language use, while at the same time encouraging their willingness to use the target language beyond the classroom. This may require curriculum designers and materials developers to consider the integration of social media in language teaching resources more widely than has been the case so far.

The effectiveness of social media might depend on learners' needs and learning activities, and the understanding and abilities of the teacher to plan, design, and make use of technologies. Reinders (2009) points out that teachers should have the ability to apply the technology, create activities using the technology, and teach with the technology. This is to suggest that pedagogy should be a fundamental consideration in the design of CALL activities, and that technologies should be selected for class because their use and outcome can meet the learning goals and pedagogical approaches, not just because they are new or popular. At a practical level, this implies the need for specific training, time, resources and pedagogical support so that teachers can integrate technologies in an appropriate way.

Like all studies, ours has a few limitations. Most importantly, the study was conducted with only one teacher and one class. It is possible that this teacher and her enthusiasm for technology, or certain characteristics of this group of learners, affected the results. This means we have to be careful in generalising from our findings. Secondly, we only obtained results for students' perceptions of their WTC in class at the start of the course; it is possible that over time not only their WTC in using social media but also their WTC in class went up, but we do not know. Future studies will need to find ways to control for such variables. Future studies could also look at measuring language production, in addition to self-report data. This is because what learners think about communicating might be different from how they actually communicate (Clément et al., 2003; Yashima et al., 2004).

While some might argue that social media like Instagram are not directly intended for educational purposes and have not much to do with language learning, the benefits of their use for improving WTC are promising indeed. Especially in EFL settings this seems a particularly

valuable contribution to encouraging learners to become more active participants in the learning process, and to develop positive attitudes towards communicating in English; assets that will be valuable to them both inside and outside the classroom.

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