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EMPLOYING SOCIAL MEDIA BASED WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE (WTC) MODULE IN ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL INSTRUCTION

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Abstract:

Having a sense of willingness to communicate (WTC) in the 2nd language (L2) is one of the important factors in improving ESL students' speaking skills. WTC model is used as an indicator for successful English learning outcome. This study looks at the impact of the employment of WTC on ESL students' speaking skill by integrating the employment of social media applications in a digital English-Speaking classroom setting. This study employs multi-methods approach using purposive sampling technique involving questionnaire responses of 421 students to identify successful WTC strategies to be integrated in the module; a pre- and post-test to look at impact of the module and focus group interview of 17 pre-university students to investigate their opinion on the module. The findings of the study revealed that students' WTC were very much influenced by the use of social media applications in a digital classroom. The interview data also showed that students were more engaged and had higher WTC when social media applications were used. These findings are seen as valuable input especially to English language instructors in integrating social media applications in their teaching and learning in order to engage and increase their WTC in English in the classroom.

Keywords:

Willingness to Communicate (WTC), Social Media, Digital Classroom, ESL Students; Pre-University

Introduction

The English language is viewed as a critical mode of communication within the community, particularly at higher education institutions in Malaysia and in the workplace. With regards to Malaysia, the English language has been given the status of a second official language next to Bahasa Melayu which is the official language of the country. However, this is argued by Wahi, et. al (2011) that English language may not essentially be the second language for Malaysian students as it could be the first, second, foreign or even 'alien' to some students.

This is determined by the locality of where the students live. Students from urban area for example have a wider exposure to the language compared to those who are staying in the rural area. They have a wider contact to the English language and may come from homes where English is used that leads to their competency in communicating in English (Gobel, et.al., 2013). On the other hand, students who live in rural areas are most likely to be using their mother tongues as the medium of communication in the household. Compared to the students in the urban area, they have minimal or no contact to English outside of school and they are not in the environment where they are able to practice the language learnt in school.

Therefore, due to these restrains that students face, it is noted that, despite learning English for six years at elementary schools and five years in secondary school, Malaysian students' English oral competency level has always been an obstacle in securing success at university level as well as in job opportunities. It was also reported that one of the contributing factors why school leavers and graduates are unable to secure a good job is because of their poor command in English (Spawa & Hassan, 2013).

This report is supported by a survey conducted by the Malaysian Government on Malaysian graduates of local universities where it was found that two out of three main reasons for the 60,000 Malaysian graduates failed to be employed are related to their proficiency in the English language. First, the graduates have poor English Language proficiency and second, they have poor oral communication skills in English (Rajeandram, 2016), which is influenced by their inter group communication in the classroom. This is further supported by Liu (2005) and Peng (2014) in their studies that students' reluctance to engage in activities involving authentic oral communication in L2 has been a major concern in both English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) context.

While English is widely spoken in Malaysia, there have been concerns about its declining standards, with educationists and employers observing that graduates are unable to use the language proficiently which resulted in the high level of unemployment rate among graduates (Ting et al., 2017). Ting stated that the high unemployment rate among graduates is often attributed to their lack of English proficiency and communication skills. The minister of Entrepreneur

Development and Cooperatives (MEDAC), Datuk Seri Dr. Wan Junaidi Jaafar, further corroborates this statement as he mentioned that lack of English proficiency has caused graduates to be less desired in the market (Hani, 2021). Students' reluctance in speaking English can be related to their unwillingness to communicate in the target language during the teaching and learning process. According to Kang (2005); "Willingness to Communicate (WTC) is an individual's volitional inclination towards actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential situational variables". In other words, the speaker's willingness to communicate in a specific situation are affected by various factors such as the topic, their interest and the conversational context (Kang, 2005) they are in.

Thus, having a good command of English among undergraduate students is the key in the success of teaching and learning of English in the higher learning institutions of countries that are heavily populated by non-native speakers of English. Recognizing that English is an important language needed by the society in general, the Malaysian Ministry of Education (MOE) is determined to enhance students' competency in the language. Due to this, a lot of emphasis was given on the importance of the English language among undergraduate students. Mohd. Noh and Abdullah (2019) stated that the Malaysian Education Blueprint (MEB) took urgent action to enable students to become an all-rounded global citizen in the 21st century, which has led to the establishment of The English Language Standards and Quality Council (ELSQC). This council was set up to produce a roadmap to address the fundamental problem faced by the young people of today to cope with the globalization era which requires them to have a good proficiency in the English language. Hence, MOE launched the English Language Education Reform in Malaysia: The Roadmap 2015-2025 which is a clear indication by the ministry to bring about a substantial improvement in the students' proficiency in the English language (Mohd. Don & Abdullah, 2019). It is a 10-year reform plan to develop an effective and proficient user of the English language.

This goes hand in hand with the Act 550 (Education Act, 1996) whereby the purpose of education is to enable the Malaysian society to have a command of knowledge, skills and values necessary in a world that is highly competitive and globalized that arises from the impact of rapid development in science, technology and information where the English language is the main source of information.

As a result, the requirement for effective communication is thought required in order to engage in meaningful engagement with others. Thus, developing a sense of WTC in a second language (L2) is seen as a critical aspect in enhancing students' English as a L2 students' speaking ability (MacIntyre et al., 1998). The performance of students in English, particularly in higher education institutions, has long been a source of worry for the Ministry of Education. This is because graduate unemployment is prevalent owing to a lack of communication skills and limited English ability (Spawa & Hassan, 2013).

Thus, WTC is a model that is employed in educational settings as a predictor of good English outcomes. WTC is supposed to assist the language acquisition process by increasing students' propensity to converse in English, which results in greater opportunities for second language practise. In accordance to that, the overall purpose of this study is to examine the effect of

employing willingness to communicate on the speaking abilities of English as a second language students through the integration of social media applications in a digital English-Speaking classroom setting.

Social Presence Theory

Social presence was first conceptualized by Short et al. (1976) and defined as the importance of the interaction partners and their interpersonal relationship during a mediated conversation. According to Short et al., intimacy and immediacy are the two core components of social presence. These two concepts are closely related. Intimacy refers to the sense of connectedness felt by interlocutors during an interaction, while immediacy refers to the psychological distance between interlocutors. Both intimacy and immediacy are determined by verbal and nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, voice, gestures, and physical appearance (Gunawardena & Zittle, 1997). Short and colleagues argued that some media are better able to convey these cues while others are not. They emphasized that social presence is a "property of the medium itself" (Short et al., 1976, p. 65).

Short et al. were the first to describe social presence as the important element of the interaction partners and their interpersonal relationship during a mediated discourse. The two essential components of social presence, according to Short et al. were intimacy and immediacy. These two ideas are inextricably linked. Interlocutors' feelings of togetherness during contact is referred to as intimacy, while the psychological distance between them is referred to as immediacy. Both verbal and nonverbal clues, such as facial expressions, voice, gestures, and physical appearance, determine intimacy and immediacy (Gunawardena & Zittle, 1997). Short and colleagues claimed that some media are better than others at conveying these indications. They stressed the importance of social presence as a "feature of the medium itself" (Short et al., 1976, p. 65).

Online social presence is defined as a degree of feeling connected to, observing, and reacting to another person without being physically present in the same area when it comes to online learning (Kim et al., 2016; Tu & McIsaac, 2002). In online education, social presence is especially important since it helps to build a learning environment (Caspi & Blau, 2008). This is supported by Le et al. (2018), who discovered that social presence has been investigated in the context of online learning. Research studies have shown that there is also a link between students' views of social presence and their perceptions of learning and learner satisfaction (Richardson & Swan, 2003; So & Brush, 2008). This is important because their social presence influences their involvement during class (Le. et al., 2018)

Origins of Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

Back in the late 1950s and early 60s in North America (McCroskey, 1997), the notion of WTC emerged from the work on communication where interpersonal communication in the native language is strongly valued (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990). McCroskey & Richmond (1990) and McCroskey (1997) discovered that the difference of communication behaviours was conceptualised as regularly occurring across situations, as determined by certain personality traits. This concept was called "willingness to communicate" (McCroskey & Richmond, 1987). It was then defined as "as a stable predisposition toward communication when free to choose to do so" (McCroskey & Baer, 1985, cited in MacIntyre & Charos, 1996, p.7).

In the beginning, WTC was developed to indicate a consistent tendency of communication behaviours in the native language (L1) across interpersonal communication situations (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990; McCroskey, 1997). It was conceptualised as a cognitive process of volitional choice to speak, which is determined by an individual's personality (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990). Based on McCroskey's research and a review of other studies on L1 WTC, McCroskey (1997) argued that WTC in L1 is highly dependent on two major antecedents: Communication Apprehension and Self-Perceived Communication Competence (McCroskey, 1997). Communication Apprehension (CA) is viewed as "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey, 1997, p. 82). It was found that people with a high level of CA are likely to be less willing to communicate. Also, researchers (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990) found that WTC is more highly related to Self-Perceived Communication Competence (SPCC) more than actual competence (McCroskey, 1997). Self-Perceived Communication Competence refers to the perception of one's ability to communicate appropriately in a particular situation. However, McCroskey and Richmond (2007) argued that there are other significant antecedents of WTC apart from CA and SPCC which are Motivation, Personality and Content and Context.

The original construct of WTC implies its trait-like nature that remains stable across time and situations. However, researchers (e.g., McCroskey and Richmond, 1990) have acknowledged that WTC is also dependent on specific situations which is known as state-like, where it can change according to situation and context. Based on this, MacIntyre, et. al. (1998) have developed a heuristic model of WTC in a L2 context.

Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

WTC is a relatively new concept in second language acquisition (SLA). It is defined as an individual's willingness to engage in conversation at a specific time with a specific person or people using L2 (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

The WTC model was originally formulated and coined by McCroskey & Bear, (1935), for first language speakers. It was further developed by Macintyre et.al. (1998) and adapted WTC to the second language situation in a model that is intended to explain individual and contextual influences in the choice to initiate second language communication.

The model is made of 6 layers with 12 constructs as shown in Figure 1 below, which integrates psychological, linguistic and communicative variables to describe, explain, and predict second language communication. Willingness to communicate construct plays an important role in second language (L2) teaching and learning. Different researchers have employed different ways to explore the construct of WTC to explain why some language learners seek, while others avoid second language communication.

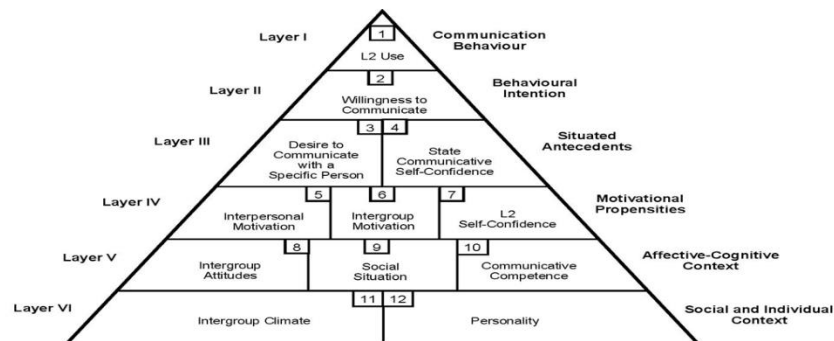


Figure 1: Willingness to Communicate in Social Media

Source: MacIntyre et. al (1998)

Language learning and teaching beyond the classroom (LBC) is emerging as a field ripe for the development of new research agendas (Benson & Reinders 2011; Nunan & Richards 2015). Hence, the transition from face-to-face teaching and learning to online language learning is viewed as a novel approach to English learning, as evidenced by students' increased engagement in social media activities (Malyndra et al., 2020). As a result, educators' best option for continuing their teaching and learning online is digital communication platforms. Digital communication platforms are online platforms that enable individuals or groups to interact. Apart from commercial applications, it could also be used as an educational platform for educators to deliver their teaching and learning online. To optimise these interactions, each platform has developed its own set of rules. For educational institutions, this is a step forward because it enables them to manage a method of distance education that benefits both the institution and the student. Educators use a variety of platforms in their teaching and learning, including Google Meet, Google Classroom, Zoom, Webex, and Microsoft Teams.

Numerous research studies have been undertaken on the relationship between WTC and social media (Lee & Hsieh, 2019; Jarrell & Freiermuth, 2005; Reinder & Wattanna, 2015) to determine the influence of social media on students' WTC in English in the classroom.

A research study by Jarrell and Freiermuth (2005) examined the use of Internet chat to increase the interaction, motivation, and, as a result, the WTC of 69 female Japanese L2 learners increased. The data suggested that the majority of their students preferred Internet chat over face-to-face interaction when completing tasks and that they were more motivated to converse in English while communicating online. Additionally, students reported feeling more comfortable and able to use the L2 more frequently in this study. In view of these data, Jarrell and Freiermuth (2005) emphasised the educational benefits of chat for increasing learners' WTC.

In a related study (Freiermuth & Jarrell, 2006), both survey and discourse analysis revealed convincing evidence that the majority of students felt more intrinsically motivated to use English, were less anxious about using English, produced more English, and, most importantly, were more willing to communicate in English as a result of the course.

Factors Affecting Students' Willingness to Communicate in a Digital Context

A wide range of researches on ESL and EFL WTC has been carried out in different countries, particularly in the Western countries, also in countries like Japan, Korea, Turkey, China, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia to name a few. These researches looked into the different issues relating to students' WTC in English in various contexts.

The use of digital technologies can be one of the ways to create a real and enjoyable atmosphere for students as well as teachers. Teachers are able to carry out their classes online using the educational digital platform as the tools for their teaching and learning process.

Students' online participation falls into three distinct groups (Mason, 1994) which are active participants, lurkers (those who read but do not post messages) and inactive participants who do not take part at all during the online class. Taylor (2002) too investigated students' online participation and found three participation groups that were the same as Mason's (1994) findings. Taylor (2002) named the three groups as workers (proactive participation group), lurkers (peripheral participation group) and shirkers (parsimonious participation group). Students who are workers participated actively during online class, while lurkers would participate occasionally and students who were shirkers had minimum participation during an online class.

Students' participation during online class whether they are workers, lurkers or shirkers were influenced by several factors. Looking at the L2 context, these factors could also affect students' WTC in English. These factors are technology and interface characteristics, content-area experience, students' roles and instructional tasks and information overload (Vonderwell & Zachariah, 2005). According to Vonderwell and Zachariah (2005), the result of their study revealed that students' technology skills and the interface design of the discussion board influenced the students' participation and their focus during the course. It was discovered that students who have prior knowledge of the task at hand were actively involved compared to those who did not.

The other factor that influenced students' participation online was the content-area experience. This basically means that students who are knowledgeable on the content of the task assigned were more engaging during an online class. As for students' roles and instructional tasks, Vonderwell and Zachariah (2005) found that students who were assigned specific roles maintained an online presence throughout the online class.

Information overload was also one of the factors that influenced students' participation. Students who tended to feel overwhelmed with information and workload participated less during an online class. Coman et al. (2020) also stated that the criteria that contributed to a successful online class were technology, lecture characteristics and student characteristics. Havwini (2019) added that aside from teachers, tasks and interlocutors also play a role in a successful online class

The technology used in online learning should be user-friendly and easily utilized by the students and lecturers as affirmed by Vonderwell and Zachariah's (2005) study on technology and interface characteristics. The digital platform used by teachers or educators should be easy for students to access, explore and learn their course content from anywhere and anytime.

Teachers' trait also plays an important role in engaging students' participation online (Tsang, 2018). Having to have classes online would be much more challenging for teachers in carrying out their lessons as they would not be able to conduct their lessons as a normal face to face lesson would. Therefore, in an online class, teachers would need to put extra effort to make students feel comfortable and engaged throughout the lesson. This is because students feel isolated due to fewer face-to-face sessions with the teachers (Caroll, 2013).

In an online class, students' characteristics is another component that impacts the success of the lessons (Coman et al, 2020). Students were reported to be more likely to use a digital platform if they were given grades as part of their course evaluation. This research backs up Vonderwell and Zachariah's (2005) findings that students were more engaged when given instructional tasks and roles. As a result, increasing their WTC in English throughout class would be beneficial (Fu et al., 2012). Zarrinnabdi et al. (2021) confirmed this by stating that students who see their learning environment as autonomy-supportive are more likely to promote a developed language mindset and more WTC in the target language.

Methodology

Research Design

To gain a better understanding of the impact of social media on students' WTC, this study gathered a variety of data from pre-university students. Thus, the current study was conducted using a multimethod approach, which may be used to address complicated social research problems (Greene, 2015), as it employs two or more data collection or research methodologies to investigate the research question.

Population and Sampling

Purposive sampling refers to the researcher's deliberate selection of sampling criteria for this study (Cresswell, 2014). Purposive sampling or convenience sampling is used (Cresswell, 2012) to ensure that the researcher can collect the necessary data from a specific group of people. Hence, this research employs a purposive sampling of pre-university students who enrolled in the same course and would provide the necessary data needed for the study.

Participants

The participants involved in this study were pre-university students in Year 1 of their study, taking the English foundation course, UB0013 Academic English for Writing and Speaking. There was a total of 428 pre-university students who entered the university and were currently in their first semester. A total of 350 students were Science Foundation students, 51 Information Technology (IT) foundation students and 27 were Agriscience students. For the purpose of this study, all the 350 science foundation students were chosen because they were in the same course background which would lessen the discrepancy of the data collected.

Data Collection

Prior to developing the WTC Module, the first phase of the study investigates the relationship between affective variables (L2 self-confidence, L2 anxiety, L2 motivation, and grit) and willingness to communicate in digital contexts. The empirical findings are then incorporated into the WTC Module used in the teaching innovation. WTC questionnaires were provided to 350 Foundation students in the first phase. Each questionnaire contained three sections. Participants were asked to reply to questions about L2 self-confidence, L2 anxiety, L2 motivation, and grit in the first section. The second section assesses students' L2 WTC in digital classroom environments. The third section was created to elicit students' speaking strategies in a digital classroom.

The second phase of this experiment examined the WTC Module's effectiveness. The Module was conducted over a five-week period. In this phase, 18 students were involved in the study.

Research Instruments

The research instruments that were used in the study was questionnaire, pre and post- test and focus group interview.

Questionnaire

One of the instruments used in the study was questionnaire. Questionnaires are used to answer questions about what, where and when. Therefore, it was used in this study to obtain information from a specific group of people within a limited time. It also functions to determine the causal effect between the variables in a study (Cresswell, 2012).

An adapted version of the Likert-type questionnaire is used in this study which comprises 68 items. The questionnaire was adapted from four different sources. The first is the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) questionnaire (MacIntyre et al., 2001) which measures students' willingness to communicate. The second source is from Lee & Hsieh (2019) which examines students' affective variables and WTC in three different settings, which are inside and outside a non-digital ESL classroom and in a digital classroom. The third and fourth sources are taken from Missoum (2014) and Schroeder (2016) which look into spoken English strategies.

Pre and Post Test

The 18 students who participated in the second phase of the study were required to take a pre-test before the post-test. The pre-test requires students to give a 1-minute spontaneous speech on a given topic. The students were not taught how to give a speech during the pre-test. As a result, they were graded based on their prior knowledge of the English language. Students were required to present their speeches on the same topic again at the end of the course. Students had already completed the English course at this point and were reassessed to determine their progress.

Focus Group Interview

To collect qualitative information, a focus group was formed. Focus group research is a qualitative method that has several intriguing characteristics. An organised discussion and interview with a small group of people are conducted by a moderator, and the results are recorded. A list of questions would be compiled ahead of the meeting. It also used a combination of open and closed-ended questions, which allows the participants to express themselves freely without being

restricted. The third instrument that was used was focus group interview. The interview questions were adapted from Saidi (2018). The purpose of the interview was to collect data on students input in using social media applications to help in their willingness to communicate in English.

Following that, the audio data of the interview was transcribed and coded. The codes with similar properties and characteristics were then grouped together for easier identification. Subsequently, these groups of codes were divided into categories, and tentative themes were generated based on the categories. The tentative themes were revised several times before the themes for the study were eventually finalised (Zhang, 2013)

WTC Module

In order to facilitate willingness to communicate in the classroom, the WTC Module for English speaking skills was produced specifically for English language instructors. This module consists of 3 units which are speaking about myself, speaking accurately which focuses on pronunciation and the last unit is practice in public speaking.

This module includes suggested lesson plans and a range of activities on how to integrate social media applications in the lesson which are *Tiktok*, *Madlipz* and *Facebook* which could be used interchangeably where the lessons to be done in pairs and groups so that students learn to respond spontaneously in any communication situation.

The objectives of the module are,

- i) To promote effective speaking in their classroom by engaging students in communicative activities to develop oral proficiency in a digital classroom;
- ii) To provide ideas to English language instructors in their teaching and provide opportunities to students to practice using English.
- ii) To introduce 3 social media applications that could be integrated in the teaching and learning which are *Tiktok*, *Madlipz* and *Facebook*.

Figure 2: Sample of Students Work

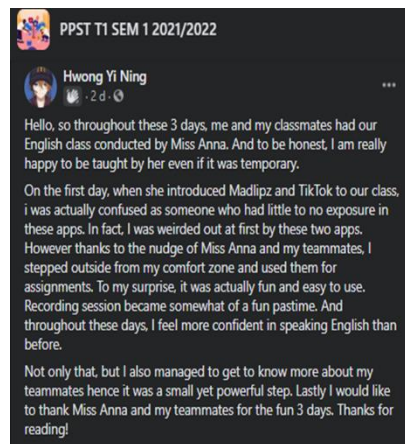
Below are some samples of students work using 3 different types of social media.



The first video is an example of a Madlipz clip.



The second video is an example of a one-minute speech recorded via tiktok



The third is a short writing of one of the students about her feedback using social media applications in the classroom. This feedback was written in facebook group

Results

Findings from Questionnaire

Table 1: Descriptive- Affective Factors and WTC

Factors	Mean	SD
Self Confidence	3.58	0.96
Anxiety	3.40	1.26
Motivation	3.68	0.86
Grit	3.16	1.14
WTC	2.27	1.14

The table shows the descriptive analysis of the affective factors and willingness to communicate. The mean above shows neutral levels for all factors with motivation at the highest ranking. 3.68,

followed by self-confidence 3.58, speaking anxiety, 3.40 and grit, 3.16. The result of the questionnaire is analysed using statistical analysis version 27. The result of this probably indicated that motivation play a more significant role in students' WTC in English followed by self-confidence, speaking anxiety and grit.

Table 2: Relationship between Affective Variable with WTC

	Self-confidence	Anxiety	Motivation	Grit	WTC
Self-confidence	1	-0.520**	0.291**	-0.017	0.627**
Anxiety		1	0.0024	0.298**	-0.416**
Motivation			1		0.343**
Grit				1	-0.066
WTC					1

Note: ** p<0.01

The table above shows the relationship between affective variables with WTC Using spearman correlation as the analysis, the results shows that willingness to communicate has moderate positive correlation with self-confidence with zero point six two seven, a low positive correlation with motivation with zero point three four three and anxiety with zero point four one six. Grit, however, has no co relation at all with WTC.

Table 3: Regression Model: Factors Affecting WTC

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	Parameter estimates	Standard Error	Parameter estimates	Standard error
Constant	1.287	0.461	1.416	0.363
Gender	0.015	0.086		
Strata	-0.010	0.082		
SPM English Result	0.032*	0.016		
Have travelled to English speaking countries	0.293**	0.107		
Self confidence	0.399**	0.075	0.465**	0.068
Speaking anxiety	0.274**	0.051	0.396**	0.071
Motivation	0.300**	0.071	-0.144**	0.046
Grit	0.109	0.083		

Note: *P-value less than 5% level of significance, **p-value less than 1% level of significance

The table above shows the regression model of factors affecting willingness to communicate. Stepwise regression analysis shows that only self-confidence, anxiety and motivation significantly can be used as predictors towards WTC. Model 2 which is self-confidence, anxiety and motivation can explain thirty-nine-point six percent variation in willingness to communicate.

Table 4: Findings from Pre and Post Test

Score	Mean	SD
Pre-test	11.67	1.49
Post-test	12.19	1.24

The table above shows the findings from pre and post-tests. The Mann-Whitney result shows that there is a significant difference between the pre-test score and post-test score at 5% level of significance. For phase two, 18 pre-university students were involved in testing out the WTC module in the English language classroom. The pre and post tests were adapted from MUET speaking Exam and assessed using the MUET rubric. The students were required to give a 1-minute speech about themselves and record themselves via *Tiktok* application. The result of the test was also analysed using statistical analysis version 27

Themes	No. of Respondents (N=17)	Examples of excerpts
Fun and interesting	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To my surprise, it was actually fun and easy to use. Recording session became fun. Surprisingly, it is fun and interesting to use somewhat of a fun pastime (R-1), Surprisingly, it is fun and interesting to use (R3), I had a lot fun! (R5)
Improve English	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I not only learn on how to use social media but also improve my vocabulary and the way I am talking in English. (R 2), my speaking skills improved little by little. (R5)
Confident	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I also became a little bit confident talking in English but I will keep on improving in the future. (R2), encouraged me to be brave to speak in English with my friends (R4), ignite some bravery in me ever since enrolling (R6)

Table 5: Findings from Interview

The result of the interview was analysed using thematic analysis. Only 17 students participated in the interview session that was conducted via Google Meet. The findings from the focus group interview seem to demonstrate that the students felt that the WTC Module that they have used for five weeks are fun, interesting, have helped to improve their English-speaking skill and have made them more willing to communicate in English. Apart from that, these students felt their confidence has improved with the use of social media which also has indirectly influenced their WTC in the classroom.

Conclusion

Using a variety of methodologies, this study collected data on pre-university students' WTC in English in a digital ESL classroom at a public university in Sabah, Malaysia. In this study, the WTC paradigm (McIntyre et al., 1998) served as a framework for examining the WTC of ESL students. This study's primary objective was to examine the influence of social media on students' WTC in English in a digital ESL classroom. To answer the study's research questions, three methods were employed: pre- and post-testing, statistical analysis with SPSS, and a focus group interview. Students' WTC increased when social media platforms such as Madlipz, Tiktok, and Facebook were integrated into classroom English lessons, according to the study's findings. In addition to making the lesson more enjoyable and engaging, the use of social media in the classroom enhanced students' English language skills and confidence in using the target language in the classroom.

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