

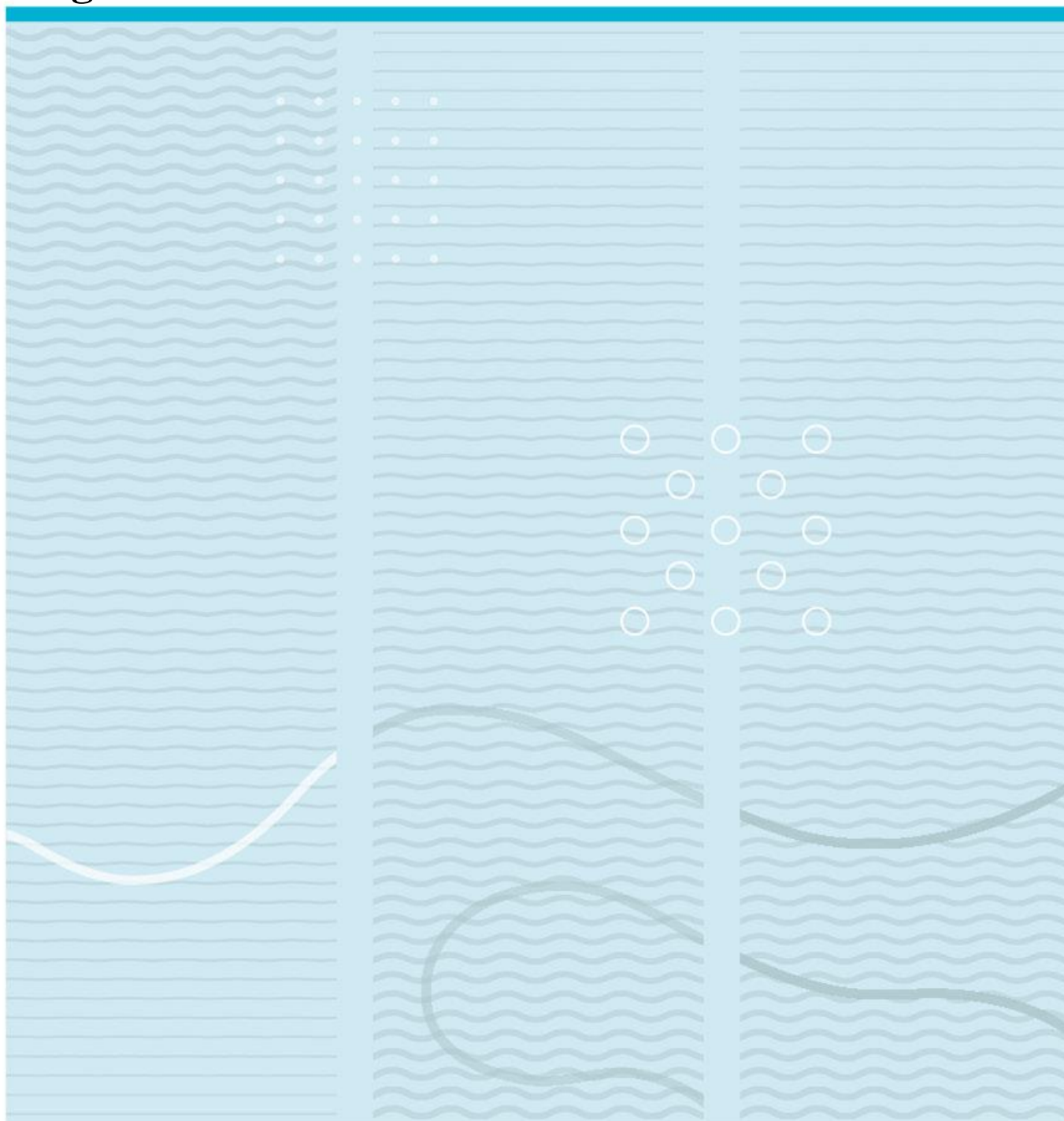


University of South-Eastern Norway
Faculty of Humanities, Sports and Educational Science

Master's Thesis
Study programme: MGLU1
Spring 2023

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Social Media and Willingness to Communicate in English



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This thesis is worth 30 study points

Abstract

This thesis investigates diverse factors potentially impacting 7th-grade pupils' English communication engagement on social media platforms. The research question for this thesis is: How does the use of social media affect pupils' willingness to communicate in English? Willingness to communicate (WTC) is an emerging study field with visible gaps within its Extramural digital environment (ED) context. This study seeks to analyse these gaps by employing a mixed-method approach, employing a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews.

Building upon Bandura's social cognitive theory, MacIntyre's WTC model, and previous WTC studies, this study has conducted semi-structured interviews with fifteen participants in total to investigate the contextual and individual variables that affect pupils' WTC. Permission for the study and audio recordings was obtained from the project school, the principal, the parents, and the pupils.

The study's findings indicate that social media platforms can positively affect pupils' willingness to communicate in English. The results reveal that children are exposed to a significant volume of English language media daily, contributing to their WTC through various forms. With the advancement of technology and the widespread use of social media, the interview participants conveyed that they were able to create safe ED environments for English communication centered around the content they find enjoyable. In addition, various factors, such as familiarity with interlocutors, online communities, platforms, self-confidence, self-efficacy, and anxiety, had all impacted pupils' willingness to communicate. Nevertheless, this study has also acknowledged the significance of recognizing the potential negative elements of social media, such as its contribution to linguistic mistakes or cyberbullying. Therefore, this study has utilized Bandura's social cognitive theory as a framework to elucidate the various factors of social media that contribute to pupils' willingness to communicate.

Contents

Abstract	2
1.0 Introduction	7
<i>1.1 Background</i>	8
<i>1.2 Literature review</i>	9
<i>1.3 Research question</i>	14
<i>1.4 Limitations</i>	14
2.0 Theory	15
2.1 <i>Willingness to communicate (WTC)</i>	15
2.1.1 <i>Willingness to communicate in ED</i>	16
2.2 <i>Social Cognitive</i>	17
3.0 Method	20
3.1 <i>Research context</i>	20
3.2 <i>Participants</i>	21
3.3 <i>Instruments</i>	22
3.4 <i>Mixed method approach (MM)</i>	22
3.5 <i>Sampling</i>	24
3.6 <i>Survey</i>	25
3.7 <i>Interviews</i>	25
3.8 <i>Procedure</i>	27
3.8.1 <i>Data collection</i>	27
3.8.2 <i>Ethics</i>	27
3.9 <i>Data Analysis</i>	28
4.0 Findings	29
4.1 <i>Survey results</i>	29
4.2 <i>Interviews</i>	30
4.2.1 <i>Familiarity with interlocutors</i>	30
4.2.2 <i>Familiarity with the platforms</i>	31
4.2.3 <i>Self-confidence</i>	32

4.2.4 Anxiety	32
4.2.5 Written task.....	33
4.2.6 Gender	34
5.0 Discussion.....	34
5.1 Familiarity with interlocutors	35
5.2 Familiarity with the platforms.....	37
5.3 Self-confidence and Anxiety	38
5.4 Written task.....	40
5.5 Gender	41
5.6 Curriculum Implications	43
5.7 Social Cognitive Implications.....	44
5.8 Summary.....	47
5.9 Implications	52
5.10 Further research.....	53
6.0 Conclusion	54
References	56

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my supervisor Raees Calafato for guidance.

Thank you to my family, friends, and my pupils for the support.

1.0 Introduction

Children are exposed to large quantities of English language media every day. Movies, video games, and social media are available at the click of a button, and English-speaking countries dominate the production of the most famous content (Sundbye, 2022, p.5). The Internet has become necessary to participate in society, and English is nearly ubiquitous in most European countries, including Norway (Sundbye, 2022, p.5). With the increasing use of social media and technological advancement, the role of willingness to communicate (WTC) in teaching and learning research has also rapidly become a new case (Buckingham & Alpaslan 2017; MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, & Noels, 1998).

Earlier WTC studies have analyzed pupils' willingness (or unwillingness) to communicate on social media from trait-like, situation-specific, dynamic, and situated perspectives, meaning that they have analyzed individuals' factors such as self-confidence (Yashima, 2002), contextual factors such as familiarity (Cao & Philip, 2006), and shared influences from both personal and contextual factors (Kang, 2014). However, these studies are based on a formal classroom setting where the instructor primarily structure and regulate pupils' communication activities (Sundbye, 2021, p.3). For the reasons mentioned above, recent studies have begun researching WTC in online environments (Reinders & Wattana, 2015).

With the increasing affordance and possibilities beyond the classroom for English practice, Language learning and teaching beyond the classroom (LBC) has developed in volume as a field of study (Reinders & Benson, 2017). With this in mind, Lee and Dressman (2018) endeavored to analyze the relationship between pupils' willingness to communicate and extramural digital environments (ED) to study how pupils communicate in autonomous English learning in an out-of-class environment (Sundbye, 2022, p.7).

However, there are two visible gaps in earlier WTC studies. First, past studies have mainly focused on WTC in in-class and extracurricular digital settings. They have overlooked the ED environment, a rapidly emerging communication context (Lee & Dressman, 2018). Second, little is known about factors influencing pupils' willingness to communicate in the ED environment. Therefore, this study aspires to address these gaps and use a mixed-method approach (quantitative and qualitative) to investigate the factors that might have affected pupils' willingness to communicate in the ED environment. The research question for this is, "How does the use of social media affect pupils' willingness to communicate in English?".

In order to explore this, this study investigates the pupils' attitudes in addition to their exposure to English outside of school. As mentioned, this study employed a mixed-method approach to examine the research question. The method consists of a survey followed by a qualitative interview with the participants. The scale of the data did not allow for classroom observations or other forms of confirmation of the participant's statements. Therefore, qualitative interviews were used to acquire insight into the participants' experiences, opinions, and reasoning for their practices.

1.1 Background

Social media refers to a wide range of social networking sites and platforms that provide users with an accessible and easy-to-use communication means (Sundbye, 2022, p.14). More than three billion active users are utilizing social media and have made it into an essential routine in their daily life (Kessler, 2018). Platforms such as Instagram, Tik Tok, Snapchat, and Facebook are used to send and receive messages, share news and information, and interact with others (Riksfjord-Lie, 2021, p.7). In addition, many people worldwide use social media to create text, image, audio, and video content and disseminate it across the Internet (Sundbye, 2022, p.21). The Norwegian Media Authority furthermore demonstrated that 90% of children between the ages of 9-18 use social media in Norway, and 85% have private accounts (Medietilsynet, 2020, p.5).

Therefore, with the refinement in technology and, consequently, greater English affordance and opportunities beyond the classroom, current studies have interrogated learners' informal learning of English by using technology outside of institutional settings (Lai, 2017; Richards, 2015; Reinders & Benson, 2017). The field of research has been expanded to encompass a range of digital devices such as; smartphones, computers, television, digital games, popular culture, and social media (Sundbye, 2022, p.7). Nonetheless, pupils' English language consumption during their spare time is rarely due to a desire to improve their proficiency. Instead, it is a side-effect of their engagement with content or enjoyable activities (Sundbye, 2022, p.11).

To date, investigations on language learning in the extramural device (ED) context have mainly examined three aspects of English learning outcomes, including (1) language tests- vocabulary (Sundqvist & Wikström, 2015, Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012), reading (Cole & Vanderplank, 2016), formal testing (Lai et al., 2015; Sundqvist & Wikström, 2015), and the standardized English tests (Kondo et al., 2012); (2) learner characteristics such as motivation (Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012) and

confidence (Lai et al., 2015); and (3) skills such as autonomy (Chik, 2013) and cross-cultural communication (Lee & Lee, 2018; Mitchell, 2012). The topic of willingness to communicate in English has gained more attention during the past three decades (Lee, 2019, p.692). Although this research sequence is still at an early phase, language learning in the ED context has been discovered to increase learners' affective attributes (e.g., motivation and confidence). It has tremendous potential to influence learners' willingness to communicate (WTC) in English (Lee & Dressman, 2018).

1.2 Literature review

Several studies have examined pupils' experiences in Extramural device environments (ED). Sylvén and Sundqvist are among the most notable researchers describing the association between language exposure and media. They suggest the term Extramural English (EE). The term describes pupils' English language activities in their spare time (Sundbye, 2022, p.6). The word separates the language activities related to school and the extra time and considers utilizing the English language outside school as an essential tool (Sundbye, 2022, p.8). Extramural English does not involve initiation by teachers or other people working in educational institutions (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p.31). The initiative for involvement with the language lies with the learner itself (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p.6). The researchers recommend that teachers incorporate pupils' spare time in English language practice into the classroom (152-172). However, Sylvén and Sundqvist's definition of Extramural English can be problematic. EE suggests incorporating pupils' spare-time activities in the classroom yet accentuates those activities must be learner created for them to be considered Extramural English (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p.223). In addition, they oversee activities initiated by teachers and educators but permit parent- or peer-initiated English use, making it challenging to determine whether an activity is genuinely EE (Sundbye, 2022, p.7). Therefore, for the above explanations, this study has not used Extramural English when analyzing pupils' English language activities outside school. The term *out-of-school English will be utilized because* it permits more extensive use and consideration of all pupils' English use outside school.

Lee Ju Seong has, in his study, conducted qualitative research with 98 Korean students about their WTC. The researcher gathered data from in depth-interviews about students' language acquisition. In his research, he noticed that Korea's test-driven English learning approach dampened students' English communication skills (Lee, 2019, p.699). The participants argue that they were trained to

become passive learners in the classroom, and when they were in the presence of foreigners in online or office settings, they had difficulties using English. However, several participants mentioned that proximity of interaction with their communication partner facilitated more L2 WTC in the ED context. This approach could decrease their L2 anxiety and make them feel more comfortable delivering a message in English. Students with overseas experience have chosen social media platforms such as Instagram to maintain friendships with others in foreign countries (Lee, 2019, p.700). On the contrary, students with no overseas experience made foreign friends in South Korea and maintained those friendships on online communication platforms (Lee, 2019, p.700). In addition, familiarity with online communities also positively influenced students' tendencies toward using English in an ED context (Lee, 2019, p.701). In his study, Lee Ju Seong also noticed that some participants without overseas experience gained self-confidence through regular interaction with other English users living in Korea (Lee, 2019, p.702). The participants commented on not being afraid of making mistakes online due to positive reactions from other speakers (Lee, 2019, p.702).

With a similar approach, a Norwegian study called the VOGUE project followed pupils at the upper secondary level and studied their language habits in and out of school. The study focused on their reading and writing abilities in English. The participants were considered linguistically outliers and scored above the average percentile in English (Sundbye, 2022, p.7-8). Brevik, the project leader, divided the pupils into three categories depending on their answers: Gamers, Internet surfers, and Social Media Users (Brevik, 2019, pp.595-603). The results verified that gamers used more time on media and were exposed to more English (Sundbye, 2022, p.8-10). Internet surfers and Social Media Users participated in fewer English language activities (Sundbye, 2022, p.11). The Gamers were mainly boys, and the Social Media Users were girls. Brevik finishes her article by presenting that pupils' outside-of-school interests caused them to engage with English language content and that their English language reading and writing comprehension was positively affected by this (Sunday, 2022, p.16).

Similar research has also been found in other countries. A study in Belgium analyzed the correlation between the use of English outside of school on French-speaking pupils. However, the region was predominantly Dutch speaking. Pupils learned French as their second language and English as their third (Peters et al., 2019). The researchers tested pupils' vocabulary skills through similar tests and noticed that pupils understood English more than French (Peters et al., 2019). The researchers attribute this contradiction to the quantity of English language media pupils were

exposed to online (Peters et al., 2019, pp.747-775). The results proved that out-of-school English has the potential to contribute to English language acquisition and can be incorporated as a benefit in classroom teaching.

This is further reinforced by a study conducted in the Netherlands studying ten-years-old. The researchers found a similar correlation between outside-of-school English and English language proficiency (Leona et al., 2021). English lessons were mandatory from fifth grade, but teachers could begin teaching English earlier. The researchers found that exposure to English outside school positively impacted pupils' English language proficiency and linguistic self-confidence (Leona et al., 2021).

Drawing from previous research, engagement with English-language media and participation in English-language activities may potentially promote English acquisition. Lee Ju Seong has, in his research, divided pupils' WTC into sub-variables concentrating on their self-confidence and background with the English language. However, it can be necessary to investigate whether the pupils know their English language acquisition and out-of-school English activities (Sundbye, 2022, p.14). In the previously mentioned VOGUE project, Brevik interviewed the participants about their English language learning strategies. Unlike Korean students, Norwegian students display an attitude where their out-of-school activities are unrelated to what they do at school (Brevik, 2016, p.49). When interviewing, Brevik discovered that not all participants knew their language proficiency (Sundbye, 2022, p.15). When questioned why they were proficient English users, most pupils pointed out their use of English outside of school (Sundbye, 2022, p.15). However, the pupils did not consider their gaming or social media habits relevant (Brevik, 2016, pp.47-53). Therefore, Brevik advises that teachers ask about their pupil's interests outside of school, indicating that it may contribute to a positive motivation to learn English (Brevik, 2016, pp.53-56).

To remedy this, Thorne and Reinhardt urge bringing the pupils' out-of-school language competence into the classroom through a model they refer to as Bridging Activities (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2002). Thorne and Reinhardt explain that pupils may benefit from working with texts equivalent to the language they encounter in their spare time (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008, pp.558-572). They present that pupils can select which texts or platforms to bring into the classroom for study (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008). These texts are called internet-mediated texts (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008, pp.558-572). Bringing the pupils' language competence into the classroom may be a way to validate the language use pupils experience and use in their spare time (Sundbye, 2022, p.13).

With a similar approach, Stewart (2015) has, in her comprehensive review, investigated the use of social media in education and its features, including its disadvantages and limitations. Stewart claimed that social media in classrooms could be hired as an exhaustive, interactive, and effective tool that pupils can benefit from (Stewart, 2015). Pupils in Scandinavia are generally exposed to large amounts of English outside of the classroom, which can be used as an active learning resource. She mentioned the necessity for specified knowledge for involving it in the classrooms and that many teachers lack knowledge (Stewart, 2015). Furthermore, she reasons that pupils should comprehend that using social media in academic contexts is entirely different from regular use outside of the classroom (Stewart, 2015).

However, the Linking Instruction and Student Achievement (LISA study) have ascertained that teachers mainly employ digital tools (Sundbye, 2022, p.22). The investigation indicates that PowerPoint presentations constitute the use of technology in class (Blikstad-Balas, 2020, p.51). Digital tools are employed to improve the subject the teacher presents. On the contrary, the pupils constitute 12% of digital devices in class and use the devices to write individual texts prepared by the teacher (Blikstad-Balas, 2020, p.53). In his book "Oversold and Underused," Larry Cuban states that 77% of pupils do not use their digital tools enough to develop digital knowledge (Egeberg, Hultin & Berge, 2016). Therefore, the use of digital resources is severely limited and does not reflect the authentic use of the English language in the real world. Younger generations are not necessarily using PowerPoint as much as other resources (e.g., social media), contributing to a disconnect between pedagogical practices and real-world language use. Cuban claims that schools mainly focus on providing pupils with digital devices rather than using its potential platforms (Blekstad-Balas, 2020, p.56).

Nonetheless, when researching teachers', pupils', and classroom practices, it is essential to consider the current curriculum and its impact on the teaching and learning process. The Norwegian curriculum was revised in 2020 to include a Core curriculum. The updated Core curriculum acts as a foundation for all subjects, and there are essential aspects it aims towards.

First, the Core curriculum aims to develop an inclusive environment and underscores the significance of involving pupils in creating their own learning environment (Ministry of Education and Research, 2020). Furthermore, the curriculum desires to incorporate knowledge exchange with larger societies in order to develop pupils' perspectives and provide them with new language

experiences (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). The Ministry of Education and Research (2017) refer to these ideologies as the pupil's environment and highlights the significance of its potential to create a safe and welcoming environment for the pupils.

Second, the curriculum also acknowledges digital proficiency as one of the five fundamental skills at schools. This acknowledgment indicates that all teachers are accountable for teaching digital skills, regardless of their subject (Grepperud, 2006). The curriculum explains digital proficiency as a fundamental skill that will guide the pupils to obtain and process information adequately, be innovative with digital resources, and communicate and interact with other users on digital platforms (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017).

Moreover, the curriculum also indicates that it is essential to incorporate pupils' interests into the classroom and utilize various forms of media from the English-speaking world to let pupils interact with a broad scope of English content (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2017), which means that the curriculum indicates to use the digital devices in the classroom more often and encourage the pupils to be even more involved in their learning process and cooperate with other countries.

In addition, the curriculum has also included relevant English competence aims for the pupils finishing their 10th year of schooling. One of the aims notes that pupils should be able to "explore and present content of cultural forms of expressions from various media in the English-speaking world related to one's interests" (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). This aim seeks to incorporate pupils' interests into the classroom and views their outside-of-school English activities as a beneficial resource to include in their English teaching (Sundbye, 2022, p.9). Once again, indicating that the curriculum prioritizes encouraging pupils to explore various forms of media from the English-speaking world to develop their spectrum of English language content (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

Overall, the new curriculum strives to develop an inclusive, diverse, and encouraging environment where all pupils feel welcomed. It underlines the significance of digital proficiency as one of the five fundamental skills and encourages incorporating pupils' interests into the classroom (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019).

1.3 Research question

The visible gaps within the earlier WTC studies inspired this study's research question. Previous studies have neglected the Extramural digital environment (ED) as a practical communication context for pupils, and there is also a shortage of information regarding the elements that impact pupils' WTC in the ED environment. On the contrary, there have been considerable amounts of studies on the impact of motivation of the term Extramural English, but not about the connection between outside-of-school English and willingness to communicate.

Therefore, this thesis seeks to explore social media as an ED environment. Social media consists of various entertainment platforms where communication is available in every context, such as gaming, chatting, watching videos, and uploading videos. This thesis aims to explore these unknown areas by analyzing the different social media platforms.

In addition, social media as an ED environment were chosen by its accessibility for data collection. This study employed qualitative interviews as one of its research techniques in order to gain a more profound understanding of the participant's social media usage, especially regarding their past communication experiences. The qualitative interviews allowed the participants to share their previous social media activities and perspectives regarding their language practice online.

Therefore, the research question for this thesis is: How does the use of social media affect pupils' willingness to communicate in English? By exploring this question, this thesis desires to enhance the reader's understanding of the unexplored relationship between social media as an ED environment and willingness to communicate.

1.4 Limitations

This thesis aims to investigate how the use of social media affects pupils' willingness to communicate in English. Mainly, it focuses on pupils' cognitive processes when utilizing the English language voluntarily on social media. However, even though social media as a research field offers diverse research areas, the time scope of this study restricted the limits of this research. For the purpose of further research, it would have been beneficial to study social media's impact on

linguistic mistakes and mental health. Nonetheless, by investigating pupils' social media WTC, this study seeks to analyze the insights into how social media can influence pupils' behaviors regarding English communication.

2.0 Theory

The study focuses on exploring how the use of social media affects pupils' willingness to communicate in English, taking pedagogy into account. The framework for this study is the social cognitive theory by Albert Bandura, which is a theoretical framework developed in the 1940s that highlights how our environment shapes our behavior.

The theory section of the study is divided into two concepts. The first subsection utilized MacIntyre's willingness to communicate model created in 1998. The section highlights the importance of the term willingness to communicate and why it is a vital educational aspect for pupils. The first subsection is followed by a smaller section that examines why WTC is a crucial aspect of the ED environment.

The second subsection presents the social cognitive theory by Bandura in more detail. Social cognitive theory refers to the fact that our behavior is not only shaped by individual factors such as personality and motivation but also by environmental elements. This study refers to social media as an ED environment where pupils can be affected by other users' behavior. However, due to the volume of the theory, this study only focuses on the theory's vicarious learning, social presence, and self-efficacy aspect to comprehend how social media affects pupils' WTC.

2.1 Willingness to communicate (WTC)

As previously mentioned, willingness to communicate as a topic has gained more attention during the past three decades. McCroskey and Baer suggested the first WTC model in 1985. The model considered how individual qualities might impact one's first language communication. However, the first connection between WTC and schooling was founded in the 1990s and referred to WTC as a "readiness to enter into the discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons" (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p.547).

MacIntyre has also developed a theoretical model in a pyramid-shaped design, which is propounded to represent the construct of WTC (Lee, 2019, p.693). According to this pyramid-shaped model, the top three layers are considered dynamic, situation-specific influences on pupils' WTC. More particularly, it concerns the actual desire to communicate with a specific person (Merc & Saka, 2021, p.29). In other words, variables affecting patterns of WTC and communication are inclined to be unpredictable and are dynamic over time, depending on specific communication circumstances (Sundbye, 2022, p.34). On the contrary, the bottom three layers represent more stable, trait-like variables influencing WTC and communication behaviors consistently across time and context (Lee, 2019, p.693). It studies the motivational tendencies to communicate in another language with others and the affective, cognitive, societal, and individual contexts (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p.547).

Since 1998, additional studies have reinforced MacIntyre et al.'s WTC model from trait-like, situation-specific, dynamic, and situated perspectives (1998). Trait-like WTC focuses on individual characteristics to describe WTC in communication (Lee, 2019, p.693). Earlier investigations have identified that different personal attributes influence learners' WTC, such as motivation and attitude (Hashimoto, 2002; Yu, 2011), international posture (Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004), personality (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996), and gender and age (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan, 2002). In contrast, situations-specific WTC-oriented researchers have identified contextual factors such as classroom environment (Peng & Woodrow, 2010) and interlocutors (Cao & Philip, 2006), all of which may mediate pupils' willingness to communicate (Lee, 2019, p.702). Other studies have reconceptualized WTC as a dynamic and situated procedure in which individual (trait-like) and contextual (situation-specific) variables consistently interact during communication (Lee, 2019, p.703).

2.1.1 Willingness to communicate in ED

ED stands for Extramural digital environment. The term refers to learning contexts outside of school and without the direct involvement of teachers and institutional settings (Dressman & Lee, 2018). With the advancement in technology and the increasing use of social media, the research field of WTC has gained significant attention (Sundbye, 2022, p.7). Past WTC studies suggest that technology may positively impact learners' motivation and anxiety.

In addition, the researchers Dressman and Lee (2018) have conducted several WTC studies and investigations in the ED context. The researchers have also utilized MacIntyre's (1998) WTC model. However, their findings indicate that while most WTC research has focused mainly on pupils' speaking skills, WTC in the ED environment tends to encompass both speaking and writing skills, such as cyber communication, often involving typing and video chat functions (Merc & Saka, 2021).

2.2 Social Cognitive

Social cognitive theory, developed by Stanford psychologist Albert Bandura, refers to understanding how people are actively shaped by their environments (Chen et al., 2009, p.3). The theory describes the procedures of observational learning and modeling and how self-efficacy can influence our behavior (Garwonski et al., 2015, p.11). Furthermore, the theory refers to our mental processes influenced by our social worlds (Chen et al., 2009, p.3). It relates to elements of cognitive processing that are shaped by social interactions, whether real or imagined and how they affect our subsequent social behavior (Chen et al., 2009, p.5). Social cognitive is a research direction that employs cognitive principles to investigate and examine social psychological topics such as social influence, the self, and social perception (Chen et al., 2009, p.17).

Social cognitive theory is a complex theory framework. Given the volume of the theory and its numerous conceptions and interconnections, it can often be challenging to distill it into a concise description. To handle this challenge, this study focuses on three central concepts within the theory: vicarious learning (observational learning), social presence, and self-efficacy. By investigating these concepts in the context of social media use, the study aims to understand how social cognitive theory can explain pupils' willingness to communicate in English on social media.

First, social learning theory was introduced by American psychologists and occurred as a reaction to behaviorist ideas that considered external stimuli the primary determinant of human behavior (Chen et al., 2009, p.4). Bandura's theory aims to explain and comprehend how and why individuals develop behaviors by imitating others, even when there is no possibility for direct reinforcement (Chen et al., 2009, p.5). In 1963, with the psychologists Walter, Bandura expanded his theory by presenting the concepts of social presence, vicarious learning, and self-efficacy (Chen et al., 2009,

p.4-5). With that, Bandura introduced a new model of social cognitive theory that focused on the role of vicarious learning and the self-efficacy process (Chen et al., 2009, p.6). In contrast to earlier social learning theories, Bandura described people as active and self-regulating mechanisms who can create their own reality rather than passive individuals that are controlled by environmental stimuli (Chen et al., 2009, p.7-8).

As previously mentioned, this study will focus on one of the social cognitive theory's central concepts, vicarious learning (Bandura, 2002). Vicarious learning, or observational learning other words, suggests observing others' behavior to expand your behavior (Chen et al., 2009, p.6). In other words, the term describes how an individual selects a behavior from another to guide their actions. The procedure is controlled by four critical processes: attention, retention, production, and motivation (Chen et al., 2009, p.7-10). The attention process involves choosing a desired individual or behavior and observing it (Vinney, 2019). Once the individual has observed the desired behavior, they must remember it. This is called the retention process (Vinney, 2019). Next is the production process, which involves the individual must learn to use the observed behavior in appropriate contexts (Vinney, 2019). Lastly, the motivational process determines whether an individual will keep the obtained behavior. This process depends on the outcome of the observed behavior (negative or positive) (Vinney, 2019).

Moreover, observational learning is utilized to gain a more profound understanding of how individuals develop behavior. This part of the observational learning process is called social presence. Social presence refers to the significance of connection and engagement individuals experience in online and virtual environments (Merc & Saka, 2021, p.24-26). In addition, social presence also contains factors such as perceived interactivity which is the feeling of being part of a social group and the sense of being able to express oneself authentically in a mediated environment (Merc & Saka, 2021, p.26).

The last concept within the social cognitive theory is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy as a concept is the judgments individuals believe about their capability to achieve a specific behavior (Chen et al., 2009, p.8-10). Self-efficacy beliefs are similar to the motivational process of vicarious learning in that the process is affected by its outcome expectancies (positive or negative) (Chen et al., 2009, p.8-10). Bandura explains self-efficacy beliefs as "People's motivation, affective states, and actions are based more on what they believe than on what is objectively true" (Bandura, 1998, p.2), which means that self-efficacy beliefs have a more profound correlation with one's accomplishments

rather than their past experiences or skills (Chen et al., 2009, p.11). In other words, self-efficacy beliefs depend more on contextual factors such as motivation, emotional states, and environmental conditions, impacting an individual's capability to predict successful outcomes (Chen et al., 2009, p.11). For this research, it is vital to mention that individuals with self-confidence and high self-efficacy will most likely achieve successful outcomes. On the contrary, individuals with low self-efficacy beliefs will experience otherwise (Chen et al., 2009, p.12).

Furthermore, self-efficacy beliefs can also be affected by observing other people. For instance, if an individual observes a model who can complete a task successfully, in addition to the model being equivalent to the individual itself, it can positively influence the individual's belief about their own capability (Vinney, 2019). On the contrary, if the observed model, who is also equivalent to the individual, fails to accomplish a task, this can affect the individual's self-efficacy negatively (Schunk, 1987). This effect is particularly crucial for those individuals who are already skeptical about their own capabilities (Bandura, 1986; Schunk, 1987). In addition, individuals who have experienced past difficulties will also be highly affected by this situation. However, if people view a model's capability as highly distinct from their own, the effect of self-efficacy will be significantly reduced (Vinney, 2019).

Nonetheless, self-efficacy as a social cognitive concept has its own limits regarding task accomplishment. As briefly mentioned, the amount of self-efficacy an individual has does not matter if the task they want to accomplish lacks the necessary resources (Chen et al., 2009, p.13). Additionally, it is nearly impossible for individuals to accomplish a task with high self-efficacy alone (Chen et al., 2009, p.14). This means that several tasks require a certain amount of skill. If the individual cannot fulfill a task that exceeds their skill level, then self-efficacy alone will not result in a positive result (Chen et al., 2009, p.14).

The last process of self-efficacy involves the psychological and emotional states, such as anxiety and stress, and the individual's experience when completing an action (Chen et al., 2009). In addition to the elements mentioned previously, extreme emotional reactions can also affect the results of a task (whether it will be successful or not). Once again, negative thoughts such as fear will only decrease the individual's self-efficacy, resulting in unsatisfactory performance (Vinney, 2019). However, individuals can adjust their emotions by reducing negative thoughts and improving their self-efficacy (Chen et al., 2009, p.9).

3.0 Method

The thesis aimed to explore how the use of social media can affect pupils' willingness to communicate in English. To explore this, this study utilized a survey and interviews. The research question could have been investigated by employing classroom observations as well. However, the research's size and time scope did not allow for that. In addition, this study is also dependent on understanding the pupils' outside-of-school language practices to answer the thesis. Therefore, this study employed a mixed-method approach combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews. A mixed-method approach gave the researcher a comprehensive overview of the situation while offering more in-depth insight into the participants' experiences.

The survey allowed for a more profound method of gathering data from a significant number of participants, providing insight into similar patterns within the responses. On the contrary, the interviews provided a chance to gather a more significant understanding of pupils' perceptions of their WTC and the factors that influenced it.

Another advantage of a mixed-method approach is the opportunity to verify and validate the data from multiple sources, enhancing the reliability and validity of the research findings and providing readers with a more comprehensive understanding of the pupils' WTC.

In conclusion, this study section provides insight into the data procedure and an overview of the project school, the survey, and the interview participants and how they were selected.

3.1 Research context

The study was conducted in 7th grade at a 1-10 school in Viken, Norway. The grade consisted of three classes (A, B, and C), each with 31 pupils in total. The participants for the study were all between the ages of eleven and twelve. Two-thirds of the participants had prior experience using English in foreign countries. However, the remaining participants had mainly been exposed to English through digital devices such as social media.

For further information, the project grade was dominantly Norwegian speaking. However, the immigrant statistics of Norway demonstrate that approximately 18.9% of pupils in a regular Norwegian class are either immigrants or children born into immigrant parents (Statistics Norway, 2022). Therefore, given these statistics, it is essential to consider the possibility that some of the children might have English as their third language, which can affect their WTC in English differently.

Considering the linguistic diversity within a grade before conducting a study is vital. This is to ensure that the study's findings are based on all participants' accurate experiences. By acknowledging the diverse language background of the study participants, this thesis desires to gain a more in-depth understanding of how the use of social media can affect pupils' willingness to communicate in English.

3.2 Participants

To investigate how the use of social media affects pupils' willingness to communicate in English, the project school was contacted through email. The email was sent to the principal, grade-level teachers, parents, and participants. After all the necessary permissions were obtained, the survey was administered to the participants. The survey was created as a tool to gain an overview of the participant's social media routines. All the participants were asked to fill out the survey. After completing it, they were allowed to be voluntarily interviewed for further in-depth analyses of their answers.

The interview participants were selected based on their interest in being interviewed and their survey answers. By conducting the survey first, the study ensured that the interviews included pupils who provided practical insights into their social media routines and were willing to share them—incorporating a survey and interviews allowed for a more profound understanding of pupils' perspectives regarding social media and their WTC.

3.3 Instruments

This thesis employed a mixed-method approach to gather data (quantitative and qualitative elements). Therefore, the data collection procedure was divided into a survey and interviews.

The first portion of the procedure conducted a survey that gathered quantitative data to gather statistical analysis for the study. As previously mentioned, the survey was created to gain an overview of the pupils' social media routines and their opinions about English communication. The second portion consisted of an interview where pupils' who expressed interest in further investigation were gathered. The interviews provided qualitative insight into participants' perspectives, meaning that the researcher was able to investigate pupils' thoughts and feelings.

Once again, by utilizing surveys and interviews as a method, the study aimed to compare the results of both approaches to acquire a more profound understanding of how social media affects pupils' willingness to communicate in English.

3.4 Mixed method approach (MM)

Mixed methods research implies adopting multiple research techniques (Lund, 2011, p.156). MM research requires a calculated mixing of methods for data collection, data analysis, and interpretations of the evidence (Bergman, 2018; Brevik, 2021; Creamer, 2018). The keyword is "mixed," which is a critical step in the MM approach. This approach incorporates quantitative and qualitative procedures to comprehend data from various perspectives (Brevik & Mathé, 2022, p.47). In MM, it is essential to understand the association between the paradigms to acquire additional information from the data (Brevik & Mathé, 2022, p.49). Quantitative data frequently includes closed questions and numerical data (numbers and quantities), while qualitative data employ open questions and visual information (Creamer, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). MM research draws on the possible strengths of both paradigms, allowing researchers to explore diverse perspectives and discover relationships between the complex layers of our multifaceted researchers' questions.

Choosing the appropriate research method begins with specifying the research question and its aims. MM method is appropriate for answering questions that neither quantitative nor qualitative approaches could answer independently. As mentioned, MM can be employed to acquire a more profound understanding of connections or contradictions between the paradigms and their data; they can provide opportunities for participants to have a powerful voice and convey their bits of knowledge across the research procedure, and they can ameliorate further avenues of exploration that improve the evidence and allow questions to be answered more profoundly (Lund, 2011, p.156). MM approach can encourage more significant scholarly interaction and enhance the experiences of researchers as various perspectives illuminate the issues being examined. However, the process of MM methods within one study can add complexity to conducting research. It frequently requires more resources, time, and additional research training. To conduct a successful MM study, the researcher must comprehend quantitative and qualitative approaches.

This study conducted an explanatory sequential mixed method design, which indicates that a quantitative approach was employed first to analyze qualitative data afterward (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Explanatory sequential MM design allows the researcher to begin exploring at the start of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Tashakkori et al., 2020). This approach seeks to collect a foundation for analysis before further data collection. Through this method, the researcher can use the collected data (quantitative) to determine how much more data (qualitative) they need to elaborate their study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Tashakkori et al., 2020).

This MM study consists of a survey (quantitative) and interviews (qualitative) with selected participants. Neither a quantitative nor a qualitative design could answer the research question independently. The research question seeks to understand if social media affects pupils' willingness to communicate in English. Finding participants who use the English language on social media was essential to answer this. The participants filled out a survey and were recruited for subsequent interviews based on the initial survey.

3.5 Sampling

Planning and conducting a survey demand careful execution. However, selecting its participants is the most crucial part when conducting a survey. Therefore, the first step for conducting a survey is called sampling. The term sampling refers to the researcher's approach when selecting participants from a target population (Wellington, 2015, p.118). To provide a broader overview, the sampling approach can be divided into probability and non-probability sampling.

Probability sampling refers to picking a more extensive population from a random location (Wellington, 2015, p.118). This is to guarantee that the sample group is representative of the target population. Probability sampling is more dependable and objective but can also be time-consuming (Sundbye, 2022, p.23). On the contrary, non-probability sampling is faster and more straightforward. However, it does not allow generalization of a specific location like probability sampling (Wellington, 2015, p.119).

However, non-probability sampling itself can be divided into various types of sampling, such as quota and convenience (Wellington, 2015, p.119). Quota sampling refers to selecting participants based on specific criteria, such as age and gender (Wellington, 2015, p.119). On the contrary, convenience sampling refers to choosing participants based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study (Wellington, 2015, p.119). Convenience sampling is often utilized in studies with limited time scope (Sundbye, 2022, p.23-25).

Nonetheless, convenience sampling can also be divided into convenience and practicality. As previously mentioned, convenience sampling refers to choosing participants based on their accessibility and willingness to participate (Wellington, 2015, p.119). However, practicality sampling involves choosing participants based on practical considerations, such as location and availability (Wellington, 2015, p.119).

With that in mind, this study consists of a small sample size where generalizability is less of a crisis, and practicality and convenience are more essential considerations. Therefore, the present thesis employed a non-probability sampling called convenience sampling to recruit interview participants.

Lastly, the research survey was handed out on paper and digitally. Digital distribution is an easier option that can save time and resources, but it can also be a disadvantage for participants unfamiliar with digital technology (Wellington, 2015). Therefore, the survey was given out in both methods in order to ensure that every pupil had the chance to participate.

3.6 Survey

The first part of the study was a quantitative survey. It consisted of eight multiple-choice questions and was handed out in person and online. The Norwegian Centre for Research Data approved the survey and the data collection (with project number 159888). The pupils were requested to respond to questions about their English-language exposure outside school. The questions asked them about their social media routines, if they communicate in English, which platforms they use, and how confident they are using English online. In addition, the pupils were also asked to write a short text about their weekend as if they would have done it if it was homework and how they would have written it if it was a social media post.

3.7 Interviews

The second part of the study was a qualitative interview. The study contained a qualitative interview with the participants to attain insight into their thoughts and perspectives. Wellington (2015) describes this approach as a valuable source to access participants' thoughts, feelings, and perspectives. In addition, interviews are helpful as they provide the investigator with information and knowledge about opinions that are not easily observable (Wellington, 2015, p.138). In this case, the pupils were able to present their language disclosure outside of school and their willingness to use English on social media through the interviews. This study employed a semi-structured interview technique to let the interview participants elaborate when necessary (Wellington, 2015, p.138). In addition, a semi-structured interview guide also allows the researcher to maintain an unrestricted structure while assuring that the participants convey the necessary details (Wellington, 2015, p.138).

The interview questions were broken down by order, with more straightforward questions coming first and the more complex questions following them. Wellington (2015) advises utilizing the breaking down technique when interviewing to create a more comfortable environment for the participants. In addition, the interview guide also made sure that the pupils were able to decide between answering in Norwegian or English and avoiding ambiguous language not to confuse the participants. The interviews consisted of questions about the participant's social media routines, their preferred platforms, and their thoughts about communicating in English on social media. Further, the participants were asked to describe the content they usually encountered on social media and whether it was mainly in Norwegian or English. The interviews also included questions about their previous social media posts and activities. The participants were also asked about their opinions on using English on social media in contrast to English practices in class and if they have noticed any disparity when utilizing the language in various environments. Lastly, the interview participants were asked to explain their answers to the writing task from the survey.

Nonetheless, for the purpose of data collection, the interviews were recorded. An audio recording was chosen as the most beneficial option for this thesis. Wellington (2015) suggests utilizing both an audio recording and note-taking when employing research because of their advantages and disadvantages. An audio recording provides an objective perspective of the interview participants' answers, allowing the researcher to devote their entire focus to the interviews. However, audio recordings must be transcribed, making the analysis time-consuming. On the contrary, note-taking does not consume the same amount of time as transcribing but may be less authentic data collection. Therefore, Wellington (2015) suggests that integrating both methods will increase the quality of the interview and provide the researcher with authentic results. However, this study mainly employed an audio-recording approach for data collection. Nevertheless, note-taking was used for the written task given to the pupils during the interviews.

3.8 Procedure

3.8.1 Data collection

The data was collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews based on convenience sampling after being approved by NSD (Norsk senter for forskningsdata). The participants were informed about the study and their rights throughout the procedure. The interviews were scheduled individually after written consent forms were obtained from the pupils and their parents. Each interview lasted 20-30 minutes, in English and Norwegian, depending on the participant's proficiency levels and preferences. The investigator opened the interview with broad questions asking the participants about their day and condition and moved narrowly down to their thoughts on social media and English.

3.8.2 Ethics

As a researcher, it is essential to conduct a study that guarantees respect and welfare for the participants involved (Sundbye, 2022, p.27). Furthermore, the researcher must ensure that the research does not compel the participants damage and that they are treated equitably (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.151). Creswell and Poth (2018) also accentuate that the researcher must inform the participants about the purpose of the study to avoid deception.

It is also vital to gain the participant's permission and ensure their anonymity when conducting a study (NESH, 2021). The consent of the participants must be voluntary and straightforward. The consent must be feasible to document or prove, and the participants must know that they can withdraw it anytime (NESH, 2021). In addition to NESH, the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education (NSD) also explains that participants have the right to anonymity and privacy during the data collection and after publishing (NSD, 2021). The participants in the survey were therefore given anonymous nicknames to disguise their identities (Creswell & Poth, 2013, p.182-183). To ensure the anonymity of the participants, the transcripts do not include information that can be identified. Information on the participants that could identify them was withdrawn from the transcript.

When contacting the school by e-mail, the link to the project proposal was accompanied by a document explaining the study's purpose, what participation would entail, and their rights. The e-

mail also included contact information regarding the researcher, the supervisor, and the Data Protection Official employed at the University of South-Eastern Norway. This approach ensured that the participants were informed about the study before conducting it. The data collected in the survey and the interviews were completed using safe data collection tools developed by the University of South-Eastern Norway, which also provided storage on a protected server. The participants were able to consent to the research by marking off a box at the start of the survey and signing it, noting that they had read the incorporated details in the e-mail and approved using their answers. In addition, the parents of the chosen participants were also requested to sign off on the survey before starting the interviews. The participants of the project are under the age of eighteen, and it is, therefore, essential to gain permission from their parents additionally.

3.9 Data Analysis

As mentioned, the study employed a MM approach consisting of a survey and interviews. The quantitative and qualitative data were therefore analyzed individually and then compared in the discussion section of this thesis. The data for the qualitative interviews were transcribed and translated into English if the participant decided to answer in Norwegian. The transcriptions were also double-checked for accurate translation through member checking, where the participants were allowed to read through their interview transcripts. The interview transcripts were also read several times to familiarize the researcher with the data. Lastly, the data were separated into codes and themes to filter extraneous data. For example, the codes below, such as 'familiarity with interlocutors' and 'familiarity with the platforms,' were grouped into categories depending on the participant's answers. The codes were improved from the data through the findings of reviewed transcripts.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Survey results

All of the surveyed participants answered that they are familiar with at least one social media platform. As mentioned, 102 pupils were questioned. The survey results reveal that all participants are familiar with Youtube, 86/102 with TikTok, 71/102 with Instagram, 88/102 with Snapchat, and 43/102 with Discord. However, the number changed when asked which platforms they use daily. 77/102 answered that they use YouTube the most, 89/102 preferred TikTok, 61/102 used Instagram, 74/102 chose Snapchat, and only 6/102 picked Discord.

When asked which languages they encounter the most on these platforms, 3/102 answered Norwegian, 51/102 answered English, and 6/102 replied another language. It is essential to note that not everybody answered every question.

73/102 of the survey participants answered that they had posted their own content on social media before. 59/73 out of the participants who posted their own content explained that they had posted content using English. Meaning that they either spoke or wrote in English during their post. However, the number increased when asked if they had commented on any social media posts in English; 64/102 answered that they had commented under another social media post in English.

It is essential to mention that out of the 102 participants, only one pupil had no form of social media. Social media has an age restriction, and individuals have to be 13 years old. This study was conducted on 7th graders between 12 and 13 years old. In this pupil's case, they had to wait until their birthday to use social media. However, they were familiar with the different platforms through their friends.

4.2 Interviews

Fifteen interviews were conducted in total. The participants for the interviews were based on the answers they gave on the survey. 63/102 participants' wanted to participate in the interview; however, it would have been too much data. Therefore, participants who were familiar with several social media platforms and willingly used the English language to communicate were selected. In total, eight girls and seven boys were chosen. The participants will be given pseudonyms throughout this section to protect their identities.

The interview results will be divided into several parts based on the pupils' answers. Several participants shared identical answers during the interviews, which contributed to gathering the findings in the same categories to provide a more transparent overview.

4.2.1 Familiarity with interlocutors

Three of the interview participants mentioned that a close proximity of interaction with their communication partner was found to facilitate more willingness to communicate in the ED context. This approach could decrease their anxiety and make them feel more comfortable delivering a message in English. In particular, these pupils mentioned that they either have maintained friendships they found during overseas experiences or online friends through social media platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat. Jennie said, "I have maintained a relationship with my foreign friends whom I met in France via Instagram, where we comment under each other's pictures.". Jennie also commented, "I use Instagram and Snapchat to connect with my foreign friends. We either talk with each other through messages or video calls. I feel comfortable talking to them in English because they still understand me even if I say something grammatically incorrect.". Moreover, these pupils also mentioned that affective and social support from their close foreign interlocutors played a vital role in facilitating their WTC. Another participant, Ethan suggested, "I have a very good relationship with my online friends I talk and play games with for hours, sometimes they suggest me better English expressions or correct my mistakes. They are from America.". Ethan also reported: "Most of my online friends live in America. I talk with them through Discord and ask them questions related to English if I am struggling." In contrast, a participant (Selena) who did not have any overseas experiences but had made friends through online communities had maintained those friendships by willingly communicating with them in

English in the ED context. In addition to Jennie and Ethan, Selena commented that she frequently enters fan communities to expand her language knowledge by discussing familiar subjects such as the entertainment industry. Selena continued to claim that she willingly communicates in English if the topic engages her. She believes linguistic mistakes do not count extensively if both parties are familiar with the topic.

4.2.2 Familiarity with the platforms

Familiarity with social media platforms was also a standard answer among the participants. Familiarity positively influenced pupils' tendencies toward using English as a communication source in various ED contexts. Sabrina commented, "I always use TikTok to follow fashion trends. If I go shopping with my parents or friends, I either search what is fashionable on Tik Tok or post a video asking people to comment underneath about the fashion trends." Sabrina further explained how using different audio sounds and hashtags are used to attract a specific type of audience to your videos. She suggested, "If you write #fashion underneath your video and use pop music as background music, Tik Tok will automatically show that video to those interested in the same things." Sabrina also mentioned how social media had improved her vocabulary in her interview. Sabrina commented, "I have learned new words through the comment section and the hashtags under the video. We never talk about fashion in our English lessons, so I learned phrases about fashion through Tik Tok, such as era and core that describe certain types of aesthetics." In addition, Jennie suggested, "If I, for example, do not understand a topic in class, I can search for a YouTube explanation of the topic." On the contrary, two boys, Ethan and Jonathan, mentioned online games and how they actively talk in English during online games. Ethan and Jonathan agreed they do not have to understand English fluently to understand how online games work. Jonathan demonstrated that he comprehends that if he wants to agree with a term on online games, he needs to pursue the green buttons; if not, he needs to follow the red ones. Ethan also mentioned that online games always have the same structure; therefore, he does not need to fear not comprehending a game. In addition, both boys expressed that when playing an online game, they understand the frequently used expressions due to the context of the game, such as: run, shoot, and behind you.

4.2.3 Self-confidence

Pupils with more confidence when using English were more likely to initiate communication in the ED context. This was especially salient among the pupils with overseas experiences (three pupils). Irene commented, "I usually speak English when traveling if not on social media, and I became more confident in speaking English with anyone anywhere because it is easier to speak with people I will never meet again." Intriguingly, the other participants with no overseas experiences also indicated increased self-confidence that was acquired through regular interaction with other English users on social media. This interaction facilitated their WTC in the ED context. For instance, Selena, who had no overseas experience, commented, "I feel more open and bolder when I use English when discussing a topic that interests me. I think my frequent communication on fan page communities helps increase my confidence because I feel like I still make a point even though I have linguistic mistakes.". Another interview participant, Jeremiah, mentioned, "I always put the Norwegian flag on my social media biographies such as Instagram and Tik Tok because if someone clicks on my name because they noticed that I made a grammatical mistake, they can see that I am not English and that English is not my first language.". Jeremiah continued to claim that "I willingly use more English on social media than in class because I can just say that English is not my first language if someone corrects me, but if I do the same in class, the teacher will probably say that I learned English for seven years."

4.2.4 Anxiety

One of the interview questions asked pupils about using English in class and on social media. Many participants answered that they feel more anxious and unwilling to communicate in class depending on their environment and energy. Sabrina commented that she could feel uneasy about making mistakes in class in case her classmates react. The other participants, Ethan and Irene also suggested that it is sometimes easier to use English on social media because they notice that other social media users also make linguistic mistakes. As Jonathan mentioned earlier, he occasionally feels less anxious when communicating in English on social media because he has reasoning for his linguistic mistakes due to his foreign background. Nonetheless, it is essential to note that several interview participants (Jennie, Sebastian, Mustafa, and Jay) mentioned that it does not matter if they use English in class or on social media and do not care if they make linguistic mistakes. In addition, they also mentioned that it is helpful that the teacher can correct them to improve their language

skills. However, two of the participants answered that they were unwilling to post something in English in the ED environment. One of the participants, Noah, attributed this phenomenon to peer pressure and fear of losing face in public. Noah commented, "Most of my followers on social media are my friends from school. If I post something in English, they may laugh at me." Another participant, Valentina, also argued, "I feel like my friends may bully me if I use English on social media. I still want to post content on social media. I have two different accounts. I have one account where my friends follow me, but I also have another one where I post content using funny filters and audios, but no one knows the account's name."

4.2.5 Written task

The final interview question asked the pupils to explain their written task answer from the survey. This task was mandatory for every interview participant. One participant actively asked questions during this part regarding how they should write. More exclusively, she wondered how they should write the part that was supposed to be homework. The participant (Erika), in particular, mentioned how she should write based on her teacher's preference. Erika commented, "I went shopping with my parents this weekend, but I don't think my teacher would ask for that. Is it okay to write about what I did after school on the homework part?" However, every participant was supposed to answer the same questions, so Erika's request was denied. Her result revealed that she only included one sentence about her shopping trip with her parents on the first writing task, and the second task was mainly about her shopping trip. Erika's first answer was: "I basically need to wake up early every day for school, but I slept more on Saturday and Sunday. I love to go to school because I can see my friends, on the weekend I mostly am with my family and I miss my friends. I also did some extra homework on Saturday to not have that much next week. I also went shopping." Her second answer was: "I like shopping and fashion, so me and my family go to the malls on Saturday and shop you know. After that, I came home and chilled with candy and tried my new clothes. It is pretty rare I see my friends on Saturdays, but I talked with them through Snapchat and showed them my new clothes." In contrast to Erika, the rest of the participants had similar answers, with no significant dissimilarity between the tasks. For instance, Irene's first task was: "I didn't do anything special on Friday, but I made tacos with my mother, which was fun and watched a movie, that was it. On Saturday I went to my grandmothers birthday and celebrated her and ate strawberry cake and ice cream and tacos again. On Sunday I went to the cinema with my father and little sister and ate popcorn." Irene's second task was significantly similar to the first one: "My mother and me will

made tacos on Friday because I like them and watched a movie later. On Saturday I went to my grandmother's birthday party and ate more food, and gave a gift to my grandmother. On Sunday my dad brought me and my little sister to the cinema but I don't remember the name of the movie, but the popcorn was good."

4.2.6 Gender

Throughout the study, there has been a significant difference in how boys and girls use digital technology and social media. In addition to the interviews, several boy pupils asked if it was only a survey about social media or if online games could also count. These boys mentioned how they do not use social media constantly compared to online games and frequently use English during these games. This was a case that was also revealed during the interviews. As mentioned, Ethan and Jonathan are two participants who expressed how they mainly use more English during online games rather than on social media. However, the other boy participants also mentioned how they willingly search for game content on social media, especially on Tik Tok and Youtube. They frequently search for reviews for new games or discover a solution for the games through these videos. In contrast to the boys, the remaining girls noted how they usually watch dance, makeup, lifestyle, and storytime videos on social media platforms. The girls significantly used several social platforms compared to the boys. The boys mainly used Tik Tok and Youtube as social media platforms, unlike the girls, who actively used Instagram, Tik Tok, Youtube, and Snapchat. However, both genders used English-speaking content as a resource for their social media usage.

5.0 Discussion

The following section of this study has been divided into three parts to provide a more detailed analysis of how the use of social media affects pupils' willingness to communicate in English. The first subsection presents the study's findings in more detail and analyses them in light of previous WTC studies. The subsection also employs MacIntyre's willingness to communicate the model to investigate the correlation with the interview participants' answers.

The findings of the first subsection indicate that social media can influence pupils' willingness to communicate positively. The participants shared that the various social media platforms allowed

them to practice their English skills interactively based on enjoyable content. These findings correlate with previous studies that also have registered similar findings, such as indicating that social media platforms have the potential to enhance pupils' language learning practices by providing them with authentic use of the language.

The second subsection analyses the correlation between the findings and the Core curriculum. This portion of the section focuses on how the study's findings reinforce several curriculum aims. Social media can be utilized as a powerful mechanism to enhance pupils' language practices by allowing them to explore the realistic use of language in various contexts. In addition, the various social media platforms can also be used to investigate intercultural competence by exploring foreign cultures.

The last subsection presents Bandura's social cognitive theory. Bandura's social cognitive theory has been utilized to understand pupils' procedures when communicating in English on social media. The subsection underscores the importance of vicarious learning, social presence, and self-efficacy in shaping behavior. The study utilized the social cognitive theory in order to comprehend how the pupils' can observe the language use of other social media users to improve their own skills and also to receive feedback from new people.

In conclusion, this section of the thesis underscores the positive and negative effects of how the use of social media impacts pupils' WTC in English. As previously mentioned, the findings of the thesis are consistent with previous WTC research and indicate the potential of social media as a powerful tool for enhancing pupils' language knowledge. Further, the following section contains a comprehensive analysis of the study's findings, drawing on previous studies and theoretical framework to provide a more complex and accurate interpretation.

5.1 Familiarity with interlocutors

At the end of the interviews, it was discovered that familiarity with interlocutors and communities on social media affected pupils' willingness to communicate. Primarily, the proximity with pupils' interlocutors was found to play a facilitative function in their willingness to communicate. The researcher Lee Ju Seong, mentioned in the literature review section of this study, provided findings that learners who feel uncomfortable with their interlocutors in an out-of-class context may hesitate

to maintain a second language communication (Lee, 2019, p.701). In addition, Lee also showed that familiarity with the interlocutor might contribute to or reduce learners' WTC. In his study, Lee discovered that some learners are more comfortable producing a message in English online due to the familiar proximity (Lee, 2019, p.702). These results were visible in Jennie and Ethan's cases as well. Jennie and Ethan commented that they are not afraid of making linguistic mistakes when communicating online with their friends because they know that their message will be understood either way, and they can request assistance from their interlocutors if required. In addition, earlier studies confirmed that the level of familiarity with online communities has a positive tendency to produce communication in the ED environment. This indication was visible in Selena's case. Selena suggested how she willingly communicates in English on social media platforms as long as it is about her interests, such as fan communities. Selena's comment underlines how her proximity with her interlocutors and the topic affects her WTC by creating a safe environment for her, which confirms Lee's findings about how familiarity with the interlocutors contributes to WTC (Lee, 2019, p.703). In addition, this study also corroborates previous studies, which reported that learners are more engaged in informal online English learning communities such as fandom communities (2019).

The same studies also offer a new insight into how familiarity with virtual communities can be beneficial for enhancing learners' WTC and using English in a more positive frame of mind (Lee, 2019, p.703). That is, as revealed in Sabrina's case, based on pupils' needs and interests, and how they are responsible for their ED activities while interacting with other community members in a digital affinity space. As for Sabrina's case, she revealed how she prefers to use Tik Tok as a social media platform for her fashion inspiration. In this case, the learner (Sabrina) uses social media to benefit her needs and interests by interacting with other members of the fashion world on Tik Tok. Sabrina's case reveals how individuals initiate their own ED activities. These discoveries also confirm Sylvén and Sundqvists' description of the association between language exposure and media. As mentioned, Sylvén and Sundqvist suggest the term Extramural English (EE) to describe pupils' English language activities in their spare time (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p.6). The term focuses on pupils' language activities in their spare time and how it contributes to their language improvement. Regardless, EE does not involve initiation by teachers or other people working in educational institutions (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p.7). The initiative for involvement with the language lies with the learners themselves (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p.6). However, EE allows parents and friends to initiate involvement. In this case, familiarity with the interlocutors did not include any participation from anyone from an educational institution. The interview participants

commented on how they willingly initiated communication on social media and communicated with friends or members of the same community. The participants also commented that they could request language recommendations to improve their linguistic proficiencies from their online friends, which is allowed by Sylvén and Sundqvist since it does not involve any institutional help.

5.2 Familiarity with the platforms

In addition to familiarity with interlocutors, familiarity with the various social media platforms and their structure also affected pupils' willingness to communicate in English. Sabrina was, in her case, aware of how she had to use Tik Tok to ask people about fashion ideas. Sabrina commented how she used diverse hashtags or audio sounds when she published a Tik Tok because she knew that particular styles of hashtags and audio attracted more fashion community members on Tik Tok. In the previously mentioned VOGUE project, Brevik discovered that not all learners know how their social media habits affected their language proficiency; however, in Sabrina's case, she said Tik Tok had improved her vocabulary by revealing new content and concepts for her in her spare time (Brevik, 2019, pp.596). In addition, Ethan and Jonathan also mentioned how they are familiar with the structure of online games and therefore are less anxious when communicating. Both of the boys agreed that they do not have to understand English fluently to be able to participate in online games. They commented on how they use the various colors in a game as a code (green buttons indicate yes, and red buttons indicate no). It is essential to notice that the boys mentioned how they understand the frequently used expressions due to the context of the game, such as: run, shoot, and behind you. This awareness goes under the same category as Sabrina, where all three participants have learned the definition behind the expression due to its context. Familiarity with the different social media platforms again confirms Lee's findings about how virtual communities can enhance WTC and use English with a more positive frame of mind. This is revealed in Jonathan's case, where he noted how he feels more comfortable using English online than in the classroom due to familiarity.

5.3 Self-confidence and Anxiety

The results of the interviews showed that pupils with more confidence when using English were more likely to initiate communication in the ED context. This phenomenon was prominent in Irene's case. Irene mentioned that she often traveled overseas with her family, where they frequently used English to communicate, and that she has made several foreign friends during these travels. These experiences made Irene more confident and less anxious about making linguistic mistakes online. Additionally, Irene mentioned that she does not mind speaking English with somebody she will never encounter again and, therefore, will continue to initiate communication overseas and in ED. However, unlike Irene, participants with no overseas experience also conveyed similar answers about their confidence. Selena and Jeremiah commented that linguistic mistakes do not matter as long as your message is delivered and somewhat understood. Selena emphasized how fandom communities increased her confidence because she has experienced that people appreciate her social media posts even though they contain few linguistic mistakes. On the contrary, Jeremiah mentioned how he could go overlooked with his linguistic mistakes by saying that English is not his first language, and people will therefore show empathy towards his mistakes. What is intriguing in Selena and Jeremiah's responses is that, depending on their familiarity with their interlocutors and the social media platforms, the degree of how much the pupils were willing to communicate in English in the ED environment seemed to be determined, regardless of their language proficiency. As Sylvén and Sundqvist refer, pupils' improvement through social media is rarely due to a desire to enhance their linguistic proficiency but rather a side-effect of enjoyable activities (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016, p.8-10). As for Selena and Jeremiah's case, both individuals' confidence improved through positive encounters with their English proficiency on social media. Both individuals initiated communication in the ED environment for different reasons. Selena enjoyed publishing posts about her favorite celebrities and discovered that her audience did not care for her linguistic mistakes but for her content. Jeremiah realized that if he mentioned that he did not know English fluently, people would not comment on his linguistic mistakes and share whatever he desired. Nonetheless, both participants shared that they would continue using English on social media willingly for the reasons above.

However, it is essential to note that social media both increases self-confidence and negatively affects it. Few participants mentioned how they instead do not share anything on social media in case they have linguistic mistakes their friends can notice. In contrast to Selena and Jeremiah, who did not mind their linguistic mistakes, Valentina shared how she is uncomfortable with publishing

content her friends and family could see, and that prevented her from communicating in the ED environment willingly. Valentina wished to communicate more on social media but feared the response. These findings support MacIntyre et al.'s (MacIntyre et al., 1998) model that was mentioned previously. MacIntyre et al.'s model refers to how Layer 5 (affective-cognitive context, e.g., social situation including participants, settings, purposes, topics, and communication channels) and Layer 4 (motivational propensities: e.g., self-confidence including self-evaluated and overall confidence about communication) are closely interrelated with Layer 3 (situated antecedents, e.g., the desire to communicate with a specific person including affiliation or interlocutor and control motives) (Lee, 2019, p.704). More specifically, the model examines the genuine desire to communicate and how those desires are affected by various variables. The three top layers are considered dynamic variables that depend on specific communication situations, and the three bottom layers embody more cognitive processes that affect pupils' motivation (Macintyre et al., 1998). As for Valentina's case, her desire to communicate in English on social media was influenced by her fear of her environment remarking on her behavior and mistakes. However, Valentina still created another private account to publish anything she desired. In this case, her communication situation (Layer 3) was motivated by her desire to post. Her environment no longer affected her cognitive processes because she felt safe in her new surroundings.

MacIntyre et al.'s model is also evident in other pupils' anxiety when communicating in English. The interview outcomes revealed that environment, in general, plays a significant role in pupils' WTC. Sabrina, Ethan, Irene, and Jonathan are the four participants who emphasized how it could be more comfortable to communicate in English on social media compared to the classroom. The participants highlighted how the fear of making linguistic mistakes could prevent them from speaking in English. Jonathan noted how he would instead learn his mistakes from his online friends rather than his teacher, that can point out his mistakes in front of the whole class. As mentioned, English lessons are often structured by the instructor who regulates pupils' communication activities (Cao & Philip, 2006). These regulations do not always function for every pupil in class, which is also visible in this study. These regulations are evident in MacIntyre et al.'s model that explains how pupils' motivation and anxiety when communicating can be affected by their environment and how uncomfortable circumstances can influence their self-confidence when communicating in a foreign language (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

5.4 Written task

It was essential to note the difference between pupils in and outside-of-class English to comprehend pupils' cognitive processes when communicating in English on social media. The interview's final question included a written task where participants were asked to write about their weekend as they would have done if it was homework and as a social media post. This assignment was motivated by Thorne and Reinhardt's Bridging Activities, as mentioned above. Thorne and Reinhardt present that pupils may benefit from the language they encounter in their spare time (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2008, pp.558-572). In addition, they suggest bringing pupils' language competence into the classroom by validating the language they use in their spare time (Sundbye, 2022, p.5). Through the interviews, it was revealed that several participants wrote similar texts; however, one participant (Erika) gave a different answer than the rest. Erika actively asked whether she should focus on what her teacher would prefer her to write or if she could answer it differently. Erika's response was similar to Brevik's findings in her VOGUE project. Brevik concludes that Norwegian pupils tend not to consider their outside-of-school English habits appropriate to schoolwork and do not incorporate them into institutional settings (Brevik, 2019, pp.47-53). Erika was uncertain about her teacher's expectations and needed procedures on how she should answer the task. As Brevik refers, Erika did not consider her social media habits relevant to her assignment and only deemed her instructor's formal language guidelines as appropriate.

In addition, Erika's response during this assignment was similar to Lee Ju Seongs's findings in his study. Lee Ju Seong's study revealed that South Korea's socio-political climate might have affected pupils' WTC (Lee, 2019, p.700). Lee's participants commented on how they became passive L2 users in the ED environments due to the teacher-centered English pedagogy and how they rarely use English unless it is initiated by their interlocutor (Lee, 2019, p.701). In addition, they suggested how Korea's socio-political pressure had instructed them to become passive learners in the classroom where formal language learning dominated; however, when they were placed in the presence of foreigners, whether online, they could hardly speak their ideas in English (Lee, 2019, p.703). When analyzing Erika's text, it was discovered that she primarily wrote about her views about school and her friends and included two sentences about what she did on the weekend. Once again, Erika's first answer was: "I basically need to wake up early every day for school, but I slept more on Saturday and Sunday. I love to go to school because I can see my friends, on the weekend I mostly am with my family and I miss my friends. I also did some extra homework on Saturday to not have that much next week. I also went shopping." Her second answer was: "I like shopping and

fashion, so me and my family go to the malls on Saturday and shop you know. After that, I came home and chilled with candy and tried my new clothes. It is pretty rare I see my friends on Saturdays, but I talked with them through Snapchat and showed them my new clothes." These two texts focus on two various occasions. Erika's first response confirms Lee's (2019) and Cao and Philip's (2006) suggestions of how the instructor regulates pupils' communication activities in English lessons. Throughout the process, Erika was uncertain about how her teacher would prefer her to write. This is equivalent to Lee's findings about how Korea's formal language instructions produced passive L2 users. Erika was not confident in her proficiency and depended on her instructor to create a text. However, for the second task, Erika produced a coherent text about what she did during the weekend but did not consider her outside-of-school exposure relevant to the first task.

As for the remaining participants, there were no visible disparities between the assignments. However, it is essential to note that there are linguistic contrasts between pupils' texts. For instance, Irene's first task: "I didn't do anything special on Friday, but I made tacos with my mother, which was fun and watched a movie, that was it. On Saturday I went to my grandmothers birthday and celebrated her and ate strawberry cake and ice cream and tacos again. On Sunday I went to the cinema with my father and little sister and ate popcorn." Irene's second answer: "My mother and me will made tacos on friday because I like them and watched a movie later. On saturday I went to my grandmothers birthday party and ate more food, and gave a gift to my grandmother. On sunday my dad brought me and my little sister to the cinema but I don't remember the name of the movie, but the popcorn was good." Irene used capital letters for the weekdays on her first task, not for her second task. When asked about the difference, she notes that she does not mind linguistic mistakes as much when it is only for her friends or social media posts. The other participants had equivalent answers with only a few dissimilarities, such as: how long their sentences were and where they positioned punctuations.

5.5 Gender

This study sought to examine how social media affects pupils' WTC in English. However, during the interviews, there have been extreme observations about how the different genders operate digital technology. As mentioned, social media refers to a wide range of social networking sites and platforms that provide users with accessible and easy-to-use communication means (Sundbye, 2022,

p.3). Platforms such as Instagram, Tik Tok, Snapchat, Facebook, and Discord are used to send and receive messages, share news and information, and interact with others (Sundbye, 2022, p.3). With the refinement in digital technology, the field of research has been expanded to encompass a range of digital devices such as smartphones, computers, digital games, and social media (Sundbye, 2022, p.4). This range is emersed in this study and was detected during the survey. Several boys asked if the study solely contained questions about their English use on social media or if online games mattered. Nonetheless, when discovering that the study is simply about their social media use, several boy participants decided not to participate in the interview because they do not use social media actively.

The boys who chose to participate noted that they do not use English on social media frequently compared to online games. Ethan and Jonathan commented how they primarily use English during online games, where they use their microphone or the chat function to communicate with other players. However, both of the boys mentioned how they use the social media platform called Discord to communicate with other players. Ethan and Jonathan explained that they are actively on a phone call with other players if the game they are playing does not have a microphone setting they can use to communicate. In addition, other boy participants mentioned that they use other social media platforms as Tik Tok and YouTube, to watch game content. In contrast to the boys, the girls noted how they are familiar with several platforms and use them actively to communicate in English. Compared to the boys, the girls used social media platforms actively. With a similar approach, Brevik has, in her VOGUE project, informed that the gamers were predominantly boys, and the social media users were primarily girls (Brevik, 2019, pp.595-603). Brevik's results verified that online gamers used more time on media and were exposed to more English, which was also evident in this study. In their interviews, Ethan and Jonathan revealed how they played online games for several hours. As mentioned in the introduction, English-speaking countries dominate the production of the most famous content in media, including online games. Therefore, the boys were only exposed to English while playing online games. The girls who consume their time on social media could decide which language they prefer to encounter the most.

5.6 Curriculum Implications

The new curriculum, developed in 2020, is a foundation for all the subjects (Ministry of Education and Research, 2020). The Core Curriculum work towards an inclusive learning environment that benefits from cooperation with more extensive societies and underlines the significance of knowledge exchange with other countries (Sundbye, 2022, p.13). In addition, the curriculum focuses on incorporating various forms of media from the English-speaking world to let pupils interact with a broad spectrum of English content (Sundbye, 2022, p.14). As for this study, these initiatives were detectable in Sabrina's case. Sabrina implied that social media contributed to enhancing her vocabulary. Her ED experience provided her with new interlocutors from English-speaking countries that introduced her to new English phrases. As the curriculum refers, Sabrina attained knowledge within a learning environment she created herself to benefit from collaboration with a more vast society (Ministry of Education and Research, 2020). In this case, Sabrina belonged to a fashion community and could exchange knowledge with several social media users worldwide. In addition, social media was used as a shape of media. According to the curriculum, diverse forms of media can offer pupils valuable experiences with the English language (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). In Sabrina's case, social media affected her WTC by providing her with a community to explore various English content online.

Equivalent findings were introduced in the Belgium study in the literature review. The Belgium study analyzed the correlation between outside-of-school English on French-speaking pupils (Peters et al., 2019). As mentioned, the province was predominantly Dutch speaking. Pupils learned French as their second language and English as their third. Nonetheless, the researchers detected pupils' English vocabulary aptitudes were more developed than their French (Peters et al., 2019). Equivalent to Sabrina's case, the study revealed how pupils who consume several hours of different forms of media are more exposed to English than other languages. This exposure enhances their English proficiency by providing platforms to communicate with other speakers and observe the English language in new content. The curriculum explains this exposure as necessary to communicate and interact with others in digital environments (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). Furthermore, the curriculum aims to "explore and present content of cultural forms of expressions from various media in the English-speaking world related to one's interests" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). Sabrina achieved this aim by willingly communicating on social media about her fashion interests.

5.7 Social Cognitive Implications

As previously mentioned, given the volume of social cognitive theory and interconnectedness among its versions, this thesis will focus on the theory's vicarious learning, social presence, and self-efficacy content to comprehend how social media use affects pupils' willingness to communicate in English. Bandura describes his theory as comprehending how individuals are vigorously shaped by their environments (Chen et al., 2006, p.3). Once again, this statement is evident in Sabrina's case. In the familiarity with the platforms section, Sabrina conveyed how Tik Tok influenced her fashion sense. Sabrina uses Tik Tok to gain inspiration, ask for advice, and willingly initiate communication in the fashion community. The fashion community in her ED environment shapes her fashion sense and vocabulary. Bandura explains this process as vicarious learning, also called observational learning (Chen et al., 2006, p.6-7). The method indicates how individuals observe others and develop directions to guide their behavior (Chen et al., 2006, p.6-7). As for Sabrina, her behavior was operated by the other online community members. Vicarious learning is controlled by attention, retention, production, and motivation (Chen et al., 2006, p.8). Sabrina utilized the various social media users as her model and guidance. This guidance did influence not only her fashion sense but also her vocabulary. As Sabrina suggested, her social media activities exposed her to new English phrases. This exposure was through vicarious learning. Sabrina observed the comment section and the other social media users' language when describing their fashion tips. Through these observations, she maintained those new phrases in her memory. An essential stage in vicarious learning is to be able to maintain the observed behavior. As Bandura describes, an observed behavior can only be reproduced if the production of it focuses on decoding the symbolic representation of the observed behavior in action (Vinney, 2019).

Furthermore, vicarious learning can be divided into four processes. The first step is an attentional process. The attentional process is when the individual chooses to observe real-life models either in real life or via media (Vinney, 2019). In this case, Sabrina decided to follow media models. The next two steps are the retention and production processes, which involve recognizing and applying the observed information to your behavior (Vinney, 2019). Sabrina succeeded in this step by using the exact phrases she noticed in other social media content on her content. For instance, Sabrina saw that phrases such as core and era could be used to describe the aesthetic behind your outfit and decided to use the terms in her explanations as well. The last step is the motivational process. This

step is determined by its result, meaning that if the outcome of the observed behavior is awarded, the observer will considerably reproduce it. Sabrina had not experienced negative feedback on her social media content yet and therefore revealed that she would willingly continue to be a part of the online community.

Another way that social media supported Ethan WTC is through the concept of social presence. Social presence is another essential component in social cognitive theory that refers to the ability of individuals to feel interconnected and present in a social environment (Merc & Saka, 2021, p.24). Social media can provide a feeling of social presence by allowing pupils to connect with others in English-speaking communities worldwide. This experience can create a comfortable communication environment in English where one can rehearse their language (Viney, 2019). This factor was not only evident in Ethan's case. Sabrina, Jennie, Selena, Jonathan, and Irene had all created comfortable ED environments where they communicate in English. The individuals observed other social media users' language and behavior through their social media posts and the comment section on various platforms and transformed these behaviors into their own.

In addition, social media as a social cognitive environment can also support WTC by providing opportunities for pupils to express themselves creatively in English. Social media platforms such as Tik Tok, Snapchat, and Instagram provide innovative devices such as filters, stickers, and music, which can help pupils express themselves creatively (Sundbye, 2022, p.31). As Valentina mentioned, these opportunities can particularly appeal to pupils who may feel self-conscious or shy about their language skills since it allows them to communicate more visually.

Another way that the social cognitive theory supports WTC on social media is through the concept of self-efficacy. As mentioned, Bandura describes self-efficacy as pupils' critiques and opinions about their abilities to achieve a selected behavior (Bandura, 1997, p.2). Selena and Jonathan are the two most consistent participants who pointed out how social media communication has positively enhanced their self-efficacy. Both of the participants had positive experiences with using English on social media. Bandura explains self-efficacy beliefs as associations with goal-related effort, which means that individuals' self-efficacy relies on the result of the modeled behavior (Chen et al., 2006, p.9). In Selena and Jonathan's case, the positive feedback from other social media users enhanced their self-efficacy and confidence.

Bandura defines *self-efficacy* as learning that can arise without direct reinforcement (Chen et al., 2006, p.9). As mentioned, the theory indicates that pupils can control their behavior through self-reflection and self-evaluation (Merc & Saka, 2021, p.11). Pupils can observe how other English speakers communicate and model their behavior on social media. This can potentially contribute to expanding their communication skills and increasing their WTC in English. In addition, social media provides a low-risk environment for pupils to rehearse their language skills, which can also improve their confidence and WTC (Vinney, 2019). For instance, in Ethan's case, he had maintained a friendship with American social media users to practice his language skills. This opportunity allowed Ethan to observe how authentic English speakers write and pronounce sentences. These observations provided Ethan with a low-risk environment where he could improve his language proficiency in a comfortable environment with his interlocutors.

The present study also revealed that pupils perceived diverse levels of self-efficacy on social media than in class. Sabrina, Ethan, Jonathan, and Irene indicated that communicating in English online is occasionally more comfortable than in the classroom. The participants commented how the fear of making linguistic mistakes while speaking in front of the class could affect their WTC in English. As Jonathan commented, they perceived themselves most efficient in reading and writing in English than speaking. Bandura describes this phenomenon as a natural social cognitive process. Inherently, EFL speakers feel less efficient speaking more publicly (Merc & Saka, 2021, p.14). Another reason may be connected to Erika's case concerning instructor-oriented communication activities. Erika's case provided equivalent results to Lee Ju Seongs' Korean study, in which Korea's socio-political variables affected pupils' WTC. In both scenarios, the participants were influenced by their teacher's expectations and did not consider their outside-of-school English valuable. In this sense, pupils' self-efficacy perception may have been affected by their lack of motivation to communicate independently (Merc & Saka, 2021, p.16).

In addition, self-efficacy has been discovered to be an essential factor in willingness to communicate in the ED. According to Bandura, individuals with high levels of self-efficacy in communication are more likely to encounter communication behaviors, such as initiating conversations, voicing opinions, and asking questions (Chen et al., 2006, p.8). Contrarily, individuals with low levels of self-efficacy in communication may be more reluctant to engage in these types of behavior. Jennie, Sebastian, Mustafa, and Jay are four participants who mentioned that it does matter if they use English in class or social media because they believe their English

proficiency is enough for both scenarios. All participants could engage and initiate conversation in English due to their high level of self-efficacy.

Research has also uncovered that self-efficacy in communication can be impacted by various factors, including past incidents, social support, and feedback (Chen et al., 2006, p.9-11). For instance, if an individual has had positive experiences in communication, they may develop a higher level of self-efficacy in this area. Similarly, if an individual obtains positive feedback or support from others, this can also boost their self-efficacy in communication (Chen et al., 2006, p.9-11). Once again, Selena and Jonathan received positive feedback from other social media users in their ED environment, which improved their self-efficacy. However, negative experiences or the absence of support can lead to more subordinate levels of self-efficacy, such as in Valentina and Noah's case. Therefore, creating a supportive learning environment that encourages positive communication experiences and provides pupils with opportunities to rehearse and develop their WTC is essential.

However, it is also essential to consider social media as a source of anxiety and pressure. Bandura's study explains the correlation between self-efficacy and anxiety as a relationship that depends on the situational context (Merc & Saka, 2021, p.16). Individuals with low self-efficacy concerning their environment may suffer from low self-efficacy. For instance, Noah did not willingly publish English content on social media due to the fear of his companions ridiculing him. Noah commented on how he would lose face in public, meaning that his companions would also continue to tease him in public. Individuals who are nervous about making mistakes or being judged might be less likely to engage in conversations online. Once again, this incident confirms MacIntyre's WTC model and how a comfortable environment can positively or negatively affect one's WTC.

5.8 Summary

This study conducted a mixed-method approach employing a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews. This approach ensured that the participants were provided an opportunity to convey their opinions and perspectives about their own language use and WTC on social media.

Quantitative surveys were employed to choose convenient interview participants who were aware of their English use on social media and were willing to share it. The interviews provided a more in-depth understanding of pupils' cognitive perspectives. The results of the interviews indicated that

several participants had equivalent answers that were later organized into the same categories. The categories themselves were inspired by previous studies that had equivalent results. With that, this section of the study will summarize the most critical findings from the discussions section to give an overview of the results.

The first portion of the discussion analyzed these subcategories: familiarity with interlocutors, familiarity with the platforms, self-confidence and anxiety, written task, and gender. Lee Ju Seongs' study inspired these subcategories since the findings were equivalent. At the end of the interviews with fifteen participants, the study discovered that familiarity with interlocutors and communities on social media impacted pupils' willingness to communicate in English in several ways. The participants, Jennie, Ethan, Sabrina, Selena, and Jonathan, commented that they willingly engage in English conversations on social media despite making linguistic mistakes. However, these mistakes did not affect their WTC because they communicated with their online friends, community members, or people they did not know. The interview participants shared how they were comfortable asking their interlocutors to correct their linguistic mistakes and did not mind if their interlocutors noticed grammatical missteps.

In addition, the pupils had positive experiences when using English on social media due to the feedback they received from other social media users. The participants conveyed how they had experienced that other social media users had often understood their message even though it contained linguistic mistakes. Due to these experiences, the pupils' shared that they would continue communicating with other online users in English on social media. Once again, these findings support Lee Ju Seong's study and how comfortable ED environments with interlocutors and communities can increase pupils' WTC by encouraging them to continue to engage willingly in English conversations (Lee, 2019, p.701).

Furthermore, this study analyzed various factors that could have also affected pupils' self-confidence and anxiety when communicating in English on social media. As for self-confidence, the analysis of the findings noticed that pupils with more confidence when using English were more likely to initiate communication in the ED context. As previously mentioned, several participants did not mind their linguistic mistakes online due to the positive reaction from other social media users. These positive experiences enhanced their self-confidence and self-efficacy and made them into more confident English speakers online. On the contrary, two participants had negative experiences with how social media affected their WTC. The two participants shared that they would

instead not publish anything in English on social media due to the fear of their companions mocking them. The participants conveyed that they wanted to publish more online, but their surroundings prevented them. MacIntyre explains this process as a situation-specific procedure where individuals' environments prevent them from doing what they wish. In his model, he refers to how Layer 5, which focuses on the social situation the participants are in, and Layer 4, the motivational propensities as overall confidence, are closely related to Layer 3, which is the actual desire to communicate, impact pupils' WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Each participant desired to communicate in English on social media, but the actual communication depended on their circumstances and how comfortable they were with it. Several participants had built a safe ED environment where they willingly conversed in English. However, few participants did not have the same opportunity to achieve this, so they chose not to utilize English on social media.

Moreover, this study incorporated a written task the participants had to answer. The written task was invented to apprehend how social media affects pupils' WTC in English in more depth. The task requested the participants to write about their weekend as if it was homework and as if they were going to publish it on a social media platform. The interviews revealed no significant distinctions between pupils' use of English in school and outside of school. However, one participant, Erika, showed discomfort when answering the task. Erika actively questioned whether her teacher would approve of her answer and that her outside-of-school activities were irrelevant to the school. Erika's answer was equivalent to Brevik's findings in her study. In her VOGUE project, Brevik discovered that Norwegian pupils tend not to consider their outside-of-school English habits appropriate to schoolwork (Brevik, 2019, pp.47-53).

In addition, Erika's response was also similar to Lee Ju Seong's findings in his study. As mentioned, Lee revealed that South Korea's socio-political climate had impacted pupils' WTC. In his study, Lee's participants remarked on how they became passive English speakers in their ED environments due to teacher-centered English pedagogy (Lee, 2019, p.698). When examining Erika's answer, it was uncovered that Erika had gone through the same procedure. Erika's first reply to the task, which was to write as if it was homework, did not involve any activities she did during the weekend, and it was rather teacher-centered and contained her thoughts about school. Conversely, her other text, which was for social media, presented what she did on her weekend. Throughout the process, Erika was skeptical about how her teacher would prefer her to write and struggled to convey a message in English by herself.

Furthermore, the study also discovered differences between the genders regarding their social media use. Two of the interviewed boys remarked on how they predominantly use English during online games instead of on social media. However, both boys noted that they use the social media platform called Discord to communicate with other players online. In contrast to the boys, the girls were the primary social media users. The girls noted how they use several platforms to watch different content. Compared to the boys, who mainly used social media for online games, the girls used social media to watch content about other people's lifestyles. These findings are once again equivalent to Brevik's findings. Brevik discovered that boys dominated their time on games, and girls were the primary social media users (Sundbye, 2022, p.8).

Nevertheless, this study utilized the term outside-of-school English to analyze pupils' WTC. Similarly, in their study, Sylvén and Sundqvist also analyzed pupils' outside-of-school English activities and their contribution to improving pupils' English proficiency. This study used social media to analyze an example of pupils' outside-of-school English activities. Social media as a form of media can offer pupils practical experiences with the English language (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). The curriculum clarifies how pupils should communicate with people worldwide to expand their language knowledge. The curriculum aims to "explore and present content of cultural forms of expressions from various media in the English-speaking world related to one's interests" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019). In this study, the interview participant, Sabrina, shared how social media communication introduced her to new English phrases. Social media gave her a new perspective on using English differently to explain her thoughts further. The Core Curriculum explains this phenomenon as a result of interaction with other English users and observing their language to improve their own (Ministry of Education and Research, 2020).

Correspondingly, this phenomenon can be further explained by Bandura's social cognitive theory. Observing other models' behavior is an essential factor in social cognitive theory. Observational learning is a procedure that can be used to improve behavior by observing a selected model (Chen et al., 2006, p.6). In other words, the theory describes how individuals can adjust or improve their behavior in a particular context by observing others who have already attained their desired behavior. This study discovered that the interview participants had decided to observe other social media users' usage of the English language to enhance their own. Sabrina's case indicated how she discovered that other community members on social media used unique English phrases in their

sentences, which she also wanted to try. Sabrina indicated that these observations developed her English by disclosing her to new expressions in English by her interlocutors.

Furthermore, Bandura divided his observational method into four distinct processes to give a better overview of an individual's cognitive function: the attentional process, the retention process, the production process, and the motivational process (Vinney, 2019). These distinct approaches demonstrate how the observational process is attained in four steps. The process starts with the individual selecting a model they wish to observe (real-life or via media) and applying the observed information to their own behavior (Vinney, 2019). However, the observation results are determined by its motivation, meaning that the observer will continue to produce the same behavior if the outcome is positive (Vinney, 2019). This study utilized the four distinct approaches of Bandura's theory to comprehend pupils' cognitive process when communicating. The outcomes suggested that pupils who had positive experiences on social media had acquired a new behavior that they achieved by following other social media users. The results explain how Sabrina, Ethan, Jennie, Selena, Jonathan, and Irene unintentionally improved their English by observing their online friends' use of the English language and how they willingly communicated in their ED environments due to the comfortable circumstances.

Similarly, it is essential to discuss how the concept of self-efficacy also impacted pupils' WTC in English. Bandura defines *self-efficacy* as pupils' critiques of their performance (Bandura, 1997, p.2). Pupils' self-efficacy can be positively and negatively influenced depending on their experiences. Selena and Jonathan are the two most consistent participants who indicated how their positive experiences on social media improved their self-efficacy. Both participants received positive feedback from their online friends on their language use. In addition, the participants conveyed how it can be more comfortable to communicate in English on social media rather than in class. The participants noted how the fear of making linguistic mistakes in front of the class could affect their WTC negatively and that those mistakes do not matter as much online. The study discovered that pupils are either comfortable enough with their interlocutors not to mind their mistakes or conceal behind their social identity as a reason for their mistakes. Jonathan commented that he always sets the Norwegian flag on his social media accounts to use it as an excuse to say that English is not his first language if someone comments on his mistakes. This method has given Jonathan a reason to communicate in English without fear.

5.9 Implications

This study found significant variations in factors of social media that may have affected pupils' willingness to communicate in English. The interview participants conveyed that they are specific factors that contribute to their WTC on social media. In contrast to in-class English activities, the pupils had experienced that social media platforms provided them with new English contexts. The participants referred to these experiences as an outcome of their comfortable, low-pressure ED environment that enhanced their self-confidence and self-efficacy. The pupils utilized social media as a tool to communicate, observe, and explore other social media users' language to develop their own. This method is also supported by the Norwegian school system that the Core Curriculum drives. The curriculum aims to use various forms of media to provide pupils with new perspectives on how to use English.

The study's findings also indicate that social media allows pupils to practice their English skills with native speakers and other language learners worldwide. This experience reveals that pupils' language motivation can increase through various activities they find enjoyable. In addition, social media can also assist pupils in seeing the valuable benefit of learning English and becoming more engaged in their learning process.

Furthermore, social media provides new opportunities for pupils to connect with others with identical interests through communities. These communities can lead to new friendships. For instance, the interview participants revealed that their online friends and communities impacted their language knowledge positively. In addition, social media platforms such as Tik Tok, Instagram, and YouTube are full of educational content that can help pupils understand a broad spectrum of topics. For instance, Sabrina utilized Tik Tok to learn more about the fashion industry, and Jennie utilized YouTube to help her understand a challenging topic in class. These implications indicate that pupils' online activities outside of school can enhance their English skills by providing them with more exposure to the language and connecting them with enjoyable content outside of school, where they can improve their English skills as a side consequence.

Lastly, it is essential to consider the technological aspect of social media. Social media as a digital device can improve pupils' digital literacy skills, which are becoming increasingly necessary today.

As mentioned, children are exposed to large amounts of English language media daily through movies, video games, and social media (Sundbye, 2021, p.5). The Internet has become vital to participate in society. This study has revealed that social media can contribute to pupils' WTC improvement by acquainting them with the structure of the platforms. The pupils knew the diverse colors meaning, how to publish content to attract an audience, and what the different platforms contained. This knowledge enhanced their WTC by improving their understanding of how a digital environment functions and how they can use it to benefit from its advantages, such as improving their language or discovering enjoyable content.

5.10 Further research

This study conducted a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews for data collection. The collected data was based on survey answers and transcripts. However, due to the study's scale, the participants' statements and remarks could not be verified through classroom and outside-of-school observations. For the purpose of further research, it could be valuable to explore pupils' use of social media for a more extended period. It is essential to evaluate how much time pupils spend on social media, how they utilize the English language, and how other factors, such as traveling or other media, also contribute to their language exposure. This study did not allow for analyzing pupils' earlier social media activities because the project school was strictly a no-phone school and because of privacy.

This study did not also focus on one proficiency when utilizing English. The study focused on how the use of social media can affect pupils' WTC in English and did not consider a particular skill. The participants commented that they mostly write and read in English on social media, and for more comprehensive research, it could be beneficial to select between one proficiency to acquire a more profound knowledge of how social media activities influence pupils' WTC.

In addition, this study referred to pupils' social media use as an outside-of-school activity and not Extramural English. Extramural English focuses on how pupils' outside-of-school activities can be utilized in the classroom. The study desired to examine the factors on social media that could affect pupils' willingness to communicate in general. However, due to the scale of the study, it was not

practicable to use Extramural English to analyze if pupils' social media habits could potentially increase pupils' WTC in class as well.

Furthermore, this study failed to consider how social media can affect pupils' English skills compared to what they learn in class. The interview participants revealed they do not mind linguistic mistakes and grammatical rules when utilizing English on social media. It could be essential to study whether practicing and engaging in social media conversations could increase or decrease pupils' English proficiencies.

6.0 Conclusion

This thesis sought to explore how the use of social media affects pupils' willingness to communicate in English. The findings indicate that social media platforms have the potential to affect pupils' WTC positively. The results of the interviews underscore the significance of language exposure through social media and its auspicious effects on pupils' language practices.

The findings indicate that pupils are exposed to a significant amount of English language media daily. The interviews reveal that language occurs naturally through everyday exposure to the target language. With the widespread use of social media, children are even more exposed to English language media in diverse forms, such as videos, music, and social media posts, potentially enhancing their WTC. The interviews also indicate that contextual variables such as familiarity with interlocutors and communities and individual factors such as self-confidence and anxiety affect pupils' WTC in English.

These findings reinforce what is already apprehended about WTC over the past three decades. This thesis has found similar findings to Lee Ju Seong's WTC study, where it was proven that social media provides a practical environment for pupils to participate in enjoyable activities and use English in new circumstances, often caused by inner motivation controlled by self-confidence and self-efficacy.

Furthermore, this study employed the social cognitive theory by Bandura to explain how the use of social media affects pupils' WTC. Bandura's theory provides a practical framework explaining that

social media affect pupils' WTC by providing a new environment to observe other social media users' language. This approach allows the pupils to observe other users' behaviour before they try to communicate by themselves. In addition to Bandura, this thesis has also utilized MacIntyre's WTC model to comprehend the effects of social media. MacIntyre highlights the significance of motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence in pupils' WTC. The findings revealed that social media can positively affect pupils' self-confidence by providing them with a low-risk environment where they can practice their language skills without fearing linguistic mistakes. This approach can also expand their willingness to communicate by allowing them to utilize English in other contexts. In addition, the interviews also revealed that social media platforms could be utilized to obtain feedback in the shape of the amount of likes they receive, comments, and reactions to their online posts.

On the contrary, it is also essential to consider the negative aspects of social media before utilizing it. Exposure to non-standard forms of English or cyberbullying can decrease pupils' WTC. As the interviews revealed, the quality of language use on social media can be inconsistent. If the pupils do not notice the incorrect language use over time, it can affect their grammar and reinforce incorrect language use.

In conclusion, using social media can positively affect pupils' WTC in English by allowing them to encounter the English language enjoyable and interactively. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Tik Tok, Snapchat, and Discord, allow the pupils to create an interactive environment that appeals to their interests. This approach can potentially enhance pupils' willingness to communicate by encouraging them to use English in diverse contexts. However, as mentioned, it is necessary to recognize the negative aspects of social media. While social media offers exciting opportunities for language practice, it can also pose challenges. Bandura and MacIntyre explain this procedure as a result of individuals' vicarious learning, where they observe a selected model to enhance their behaviour which is influenced by their affective circumstances, such as anxiety, motivation, environment, and identity in willingness to communicate.

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