Students' Perception on the Use of Twitter as a Learning Media for English Vocabulary and Reading at the Fifth Semester of English Education Department at University

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Abstract

As digital technology continues to reshape educational methods, understanding students' perceptions regarding Twitter's effectiveness as a learning tool for enhancing English vocabulary and reading comprehension is essential for educators and researchers seeking to optimize language learning strategies. Despite a large amount of literature on social media platforms, there has been limited exploration of the specific features of Twitter that facilitate interactive learning, group interaction, vocabulary and reading development, especially when compared to other social media platforms. The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions and opinions of fifth-semester students regarding the use of Twitter as a new alternative media for improving students' English vocabulary and reading skills. This research used a qualitative approach, with data collected through interviews and presented by thematic analysis. There are 10 students from the 5th semester in the English Education Department UIN Jakarta were selected as the participants through purposive sampling. According to the interview, there are 8 students who agree and they mentioned that Twitter features like the direct message, English posts, and comment sections are useful for improving their English vocabulary and reading. The study's findings demonstrate how beneficial it is for students to use Twitter as a learning media to increase their vocabulary and reading comprehension in English.

Keywords: Learning Vocabulary; Reading; Students' Perception; Twitter

Introduction

The widespread influence of social media on modern society has profoundly altered the dynamics of communication and interaction (Putri et al., 2016). Current data highlights a significant portion of students actively participating in social media platforms (Lestrai Eka Putri Epinur Epr, 2013). This engagement extends beyond specific academic levels or departments, showcasing the pervasive influence of these platforms across diverse student populations. In line with this, the We Are Social report reveals that the number of active social media users in Indonesia reached 167 million people in January 2023, equivalent to 60.4% of the domestic population (Widi et.al., 2023). This reinforces the understanding of the deep and extensive penetration of social media's impact within society.

Social media platforms have evolved into multifaceted tools that cater to diverse needs, from personal communication and entertainment to professional networking (Oktalyra et al., 2021).The versatility of these platforms has prompted exploration into their potential applications in the realm of education, presenting an intriguing avenue for innovative learning approaches.

Despite the prevalent utilization of social media platforms, there remains a discernible gap in comprehending the degree to which students, particularly those in the Fifth Semester of English Education, have embraced these platforms for academic enrichment, particularly in the domain of English language education (Ariantini et al., 2021). This gap underscores the need for a focused examination of the specific engagement patterns of Fifth Semester English Education students with social media, shedding light on the extent to which these platforms are integrated into their educational practices (Megawati, 2016).

Among the plethora of social media platforms, Twitter stands out as a prominent player in the digital sphere. Boasting millions of users globally (Fatanti, 2014) , it serves as a dynamic space for information dissemination and interaction. Understanding the demographics of Twitter users is crucial in comprehending the potential impact it can have on educational practices.

Students and the general public have used Twitter as a forum for information sharing and self-presentation (Malik et al., 2019). In order to enhance service quality, it has also been utilized as an alternative media, especially in the context of government bureaucracy (Suminto & Al Farizi, 2020). Universitas Airlangga Surabaya and other university libraries have also used it to disseminate information. All these studies point to the growing trend of students using Twitter for learning and academic objectives.

The use of Twitter in vocabulary and reading learning for students in the Fifth Semester of the English Language Education Department at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta involves various strategies, including searching and sharing learning resources, online discussions with related hashtags, and participation in focused

reading activities (Oktaviana et al., 2021). The research results show that Twitter provides opportunities for students to engage in balanced reading and learning vocabulary activities, stimulating the holistic development of language skills. Interactions through retweets and likes also provide indicators of the extent to which learning materials are spread within the student community, which educators can use to design more effective learning strategies.

In the era of rapidly advancing technology, the integration of digital tools in education is becoming increasingly prevalent (Schmidt & Tang, 2020). As such, understanding the dynamics of technology use, particularly social media platforms like Twitter, as a medium for language learning, becomes imperative for educators and institutions alike. This research seeks to contribute to the discourse surrounding the judicious use of technology in education and its impact on language acquisition.

Recent research by Arumugam et al., (2022) intends to investigate how Twitter contributes to EFL students and the development of vocabulary at the university level as well as students opinions of Twitter's effectiveness as a language learning instrument for vocabulary acquisition. The researchers explore the impact of using Twitter as a language learning instruction for vocabulary according to the perspective of learners and educators. According to Alnjadat et al., (2019), the results and literature said that using social media on your phone is great for learning a language. It is easy to access and offers lots of benefits. The author can promote the use of social media for practicing vocabulary. If the author promotes it well, this will improve vocabulary acquisition among EFL learners, and they use technology platforms and social networks as a wise way to learn EFL vocabulary and other skills.

Recent research by Hasanah and Anugerahwati, (2022) discussed how effectively Twitter worked as a facilitator and how Twitter affected secondary students' writing. Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that the researcher is aware that Twitter may help students' in improving their language proficiency. The students can improve their understanding of word definitions and context usage by using social platforms like Twitter to enhance their course materials with clear explanations and engaging pictures, particularly for native vocabulary. They comprehend that the words or language are indicative of past happenings due to the visual provided by the attached image in the Tweet. According to Salazar-Carrillo et al., (2021), we can also see that the students believe that using media Twitter helps them do very well in their studies. The researcher did not incorporate Twitter as a media in education, they just use Twitter to assess its effectiveness in enhancing students' vocabulary. If a teacher intends to utilize platforms like Twitter as an instructional media, it is imperative for them to undertake preparatory efforts

and acquire a comprehensive understanding of Twitter's functionalities. The main difficulties that students have using Twitter should also be a concern for the teacher. The teacher or the educator needs to focus more on their students' while using Twitter as a teaching tool because the most important issues are study time, internet connectivity, and the system.

Other recent research by Eusebio and Eusebio, (2020) was to deliver insightful commentary on the utilization of social media platforms such as Twitter, to motivate and inspire students with poor vocabulary skills to improve their understanding of words and their usage. The researchers need to understand current education better, and researchers should be encouraged to explore and examine numerous useful aspects of various social networking sites.

Islamiah, (2020) conducted a study that analyzed students' perceptions of Twitter as a tool for learning English vocabulary. This research was carried out among University of Indonesia students, spanning from the 2nd semester to the 8th semester of their academic journey. The result showed that students was agreed that Twitter has a positive impact on learning English vocabulary, and the participants also agreed that using English vocabulary in Twitter helps them communicate with others. Not only to communicate with others but also to improve speaking and writing. Unfortunately, the author did not ask why students are more interested in Twitter to learn English vocabulary than other applications. So, the author can analyze Twitter users to determine why they are more interested in Twitter than other sites for vocabulary improvement in English.

Last year, Sirait and Hanim, (2022) conducted a study that discussed how to increase student vocabulary proficiency and to find out the effect of vocabulary through the use of Twitter and Instagram multimedia. This observation aligns with the prior research by Barus and Tampubolon, (2022), where it was noted that a significant number of students feel reluctant to engage in classroom activities due to vocabulary deficiencies. During the presentation, the researcher used an observation sheet and a questionnaire to record the active and serious study and learning. The findings indicated that as learning progresses, students become more involved and serious. Based on the collected data from observation sheets and questionnaires, the students were found to be engaged and excited about getting vocabulary with social media like Instagram and Twitter. The study's findings demonstrated how greatly Twitter and Instagram multimedia improved students.

Based on the earlier research mentioned, this research and the previous studies have a common focus, which is enhancing English vocabulary skills through using Twitter as a learning platform. However, there is no explanation about the role of Twitter compared to other social media platforms. It may be because of the specific feature or the unique appeal of Twitter that makes it attractive for learners to choose Twitter as a language learning platform.

Based on the limitations of previous studies, the main objective of this research is to find out the perceptions and opinions of fifth semester students regarding the use of Twitter as a new alternative media to improve their English vocabulary and reading comprehension skills.

This study's rationale lies in the intersection of language learning and technology, particularly Twitter. In today's digital age, leveraging Twitter for education is practical and relevant. Twitter's concise format promotes clear language use, immersing learners in real-time language contexts through short-form content, interactions, and multimedia. It exposes learners to real-life language, including colloquialisms and current events, enhancing comprehension and context-building. Twitter's interactive nature, with features like hashtags and discussions, can boost learner engagement and motivation. Research on Twitter's role allows data collection on learner progress, informing personalized language learning tools. This research bridges traditional instruction and the digital world, offering insights into effective vocabulary and reading strategies.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to transform English language education in the digital age. Traditional language learning methods often require costly resources. Demonstrating Twitter's potential as a cost-effective language learning tool can benefit learners with limited access to formal language education. Twitter's wide-reaching influence and ease of access make it a compelling medium for language learners, offering real-world exposure to contextually relevant language usage. This investigation is vital as it addresses the pressing need for innovative and engaging language learning approaches. Furthermore, it aligns with the demands of a modern society heavily reliant on digital communication tools, thus providing a bridging between traditional teaching methods and the evolving landscape of online language education.

Considering the information provided in the study's background, the research has framed the following questions:
1. How does using Twitter help 5th-semester students in the English Education Department improve their English vocabulary and reading comprehension skills?
2. What do 5th-semester students' perceptions about using Twitter to learn English vocabulary and reading skills?

Method

This study was conducted using a qualitative approach. This research was conducted in the Department of English Education, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. The study involved 10 fifth-semester students who used Twitter to be interviewed using purposive sampling. Researchers divided the questions into four topics; the

first topic has three questions about the use of Twitter, the second topic has eight questions about Twitter and vocabulary learning, for the third and fourth parts there are five questions each about reading comprehension and the impact of using Twitter. The purpose of the interview was to find out students' perceptions on whether Twitter can be a medium of learning and the impact of using Twitter for students.

To collect information from the research, the researchers employed interviews to answer the questions related to the use of twitter as a media for learning English vocabulary and reading. The interview session was held in English and Indonesian to help the researchers comprehend the questions more effectively. To obtain comprehensive research data, the researchers used a thematic analysis. After conducting the interviews, researchers collected the answers from the interviews, the dominant or similar answers from each class will be grouped according to themes and divided into three major themes.

Results

This section provides the data collected during the interview. These findings were procured by administering Twitter as a media for learning English vocabulary among ten fifth-semester students in the English Education Department UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. As previously mentioned in the methodology above, this examination featured 21 interview questions.

Based on the interviews conducted, the findings suggest that Twitter can have a positive impact on improving English vocabulary and reading skills. Respondents reported that they often come across new vocabulary and new information for their readings skills while using the app, especially through reading posts, tweets, and threads. The ability to observe how native speakers communicate and express their feelings in English was beneficial for vocabulary and reading comprehension. Additionally, features such as the timeline, trending topics, and bookmarking were mentioned as helpful in discovering new words and content. Some respondents also said that Twitter can motivate people to improve vocabulary and reading skills. However, it should be noted that not all users felt a significant impact on their vocabulary and reading skills from using Twitter.

Interview Results

After conducting interviews with ten respondents who use Twitter or Twitter users and focused on the students' perception on the use of Twitter as a learning media for English vocabulary and reading, the researcher found several perceptions from the students and divided them into three aspects: the use of Twitter, the features, and the benefits.

A. The Use of Twitter

Based on the interview sessions with fifth-semester students from classes A, B, and C, the researchers found and concluded that using Twitter for learning vocabulary and reading is useful and effective for improving their vocabulary and reading comprehension. The student's perception of using Twitter as a learning media is understandable, manageable, clear, and free.

Table 1. The Use of Twitter

Class	Theme
5A	a. Twitter for info, trends, and threads. b. Entertainment and viewing posts. c. Updates and info from friends.
5B	a. Twitter for news and updates. b. Entertainment with memes and jokes. c. Connecting globally and with native speakers.
5C	a. Twitter for trends, news, and threads. b. Platform for discovering words and vocabulary. c. Finding info, viewing tweets, and quotes.

In conclusion, the students across these classes view Twitter as a valuable tool for learning and improving their vocabulary and reading comprehension. They use Twitter not only for entertainment and staying updated with trends but also as a platform to discover new vocabulary and reading. The fact that students from different classes share a similar perception suggests that Twitter can be an effective media for enhancing vocabulary and reading skills, exposing them to diverse language usage, and helping them connect with native speakers and global citizens.

B. Features of the Twitter

Based on the interview sessions with fifth-semester students from class A, B, and C, The researchers found and concluded that the features of Twitter for learning vocabulary and reading is very helpful, engaging, and entertaining for improving their vocabulary and reading comprehension, and students also get a new vocabulary word and find new information for reading skills after seeing their timelines, trending news, search bar, threads, comment section, and interacting with strangers from across the world using English.

Table 2. Features of Twitter

Class	Theme
5A	a. Twitter offers news, trends, and threads. b. English Twitter, especially comments, enriches vocabulary and reading skills. c. Inspirational ideas on Twitter motivate vocabulary and reading improvement.
5B	a. Twitter enables observing native writing styles. b. Students learn vocabulary, slang, and idioms. c. Twitter provides exposure to diverse English topics so it can enhance students reading ability.
5C	a. Twitter posts introduce new vocabulary and new reading topics. b. Exposure to global native speakers enhances learning. c. Interacting on Twitter offers real-context language use.

In conclusion, the features of Twitter, as highlighted by the students, play a crucial role in vocabulary and reading improvement. Twitter offers a dynamic and engaging platform for language learning, where students can access real word language usage, interact with native speakers, and discover new vocabulary words. The consensus among students from different classes underscores the effectiveness of Twitter as a valuable tool for language learners.

C. The Benefits of Using Twitter

Based on the interview sessions with fifth-semester students from classes A, B, and C, The researchers found and concluded that the benefits of Twitter for learning vocabulary and reading are enjoyable to use and it is not difficult to find vocabulary and new topics for reading also, the other benefits from Twitter students can be having conversation with native speakers.

Table 3. Benefits of Using Twitter

Class	Theme
5A	a. Twitter aids in finding equivalent words and understanding difficult vocabulary and reading. b. Observing English on Twitter encourages language use. c. Twitter motivates improving English vocabulary and reading.
5B	a. Twitter improves vocabulary and reading, including slang and information. b. The timeline and threads help observe language use, especially by native speakers. c. Twitter positively impacts English vocabulary and reading.
5C	a. Twitter enhances vocabulary and reading, including colloquial language. b. The timeline and threads allow scrutinizing communication by native speakers. c. Twitter positively influences English vocabulary and reading enhancement.

In conclusion, the benefits of using Twitter for learning vocabulary and reading are apparent and enjoyable for students. Twitter not only helps them find and understand vocabulary and reading text more easily but also encourages them to engage in conversations with native speakers. Additionally, Twitter's features, such as timelines and threads, play a pivotal role in improving language skills, reading, and vocabulary, making it a valuable platform for language learners. The consistent feedback from students across different classes underscores the positive impact of Twitter on vocabulary and reading development and language proficiency.

Based on the data from the interviews conducted with fifth-semester students from Class 5A, 5B, and 5C, researchers found that several major and minor findings can be identified. One major finding is that students from all three classes use Twitter for various purposes, including finding information, reading threads, and seeing people's posts. This indicates that Twitter is a popular platform for accessing and consuming content. Another major finding is that students in all

three classes perceive Twitter as a valuable tool for learning vocabulary and reading. They mentioned using Twitter to find new information by reading text, updates, and new English vocabulary. Students also highlighted the benefits to exposure to native speaker's writing styles and the opportunity to observe how people communicate and use words on social media.

A minor finding is that students in Class B specifically mentioned using Twitter for entertainment purposes, such as memes and jokes. This suggests that Twitter is a source of amusement and leisure for these students. Additionally, students in Class 5C emphasized the importance of Twitter as a platform for discovering new words by reading text and found new vocabulary from various users and trending topics. This indicates that Twitter provides opportunities for students to expand their reading and vocabulary knowledge.

In conclusion, the major findings from the interviews with students from Class 5A, 5B, and 5C indicate that Twitter is widely used for accessing information and has a positive impact on vocabulary and reading learning. The minor findings highlight the entertainment aspect of Twitter for students in Class 5B and the importance of Twitter as a platform for discovering new vocabulary for students in Class 5C.

Discussion

Twitter can be helpful for learning languages, especially when it comes to getting better at vocabulary and understanding what you read. Many authors, like (Borau et al., 2009; Harmandaoglu, 2012) agree that Twitter has a lot of potential for language learning. A bunch of people, 8 out of 10 to be exact, said they improved their vocabulary a lot using Twitter. What's cool about Twitter is that it's not just for fun but it's also great for sharing info and staying updated. It's like a Swiss Army knife for learning because it can do more than just entertain you.

Also, people in the study agreed that Twitter is good for connecting with both native speakers and people from all around the world. This backs up what Plutino, (2017) found that Twitter is great for sharing experiences related to the language you're learning and for diving into popular culture. People in the study see Twitter as a tool not just for grammar and vocabulary but also for getting better at the language in general. This matches what Köse et al., (2016) that Twitter helps with vocabulary using online stuff. So, it looks like Twitter is useful not just for learning words right away but also for developing your language skills more broadly.

Apart from helping with vocabulary, it's important to look deeper into how students use Twitter for language learning, their challenges, and how effective they find it (Reinhardt et al., 2010). People do lots of different things on Twitter, like reading conversations, staying updated on politics and pop culture, and getting into

fictional worlds through fan fiction. This shows that Twitter is not just for learning words, it's a creative and dynamic tool for learning languages. In short, students from different classes think Twitter is a great tool for learning languages, and we should study more about how exactly it helps. Besides being creative and fun, Twitter is also good for seeking information, making it a useful resource for overall English language development.

The analysis of fifth-year English students demonstrates that Twitter usage significantly enhances the understanding of written material and the acquisition of new vocabulary. The study's respondents praise the timeline feature, which allows them to interact with people who speak different languages, thus facilitating the assimilation of new words through active participation. This is in line with previous research, highlighting Twitter's proficiency in enabling communication and self-expression. A study by Dindar and Dulkadir Yaman, (2018) found that Twitter users mainly utilize the platform for self-expression, escapism, and social interaction, The research participants also use a range of Twitter features such as threads, the search bar, and spaces to broaden their vocabulary. Some classes use Twitter for news consumption and language improvement, while others utilize it for exploring different writing styles. To summarize, the study concludes that Twitter is a useful tool for enhancing English proficiency.

Following what Gao et al., (2012) said about using short educational posts online, the research indicates that Twitter is a versatile and advantageous platform for learning. It surpasses mere conversation by expanding learning communities, enhancing participant engagement, and sustaining interest, all of which contribute to a deeper comprehension of technology's educational role. The research emphasizes the multifaceted role that Twitter plays in promoting language learning. It positions Twitter as a valuable aid for individuals seeking to improve their vocabulary and comprehension of written English content.

The respondents like using Twitter as a tool for language learning. They believe Twitter is particularly useful for comprehending written content and acquiring new vocabulary. The user-friendly and enjoyable interface of Twitter makes it an engaging and effective method for enhancing language skills and discovering a variety of reading materials. Twitter significantly aids English language improvement. The platform permits students to observe words in authentic contexts, bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-life application. The interactive aspects of Twitter, including sharing updates and participating in discussions, foster a suitable environment for acquiring knowledge from others, especially when communicating with individuals who are native speakers of English.

Most of the people in the study gave Twitter a good rating, 4 out of 5, which means they had a great experience using it for learning. This shows that it really helped them with learning new words. What Cohen said in 2011 supports this, that Twitter is good for making connections and finding new info easily. But, it's important to know that not everyone likes using twitter for learning. People have different ways they like to learn, so it's essential to try different things and choose what works best for each person. Many people learning a language have found Twitter very helpful because it exposes them to real language, lets them talk with others, and gives them personalized content. So, it's worth considering when learning a language.

Conclusion

Based on research carried out by the Department of English Education at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, it was discovered that Twitter can have a positive effect on enhancing English vocabulary and reading abilities. The study consisted of 10 students in their fifth semester who were interviewed using purposive sampling. The researchers categorized the most prevalent or comparable answers from each class into three major themes using thematic analysis after dividing the questions into four subjects. The research findings indicate that Twitter can serve as a learning medium and have a beneficial effect on the English vocabulary and reading skills of students. This study emphasizes the potential of Twitter and other social media platforms as tools for language learning, presenting new opportunities for further research in this field.

A suggestion for further studies would be to conduct a longitudinal research study to observe the sustained impact of using Twitter on the English vocabulary and reading skills of students over an extended period. This study could involve regularly assessing students' language skills and monitoring their Twitter usage patterns to identify any correlations or potential causal relationships. Moreover, investigating the specific features or practices on Twitter that contribute to the improvement of language skills could provide valuable insights for educators and learners. Additionally, investigating the impact of Twitter on language skills across various student demographics or proficiency levels could offer a more thorough comprehension of its efficacy as a learning instrument.

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