An Analysis of Twitter (X) as a Media for Learning English: Users' Perceptions and Experiences

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Abstract

This study is to investigates students' perceptions and experiences of using Twitter as a social media platforms for learning English, with ta focus on the development of reading and speaking skills, vocabulary enrichment, and grammatical awareness. The study employed a qualitative case study design involving students from various semesters in the English Department. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and were analyzed thematically. The findings revealed that students have positive perceptions of using Twitter for English learning. They reported that Twitter facilitates access to authentic English content, supports vocabulary development, encourages interaction with other users, and contributes to the improvement of overall English language skills. However, the study also identifies several challenges experienced by students, including difficulties in understanding unfamiliar slang and complex expressions, limited feedback on language use, confusion in navigating certain features, exposure to unscreened content, and issues related to mispronunciation. These findings indicate that Twitter can serve as a supportive tool for English language learning. However, appropriate guidance and critical use are necessary to maximize its benefits and minimize potential challenges.

INTRODUCTION

The rise of digital technology has brought about significant changes in education, especially in how English is learned as a foreign language (Al Arif 2019). This development has led to the emergence of Social Networking Sites (SNS), widely recognized as social media, which are now commonly used in both daily life and research within the social sciences (Irzawati, Unamo, and Kayla Natasha 2024). Social media technologies have contributes to a global shift in educational approach, placing greater focus on modern learning principles such as collaboration, personalized learning, and user-generated

content (Allam and Elyas 2016). Recent studies have also underlined the increasing influence of social media in education, autonomy and support (Mubarak 2016). These developments highlight the growing relevance of social media as a learning resource that supports students' engagement and language development.

Technology plays a crucial role in supporting language learning, including English, as it helps learners adjust their own learning pace and access extensive resources beyond what teachers can provide (Amir and Rustam 2025; Gilakjani 2017). Similarly, Gilakjani & Sabouri (2013) emphasized that technology enables learners to control their learning process and access knowledge beyond classroom constrains. Consequently, English learning is no longer limited to formal classroom settings, instead, social media has emerged as an effective tool for language learning. The utilization of social media for learning English is an excellent opportunity for students to enhance their English language proficiency, as it provides a diverse range of learning resources (Al Arif 2019). Since social media can be accessed anywhere, anytime, and by anyone connected, it becomes easier for users to utilize it. In addition, social media is freely accessible to people of all ages, which attracts grater interest in its use (Thaariq 2020). Due to its high usability and accessibility, social media facilitates communication and knowledge sharing, making it more practical than many traditional learning resource (Faiza 2020). Therefore, its integration into language learning offers students more flexible and engaging opportunities to develop their English skills beyond conventional instructional methods.

Social media platform, including Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, TikTok, and Line, have become practical tools for communication due to their user-friendly features and ease of accessibility. Since these platforms rely on features such as photos, captions, and videos, digital literacy is essential for their effective educational use (Putra and Madkur 2025). Among these, Twitter stands out as the most widely used platform (Faiza 2020). It allows users to post short messages, known as tweets, up to 280 characters, which was previously limited to 140 characters until November 2017 (Rosell-aguilar 2018). This brevity encourages concise expression and facilitates the quick sharing of information. With interactive features like hashtags, mention, replies, and direct message, users can engage in real-time discussions, connects with new people,

and share multimedia content (Faiza 2020; Salaras 2024). Twitter also accessible across multiple devices, contributing to its global popularity, with around 372.9 million registered users as of April 2023 and nearly 58 million tweets generated daily (Syafar, Tahir, and Sofyan 2024). Beyond social media networking Twitter has been recognized as a reliable source of current events and trending topics, while also serving as a potential education tool to foster English language skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading) and aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation (Faiza 2020; Sah 2015). Its dynamic and interactive nature makes Twitter not only a platform for social interaction but also a valuable space for gaining authentic language input that supports the development of students' skills and linguistics awareness, while enhancing their engagement in the learning process.

However, classroom-based learning is often perceived by students as less flexible and sometimes monotonous, which may reduce their motivation to engage with English learning activities. In contrast, social media platforms like Twitter offer a more dynamic and interactive environment where students can access authentic language input, engage in real-life communication, and learn at their own pace (Halawa 2024; Wati et al. 2024). This shift raises an essential question about why students turn to Twitter as an alternative English learning platform and how they perceive its effectiveness compared to traditional classroom instruction. Therefore, it becomes essential to analyze users' perceptions of Twitter as a media for learning English.

Existing studies, highlight Twitter's potential as a tool to improve specific English skills, particularly writing. Previous research has shown that Twitter can enhance various aspects of writing performance. Salaras (2024) found that Twitter supports opinion writing and encourages concise expressions. Ekinci (2018) reported that it increase students' writing achievement and motivation. Risnawati et al. (2022) also demonstrated that Twitter positively influences writing mechanics. However, limited atenttion has been given to how learner perceive Twitter as a media that supports broader aspects of English learning, including vocabulary, grammar, speaking, reading, and listening, remains less explored. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by examining students' perceptions of Twitter as a platform for learning English in a more comprehensively manner, particularly beyond its role in improving writing skills.

In this context, perception plays a crucial role in understanding how students experience Twitter as a media for learning English. Perception refers to the way individuals perceive, understand, and interpret information based on their senses and experiences (Dunifa, Zamha Zamihu, and Rianti 2023; Halawa 2024). According to Gregory's Constructive Perception Theory, perception is not a passive process but an active, top-down construction shaped by individuals' prior knowledge, experiences, and expectations (Gregory 1997). Through their interactions with English content on Twitter, including posts, discussions, and user-generated texts, students actively construct meaning based on their experiences. Therefore, this sttudy contributes to existing literature by providing epirical insights into students' subjective perceptions of using Twitter for English learning, highlighting both the benefits and challenges of utilizing social media as alearning platform beyond the traditional classroom context.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted at Universitas Islam Negeri Jurai Siwo Lampung, during October and November 2025. The research aimed to explore students' perceptions and experiences regarding Twitter as a media for learning English. A qualitative research design was employed, following the perspectives of Creswell and Poth. According to Creswell and (Creswell and Poth 2017), qualitative research seeks to describe key phenomena related to the research topic and to capture a comprehensive understanding of the process involved. In this study, the phenomenon of interest was the users' perception of Twitter as a learning media for English, making qualitative inquiry highly suitable. Furthermore, a case study approach was adopted to allow an in-depth examination of students' perceptions and experiences in utilizing Twitter for English learning.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants. Fraenkel & Wallen (2006) describe purposive sampling involves selecting participants based on specific criteria relevant to the reseach objectives. A total of 9 undergraduate students from the Department of English Education participated in this study. The participants were selected based on the following criteria: (1) actively using Twitter and (2) having experience using Twitter for English learning purposes. Participants were drawn from various academic

levels to capture diverse perspectives. Participants' eligibility was confirmed through initial screening questions prior to the intervies to ensure that they met the required criteria. As presented in the Table 1, participants were grouped based on their duration of Twitter use: 1-3 years, 4-5 years, and 6-8 years, allowing for a broader range of experiences and perspectives. To ensure participants' anonymity personal identities were not reported, instead, participants were assigned a code labelled TWS (Twitter User Statement) such as TWS1, TWS2, TWS3, and so on.

Table 1. Demographic information of participants

Demographic Characteristic	Number of Participants
Semester	
3rd semester	2
5th semester	4
7th semester	3
Total	9
Group (Twitter Use Duration)	**Interviewee Identification Code**
1-3 years	TWS1-TWS4
4-5 years	TWS5-TWS6
6-8 years	TWS7-TWS9

A qualitative case study typically involves small to medium sample sizes allowing for a deep and detailed understanding of a specific phenomenon. Rich contextual information is considered more valuable than a large number of participants (Creswell and Poth 2017). This approach enables a focused exploration of ho Twitter supports students English learning experiences. Each respondent was contacted individually, and interview sessions were scheduled based on mutually agreed-upon times and location. Before the interview, participants were provided with detailed research information and written consents form to ensure ethical compliance. After obtaining their consent, the interviews were conducted.

This research employed semi-structured interviews to collect primary data on students' perceptions and experiences of Twitter as a learning media for English. A set of open-ended questions developed based on Gregory's Constructive Perception Theory was used to obtain specific information from

the participants. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes and focused on how participants learned English independently through Twitter, as well as the challenges they encountered. The interview questions addressed participants' reasons for using Twitter for English learning, types of English content accessed, perceived benefits, and challenges during the learning process. Each participant was interviewed individually through face-to-face interactions. With participants' consent, all interview sessions were audio-recorded. This method allowed the researcher to obtain rich and detailed data regarding students' perceptions and experiences of using Twitter as an English learning media. The recorded interviews were then transcribed verbatim and prepared for thematic analysis.

In terms of data analysis, this study employed an interactive model comprising four stages: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2014). During the data collection stage, the researcher gathered information through interviews with students who used Twitter for English language learning. The collected data were then reduced by selecting, simplifying, and organizing the interview responses to focus on the most relevant insights related to students' perceptions and experiences. Subsequently, the reduced data were displayed in a structured and comprehensible form to highlight emerging themes and patterns. Finally, conclusions drawing involved interpreting these patterns to generate meaningful finding that answered the research questions and provide a deeper understanding of how students perceived and experienced Twitter as an English learning media.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The dominance of positive perceptions on this study indicates that students generally view Twitter as a supportive and beneficial media for learning English. Rather than relying on predefined evaluative categories, this study distinguishes positive and negative perceptions through thematic analysis, following Braun & Clarke (2006), in which meanings are identified based on recuring patterns within participants' responses. Positive perceptions emerge when students describe experiences that supports their learning expectations, engagement, and perceived benefits of using Twitter for English learning, while negative perceptions reflect challenges during its use. These

perceptions are shaped by students' prior experiences and interactions with the platform, as explained through Gregory's Constructive Perception Theory. The finding s are presented n three sections: students' perceptions of Twitter as a learning media, students' experiences in improving their English skills through Twitter, and students' challenges in using Twitter for learning media.

Students' Perception of Twitter as a Learning Media

First, the findings indicate that participants perceived Twitter as a practical and relevant platform for learning English in the digital era. Participants acknowledged that Twitter supports English learning through access to diverse content and interactive discussions, depending largely on how users curate and engage with their timelines. This finding aligns with Gao et al. (2012), who argue that microblogging platforms can foster participation, engagement, and collaborative learning. The participants' responses also reflect learner autonomy, as learners actively manage their exposure to learning content (Benson, 2006), as well as incidental learning through spontaneous engagement with English input (Putra et al., 2025).

The following statements reflect participants' views on the use of Twitter as a media for learning English:

(TWS1)*"I think Twitter is positive and effective as a learning media,especially when used properly to improve language skills."*
(TWS7)*"I personally learn from whatever appears on my timeline,even the comments."*

Figure 1. Collection of Menfess and Communities that frequently share English related content.

Second, the findings reveal that content quality and interaction play a crucial role in shaping learning experiences on Twitter. Learners perceived that exposure to relevant, high-quality content, along with meaningful interactions, motivates engagement and supports their language development. One participant emphasized:

(TWS5)*"Twitter is effective as a learning platform as long as we choose the right content. It's better to follow beneficial accounts and avoid negative comments that reduce motivation. On Twitter, we can get a free tutor because many people are willing to explain what is corrects."*

This shows how community-driven interactions create an informal collaborative learning environment, while careful content selection and positive engagement illustrate digital self-regulation and the importance of emotional safety. Overall, the finding suggest that productive learning on Twitter is shaped by both user choices and platform algorithms. Positive engagement encourages the recommender system to highlight similar educational content, reinforcing learning opportunities (Narayanan, 2023).

Third, the findings show that Twitter provides substantial linguistic input, particularly for developing reading skills and vocabulary. Exposure to a wide range of written English including news, personal posts, and Aus, allows learners to practice reading across different genres and register. This variety strengthens comprehension and helps learners adapt to different writing styles, improving flexibility in processing texts.

(TWS3)*"By reading AUs and English news on Twitter, my vocabulary, knowledge, and reading skills really improved. It is effectives."*
(TWS6)*"For enhancng reading, i tis really effective. Twitter really works well as a learning platform."*

These perspectives highlight Twitter's effectiveness as a text-based learning environment. Learners enhance comprehension and vocabulary by engaging with diverse content and exploring unfamiliar words. Selecting topics of interest increases motivation and supports critical literacy development. Repeated exposure to authentic English texts through real-time interactions strengthens reading fluency, vocabulary growth, and overall language

proficiency. Showing that social media can serve as a valuable platform for autonomous language learning (Wulandari & Muliani, 2023).

Figure 2. Examples of Twitter content, including news updates, personal thought, and AUs (Alternative Universe)
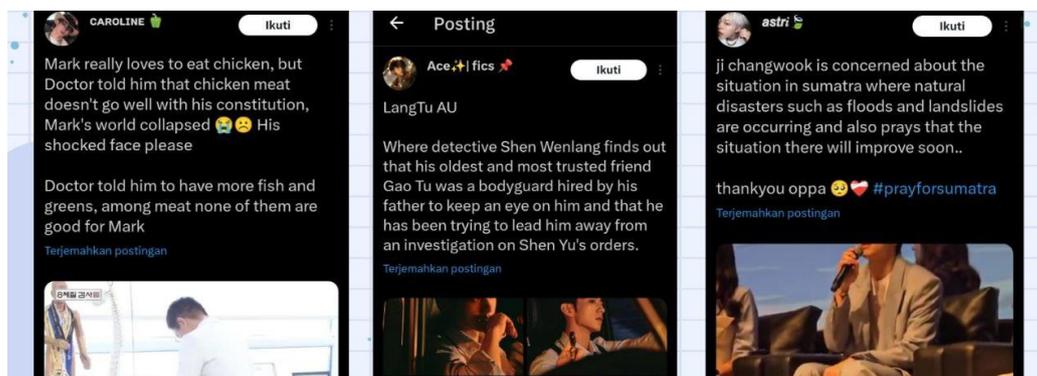
Finally, the findings indicate that exposure to international audiences supports authentic and immersive language learning. Interaction with global users allows learners to experience natural English use, including casual expressions, slang, abbrevations, and conversational patterns. This type of exposure strengthens vocabulary, pragmatic awareness, and ovrall language retention, offering a practical complement to structured classroom lesson.

(TWS8) *"I'm exposed to English ever day. It feels like a natural environment to practice reading and understanding English."*
(TWS9)*"Twitter can be a great platform for learning English, particularly for learning more casual and conversational English."*

These statements highlight Twitter's role as a dynamic, informal learning space where English is acquired naturally through daily engagement with international users. Such interactions provide immersive, incidental learning opportunities, supporting learners' vocabulary growth, and long-term retention. This aligns with Putra et al. (2025), who report that informal, spontaneous engagement with English on social media facilitates authentic language development.

The positive perception of using Twitter as a learning tool was revealed through participants interview. TWS8 and TWS9 highlighted itsvalue as a global platform exposing learners to authentic English and providing immersive, incidental learning opportunities. TWS5 emphasized that interaction and content quality matter, suggesting that following beneficial accounts and engaging with knowledgeable accounts can enhance learning, while negative comments may reduce motivations. TWS3 and TWS6 noted that exposure to both creative user-generated content, such as AUs, and formal content, like news articles, supports vocabulary growth, reading comprehension, and engagement with different registers. Meanwhile, TWS1 TWS7 emphasized purposeful use and learner autonomy, explaining that intentionally selecting content and actively managing one's timeline maximize learning benefits. Overall, Twitter facilitates both planned and spontaneous language learning in a dynamic and interactive digital environment.

Despite generally positive perceptions of Twitter for learning English, participants also reported several limitations. The platform contains mixed and unscreened content, making it difficult to consistently find reliable and educational information. Additionally, its predominantly text-based format can pose challenges for pronunciation and understanding of words with multiple meanings.

(TWS3) *"There is no content filtering, so we have to be careful in choosing what is useful for us."*

(TWS9) *"Whatever they learn vocabulary from reading, they often mispronounce the words and don't understand that one word can have two meanings."*

These responses suggest that while Twitter provides extensive exposure to written English, platform characteristics may also constrain certain aspects of language learning. Careful content selection and supplementation with additional learning resources are necessary to maximize the effectiveness as a learning media.

Students' Experiences in Learning English Skills Through Twitter
Vocabulary Enrichment

The participants most commonly reported vocabulary as the English skill that improves the most through Twitter. Vocabulary growth emerged from continuous interactions with authentic English content and comment section. Learners acquire words both intentionally, by looking up unfamiliar terms, and incidentally, through browsing or reading others' comments, covering a wide range of lexical items from casual slang to formal vocabulary. The platform's constant flow of real-time content encourages repeated exposure, reinforcing memory and supporting intuitive of new words.

(TWS1) *"Reading long AUs and English dialogues helps me build my vocabulary."*
(TWS5) *"Reading comments during 'fan wars' also helps me learn new vocabulary."*
(TWS2) *"English AUs, posts, and accounts about English improve my vocabulary a lot."*
(TWS3) *"Following international news accounts exposes me to new vocabulary and slang."*
(TWS6) *"Reading comments on someone's post about they art helps me learn new English."*

These experiences show that Twitter functions as a dynamic environment facilitating continuous and meaningful vocabulary enrichment. Both intentional and incidental learning processes contribute to learners' vocabulary development, while personal relevance of content, such as fan interactions, trending news, or creative storytelling, enhances motivation. This aligns with previous findings that social media provides authentic, meaningful input, supporting ongoing vocabulary growth (Anggraini et al. 2023; Zainal and Rahmat 2020).

Reading Improvement

Reading was another skill that showed noticeable development among participants, improving through frequent exposure to English texts in various forms on Twitter. Engagement with international users, educational accounts, and AU-style discussions allowed learners to practice both spontaneous and structured reading. Real-time interactions required quick interpretation of comments, while exposure to longer, structure texts and corrective feedback reinforced comprehension. Frequent encounters with short-form content, such

as tweets and replies, also helped learners develop intuitive understanding of vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and contextual meaning.

(TWS7) *"I became friends and exchanged DMs with an international fan using English. I also came across users who tweeted entirely in English, which motivated me to keep the conversation going."*

(TWS8) *"International react very fast, so I read their comments to understand what's going on."*

(TWS4) *"Following accounts that provide reading, speaking, writing, and listening, materials, and discussions in AUs style helped me a lot."*

(TWS6) *"My reading skills improved a lot. I can understand the meaning immediately, and expand my vocabulary."*

These experiences show that Twitter functions as a dynamic environment for developing reading skills. Both structured and spontaneous engagement contribute to faster reading processing, comprehension, and vocabulary expansion. The platform's diverse content and interactive features provide meaningful opportunities for learner to enhance reading skils in authentic, real-time contexts, aligning with previous findings that social media supports reading development effectively (Karimah et al., 2024).

Improving Speaking Skills

Improvement in speaking skills was highlighted by participants who engaged in conversational content or received feedback from others. Exposure to casual, daily conversational language and interactive discussions allowed learners to internalize sentence structures, conversational expressions, and oral fluency. The low-pressure, real-time environment of Twitter facilitates participation, imitation of native-like phrasing, anf adjustment of language based on responses, supporting gradual improvement even for passive learners.

(TWS1) *"My speaking has improved. Twitter uses casual language and reading comments and AUs improved my vocabulary."*

(TWS4) *"Following conversational content helped me the most because we could discuss directly and the mentor responded quickly."*

These experiences indicate that Twitter supports speakng development through observation, interaction, and corrective feedback. Consistent exposure to dialogic exchanges and informal discussions enables learners to develop oral

fluency and confidence, aligning with previous findings that Twitter-based speaking activities enhance languae prodction in interactive and supportive environments (Sah 2015; Sufidiana, Mustofa, and Nashir 2023).

Improved Awareness of Grammatical Rules

Grammar development was reported alongside vocabulary acquisition, often through exposure to corrected sentences and community feedback. Interactions with peers and grammar police on Twitter helps learners notice errors, recognizeaccurate structures, and apply grammatical rules, coplementing formal classroom learning. Over time, this consistent input encourages more cautious, reflective, and precise sentence production.

(TWS5) *"The skills that have improved for me are vocabulary and grammar, especially thanks to those 'grammar police' on Twitter."*

This demonstrate that community-driven feedback on Twitter supports learners' grammatical awareness. Collaborative corrections and peer interactions reinforce understanding of grammar rules, promote careful language use, and contribute to more confident and effective communication, aligning with previous findings on social media-based grammar learning (Syafar et al., 2024).

Students' Challenges in Using Twitter for Learning English

Participants reported difficulties understanding unfamiliar English expressions, slang, abbreviations or complex language appearing on their timelines. Twitter often exposes learners to creative and informal language, which differs from formal classroom learning, causing confusion and hindering comprehension.

(TWS2) *"Sometimes a random post is difficult to understand, it can be quite confusing."*
(TWS4) *"When I open English content, sometimes I don't understand the meaning."*
(TWS6) *"The difficulty is when they use English that unfamiliar to me, like slang."*

These responses indicate that while Twitter provides exposure to authentic language, learners may struggle with non-standard and evolving expressions. Aditional support, such as looking up unfamiliar words or

contextual interpretation, is necessary to overcome comprehension challenges and fully benefit from the platform's language input.

Another difficulty concerns the lack of feedback when participants seek help in understanding English tweets or comments.

(TWS5) *"Sometimes I don't get helpful responses, or I don't get it at all, which leaves me confused about what's actually correct."*

(TWS4) *"The challenge is when I ask comments, but no one replies. I can search it myself, but it still feels less satisfying."*

These responses highlight the limitations of using social media platforms as a learning tool. Unlike classroom environment where teachers provide guidance and correction, Twitter does not guarantee immediate or accurate responses. As a result, learners may remain uncertain about the correctness of their understanding. This absence of reliable feedback can hinder improvement, especially in areas that require confirmation, such as grammar, vocabulary usage, or interpretation of ambiguous expressions.

Participants also reported challenges related to navigating the Platform itself, especially among newer users.

(TWS1) *"I'm still confused about some of its features. I'm also still new to using Twitter."*

This difficulty highlights the role of digital literacy in language learning. When users are unfamiliar with features such as threads, bookmarks, quote retweets, or filters, they may struggle to access valuable content or participate in discussions. This limits their ability to maximize Twitter's potential as learning environment. Novice users often face an additional learning curve in understanding the platform before they can even engage meaningfully with English content.

This study offers valuable insights into student's perceptions, experiences, and the challenges they encounter when utilizing Twitter as a media for English language learning. It highlights how students interpret their use of Twitter, how they engage with its features for learning purposes, and the difficulties they encounter throughout the process. Overall, the participants

viewed Twitter as a positive and effective platform that serves as an alternative supportive, media for learning English.

Students perceived Twitter as a platform that offers many benefits for learning English, particularly enriching their vocabulary. Many students reported that their vocabulary improved through interactions with international users. They also mentioned that they frequently encounter new English words while reading AUs or news on Twitter, as a platform exposes them to different forms of language input, such as single words, sentences, and idiomatic expressions. Moreover, Twitter provides the feature to translate each tweet (Java et al. 2007). Overall, Twitter is seen as an effective platform for enriching vocabulary and improving students' comprehension of new English terms.

Students also perceived Twitter as a valuable platform for improving their overall English skills. Their experiences indicate that Twitter supports the development of reading, writing, and speaking through exposure to euthentic English content and interaction with other users, including international audiences. Thee findings directly address the research questions by showing how Twitter facilitates language skill development in informal and self-directed learning contexts. However, the effectiveness depends on puposeful use and learners' ability to manage the content they engage with.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to describe students' perceptions of using Twitter as a platform for learning English. The findings indicate that Twitter can have positive impact on language learners, particularly in developing reading and speaking skills, enriching vocabulary, and improving awareness of grammatical rules. Through real-time interaction with other users, learners can enhance their communication abilities. At the same time, the wide variety of topics discussed on the platforms helps broaden their knowledge and deepen their understanding of different cultures and perspectives.

Students recognized several benefits from using Twitter for learning English. Based on their perceptions, Twitter functions not only as a media platform but also as a tool for sharing and accessing information, including new English vocabulary. This is because Twitter enables users to interact and communicate with people from various countries. In addition, students

believed that Twitter helps them expand their knowledge, including their understanding of English, since users often communicate using English as an international language. They also noted that Twitter supports vocabulary development, making it easier to learn new words in context. Furthermore, students agreed that Twitter is useful for improving their English skills, particularly speaking and reading.

Recommendation: Learning English is not only about what happens inside the classroom, it can take place anywhere when students are supported with the right media. Teachers can utilize tools or platforms that students already use in their daily lives, making the learning process feel more enjoyable and comfortable for them. Twitter, as one of the platforms on which students frequently engage, can serve as an alternative media for learning English. Since Twitter offers numerous benefits for students, teachers may consider incorporating it into their teaching to enhance the learning experience and make it more engaging and enjoyable. The features and content available on Twitter allow students to learn English naturally and comfortably, aligned with their digital habits. In addition, because Twitter shows strong potential as a learning media, future researchers may use this study as a reference for further research related to how effective Twitter is in supporting students' English learning.

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