

Perceptions of English Study Program Students of Universitas Riau on Using Twitter for Vocabulary Acquisition

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to investigate perceptions of English study program students of Universitas Riau on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. This research was conducted using a mixed-methods approach with a sequential explanatory research design. The population of this research was the second-year English study program students of Universitas Riau. The sample size was 41 students who were selected by purposive sampling technique. Questionnaire and interview were the research instruments. Data were collected using questionnaire contain 20 close-ended statements and distributed to 41 samples of this research. The data were calculated and analyzed using Microsoft Excel and Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 29 using descriptive statistical analysis. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews consisting of 4 open-ended questions asked to 5 students. Data were analyzed using data analysis techniques by Miles and Huberman (1994); data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The result of this research showed that the overall average score is in high level (3.78). It means that students have a positive perception on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. Students have perceived ease of use and usefulness on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. Students also like and intend to use Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. However, some students prefer to use more credible applications that are intended for vocabulary learning because they feel that sometimes the vocabulary on Twitter is less verified.

Keywords: Students, Perception, Vocabulary, Twitter



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INTRODUCTION

As social creatures who communicate, in this context, the existence of language has a very important role. When people communicate with others at anytime and anywhere, they must use a language. In daily interactions, many languages are spoken in the world, and English is one of them. English as an international language connects people to the world. English is the language of communication in many countries to convey messages or ideas to other people. Having a good ability or mastery of English will be beneficial to individuals in the future. For non-native speakers, this language is very valuable because learning it ensures a better future career (Crystal, 2003). In this context, we can see that nowadays there is a demand for people to know and master English. Mastering a language means learning all of its main skills, writing, reading, speaking, and listening. To support these four skills, vocabulary appears as a language component that plays a major role in mastering all four skills. As stated by Alqahtani (2015), vocabulary is the number of words required to express ideas and convey the speaker's intentions. Vocabulary becomes the basic factor which helps to improve English proficiency. The higher the quantity of vocabulary a person has, the better their language skills and the higher their ability to be able to say and write what they want to convey. Magnussen and Sukying (2021) believe that the sooner young learners master their first 1,000 words, the better their chances of achieving higher levels of English proficiency later on.

The fact is that in Indonesia although English has become a mandatory subject and has been taught since elementary school, English language proficiency in Indonesia is still low. This phenomenon is caused by a lack of vocabulary. Vocabulary acquisition is considered a challenging task for most learners. Therefore, the learning of vocabulary needs special attention. Due to the advancement in 21st century technology, the use of social media and networking sites, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and many others, have become a lifestyle that cannot be separated from society. According to Gupta and Bashir (2018), there are four primary purposes for using social media, which are entertainment, socialization, informativeness, and academics. Apart from seeking information, communicating and getting entertainment, now social media platforms are also used for learning. Social media has become popular among students and has become a good learning resource for students, including for vocabulary learning. This is because students spend a lot of time accessing social media (Wang et al., 2011). In addition, since English is the internet's universal language, there has been an increase in the variety of English usage. Social media platforms offer a variety of situations that allow language learners to expand, verify, play and increase their vocabulary (Takač, 2008). Indirectly, social media has encouraged independent vocabulary learning and facilitated students to increase their vocabulary. One of the media that we can use is Twitter as one of social media can play a role in improving students' vocabulary acquisition in this era of digitalization.

Twitter is primarily a microblogging platform. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2011), Twitter is Internet-based applications called microblogs that let users which allow users share small elements of content, such as short sentences, images, or video link. Just like other social media, Twitter provides various types of popular communication facilities that are effective for exchanging information and opinions, expressing ideas, sharing thoughts and comments on current events, or for keeping in touch with friends, etc. According to research results by We are Social in October 2023, Indonesia is ranked fourth with the most Twitter users in the world, previously sixth in May 2023, with 27.05 million users. From these data, it proves that Twitter is increasingly popular among Indonesians and plays an important role in the lifestyle of Indonesian people. Meanwhile, in terms of demographics, around 42% of Indonesian Twitter users are aged 16-24, dominated by users who fall into the student category. As stated by Taylor and Keeter (2010) that Twitter is a tool that is considered popular with today's students.

There are some previous studies related to the current studies. One of studies was conducted by Sirait and Hanim (2022). Their study attempts to improve students' achievement in vocabulary by using Twitter and Instagram multimedia. The results show that Twitter and Instagram multimedia significantly improved students. Another study by Diniasri, Supiani, and Islamiah (2020) analysis of students' perception toward Twitter in learning English vocabulary and it was found that participants had positive perceptions toward Twitter in learning English vocabulary. In addition, a study by Alqunayeer (2016) investigated the effect of using Twitter on first level bachelors students' achievement in English vocabulary. The results show that there is an increase in students' vocabulary achievement in both groups, but the experimental group seems to perform better than the control group. Maharani and Addinna (2023) also conducted a study to know and describe Followers' perception on the use of Twitter Auto-base @englishfess_ for vocabulary mastery. The results of this study revealed that followers have a positive perception of using @englishfess_ to improve vocabulary.

Based on the results of previous research, it has become clear that using Twitter can improve vocabulary. Previous research has yielded important findings about the use of social media Twitter for vocabulary learning. However, the research into perceptions of students on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition using a mixed-methods approach and TAM theory has

not been investigated. Furthermore, to understand the phenomenon of using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition requires further research. Therefore, to fill the gap and reflect on the important role of vocabulary in supporting English language proficiency and the increasing number of Twitter users in Indonesia with 27.05 million users, students are a part of them, this research tries to investigate perceptions of English study program students of Universitas Riau on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition by using a mixed-methods approach and TAM theory. The fact is that they use the same application, they may have different perceptions. Research on perceptions of students on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition is very important because it shows how Twitter can help students in acquisition of English vocabulary.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a mixed-methods approach with sequential explanatory research design to investigate perceptions of English study program students of Universitas Riau on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. Mixed-methods research combines quantitative and qualitative research methods in different ways, with each approach adding something to the understanding of the phenomenon (Ary et al., 2010). As explanatory sequential research, quantitative data is collected first and then qualitative data is collected to help explain or elaborate on the quantitative results. In this research, the population was the second-year English study program students of Universitas Riau who were divided into three classes: 3A, 3B, and 3C. In determining the sample, purposive sampling technique was used in this research. Sugiyono (2015) stated that purposive sampling is a technique to choose sample based on specific considerations. Therefore, the considerations used in determining the sample are English study program students of Universitas Riau who are Twitter users. Class 3A with a total of 23 students was taken as the try-out sample class and class 3B with a total of 25 students and 3C with a total of 16 students were taken as the research sample classes. Thus, the sample for this research were classes 3B and 3C with a total of 41 students.

This research used questionnaire and interview as the instruments. Both questionnaire and interview were used to collect the data. The instruments were constructed based on the four perception indicators from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) design by Davis (1986). Questionnaire was used as the instrument in this research to investigate perceptions of students. The questionnaire was adapted from Mistar and Embi (2016) and Septiara and Hamzah (2023) which contained twenty closed-ended statements. The questionnaire was created on Google Forms in the form of an online questionnaire and distributed online via WhatsApp. Each questionnaire item has five answer choices arranged in the form of Likert scale. As according to Sugiyono (2015), the Likert scale is used to gauge an attitude, opinion, and perception of a person or group concerning phenomena. The Likert scale used is a five-point scale ranging from Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree. The collected data were calculated and analyzed using Microsoft Excel and Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 29 using descriptive statistical analysis to calculate the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation. The mean score results were then interpreted using an interpretation of mean scores according to Moidunny (2009) as cited in Thannimalai and Raman (2018) to determine the level of perception of students.

Table 1. Interpretation of Mean Scores

Mean Score	Level
1.00- 1.80	Very Low
1.81 - 2.60	Low
2.61 - 3.40	Medium
3.41 - 4.20	High

4.21 – 5.00	Very High
(Moidunny (2009) as cited in Thannimalai and Raman (2018))	

Interview was used as the instrument in this research to gain more detailed information and deeper understanding to refine data from questionnaire responses. In this research, a semi-structured interview was conducted by asked four open-ended questions constructed from the questionnaire to 5 students. The interview was conducted via Zoom Meeting and the results of the interview was recorded to prevent information from being missed. The collected data were analyzed using data analysis techniques by Miles and Huberman (1994) which include data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Result

The purpose of this research is to investigate perceptions of English study program students of Universitas Riau on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. This research was organized using questionnaires via Google Forms and interview via Zoom Meeting. The result of the questionnaire and interview are as follow:

Table 2. The Result of Questionnaire

Indicator	N	Min	Max	Std. Deviation	Mean	Level
Perceived Ease of Use	41	11	25	0.809	4.01	High
Perceived Usefulness	41	10	25	0.905	3.81	High
Attitude Towards Using	41	10	25	0.921	3.82	High
Behavioral Intention	41	9	25	0.936	3.48	High
				Total	15.12	
				Average	3.78 (High)	

Table 2 shows that the overall average score is in *high* level with the mean score of 3.78. It means that students have a positive perception on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. The first indicator is Perceived Ease of Use in *high* level with the mean score of 4.01. The second indicator is Perceived Usefulness in *high* level with the mean score of 3.81. The third indicator is Attitude Towards Using in *high* level with the mean score of 3.82. The fourth indicator is Behavioral Intention in *high* level with the mean score of 3.48. From the results, Perceived Ease of Use is the indicator with the highest mean score (4.01). Meanwhile, Behavioral Intention is the indicator with the lowest mean score (3.48).

a. Perceived Ease of Use

Table 3. Perceived Ease of Use

No	Items	Mean	Level
1.	I think using Twitter is easy as a media for acquiring vocabulary	4.05	High
2.	I think using Twitter is convenient as a media for acquiring vocabulary	3.90	High
3.	I think using Twitter is easy to access anytime and anywhere for acquiring vocabulary	4.05	High
4.	I think using Twitter is flexible for acquiring vocabulary	4.00	High
5.	I think using Twitter features is easy to understand for acquiring vocabulary	4.05	High
	Total	20.05	
	Average	4.01 (High)	

Table 3 above shows that the average score Perceived Ease of Use is in *high* level with the mean score of 4.01. Item 1, 3, 5 in *high* level with the mean score of 4.05. Item 2 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.90. Item 4 in *high* level with the mean score of 4.00.

The first indicator about Perceived Ease of Use was also asked through an interview with the question 'Do you find it easy using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition? Why?' was responded to with various positive responses in line with the questionnaire results. Most students do not have difficulty using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they are already familiar with Twitter which can be accessed anytime and anywhere and Twitter features that are easy to use and easy to understand. As stated by the students:

"Yes, because I am familiar with Twitter, and also the features are not complicated such as the base feature and the community features for English learning that I follow which makes it easier for me to acquire vocabulary." (S2)

"Yes, because the features of Twitter are clear and easy to understand, besides that it can be used anytime and anywhere so it can be flexible to increase vocabulary." (S1)

"Yes, because tweets (posts) on Twitter contain a lot of vocabulary for daily communication and slang and I usually like to look up the meaning and note down every new vocabulary I find, besides that I also follow user accounts that teach English" (S3)

"Yes, Twitter can help expand vocabulary by giving access to a variety of language styles and new terms, but it needs verification from more formal sources because the language used is often non-standard" (S5)

"Yes, because on Twitter there are lots of threads containing English language material and of course English vocabulary." (S4)

b. Perceived Usefulness

Table 4. Perceived Usefulness

No	Items	Mean	Level
6.	I think using Twitter is effective for increasing my vocabulary	3.85	High
7.	I think using Twitter makes it easier for me to be exposed to new vocabulary	3.95	High
8.	I think using Twitter encourages me to find out the meaning of difficult vocabulary that I acquire on Twitter	3.88	High
9.	I think using Twitter makes it easier for me to memorize the vocabulary I acquire on Twitter	3.78	High
10.	I think using Twitter improves my English skills through the vocabulary I acquire on Twitter	3.61	High
		Total	19.07
		Average	3.81 (High)

Table 4 above shows that the average score Perceived Usefulness is in *high* level with the mean score of 3.81. Item 6 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.85. Item 7 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.95. Item 8 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.88. Item 9 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.78. Item 10 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.61.

The second indicator about Perceived Usefulness was also asked through an interview with the question 'Do you find it beneficial using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition? Why?' was responded to with various positive responses in line with the questionnaire results. Most students feel the benefits of using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because it can increase their vocabulary, help them in classroom learning, and make them more confident in communicating in English. As stated by the students:

“Yes, because from Twitter I got more vocabulary.” (S4)

“Yes, because I can get vocabulary that I might not find when learning in class and the vocabulary also supports me in learning in class, besides that I become more confident in communicating in English.” (S3)

“Yes, because besides increasing my vocabulary, I also found a lot of slang that can help me in better oral and written communication.” (S1)

“Yes, because I feel that my vocabulary has become more diverse because my Twitter timeline displays various foreign Twitter users and English tweets (posts).” (S2)

However, one of students also said that the vocabulary obtained on Twitter needs to be further verified from formal sources. As stated by a student:

“Yes, using Twitter can be helpful, but it needs verification from more formal sources because the language used is often non-standard.” (S5)

c. Attitude Towards Using

Table 5. Attitude Towards Using

No	Items	Mean	Level
11.	I believe that using Twitter increases my vocabulary	3.78	High
12.	I believe that using Twitter motivates me for increasing my vocabulary	3.71	High
13.	I believe that using Twitter is fun for acquiring vocabulary	3.98	High
14.	I believe that using Twitter is interesting for acquiring vocabulary	3.85	High
15.	I believe that using Twitter is a pleasant idea for acquiring vocabulary	3.78	High
Total		19.10	
Average		3.82 (High)	

Table 5 above shows that the average score Attitude Towards Using is in *high* level with the mean score of 3.82. Item 11 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.78. Item 12 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.71. Item 13 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.98. Item 14 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.85. Item 15 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.78.

The third indicator about Attitude Towards Using was also asked through an interview with the question ‘Do you like using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition? Why?’ was responded with various positive and negative responses. Some students like using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they can increase their vocabulary in a more relaxed, fun, and no pressure way. As stated by the students:

“Yes, I like it because using Twitter is more relaxed, no pressure and can be used anytime and anywhere.” (S3)

“Yes, I like it because it has an effect on increasing my vocabulary, and the base and community features allow me to interact with other users while increasing my vocabulary in a fun way.” (S1)

“Yes, because it is very easy to use to acquire English vocabulary.” (S2)

Meanwhile, some students do not like using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they prefer to use apps that are intended for vocabulary learning and they feel that the vocabulary on Twitter is less verified. As stated by a student:

"No, because I prefer other apps. I prefer to learn vocabulary on applications that are specifically used for learning vocabulary." (S4)

"Yes, but I don't really like using Twitter to gain vocabulary because the words are often informal and less verified." (S5)

c. Behavioral Intention

Table 6. Behavioral Intention

No	Items	Mean	Level
16.	I will increase using Twitter for acquiring more new vocabulary	3.44	High
17.	I will not stop using Twitter for acquiring vocabulary	3.39	Medium
18.	I will continue using Twitter in the future for acquiring vocabulary	3.59	High
19.	I will recommend using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition to others	3.41	High
20.	I will share my experience of using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition to others	3.59	High
Total		17.42	
Average		3.48 (High)	

Table 6 above shows that the average score Behavioral Intention is in *high* level with the mean score of 3.48. Item 16 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.44. Item 17 in medium level with the mean score of 3.39. Item 18 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.59. Item 19 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.41. Item 20 in *high* level with the mean score of 3.59.

The last indicator about Behavioral Intention was also asked through an interview with the question 'Do you have the intention to always using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition? Why?' was responded with various positive and negative responses. Some students will continue using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they feel the impact on their vocabulary improvement. As stated by the students:

"Yes, because playing social media has become part of our lifestyle, so there is no reason not to continue using Twitter, especially since I can feel benefits in increasing my vocabulary." (S1)

"Yes, because the vocabulary used by Twitter users is usually always the most updated vocabulary." (S2)

"Yes, because Twitter helps me increase my vocabulary, but when compared to other social media I prefer to use Instagram." (S3)

Meanwhile, some students will not continue using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they are more interested in using more credible applications and sources. As stated by the students:

"No, I don't intend to always use Twitter. I prefer more credible and structured sources for vocabulary learning." (S5)

"No, because I prefer use other apps like YouTube or Instagram." (S4)

Discussion

The results of the questionnaire show that the average perception of the first indicator of Perceived Ease of Use is in *high* level with the mean score of 4.01. Based on the results of the interview, most students do not have difficulty using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition

because they are already familiar with Twitter which can be accessed anytime and anywhere and Twitter features that are easy to use and easy to understand. This finding is related with Ismail (2022) and Bandjar et al., (2018) who stated that students easily learn vocabulary because Twitter can be opened anytime and anywhere and the features in using Twitter (tweets and English accounts) help English learners get benefits to improve their English vocabulary.

The results of the questionnaire show that the average perception of the second indicator of Perceived Usefulness is in *high* level with the mean score of 3.81. Based on the results of the interview, most students feel the benefits of using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because it can increase their vocabulary, help them in classroom learning, and make them more confident in communicating in English. As stated by Eusebio and Eusebio (2020) that most of the words on Twitter are commonly used words but as current issues, politics, economics, or academics circulate on social media sites, students of all ages and grade levels can acquire new words that enhance their vocabulary. Maharani and Addinna (2023) also explained in their research that acquiring English vocabulary through Twitter can help boost confidence to communicate in English because of increased knowledge about new vocabulary.

The results of the questionnaire show that the average perception of the third indicator of Attitude Towards Using is in *high* level with the mean score of 3.82. Based on the results of the interview, some students like using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they can increase their vocabulary in a more relaxed, fun, and no pressure way. This is supported by Maharani and Addinna (2023) finding that most respondent felt that learning and improving English vocabulary by using Twitter is fun because apart from learning, they also get entertainment and there is no pressure so that learning activities feel more relaxed. Meanwhile, some students do not like using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they prefer to use apps that are intended for vocabulary learning and they feel that the vocabulary on Twitter is less verified. This result is different from the research results of Sudiran (2018) which showed that students have a positive attitude towards Twitter as a medium for improving English vocabulary, which is indicated by the percentage of students who agree and disagree which is very significantly different.

The results of the questionnaire show that the average perception of the last indicator of Behavioral Intention is in *high* level with the mean score of 3.48. Based on the results of the interview, some students will continue using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they feel the impact on their vocabulary improvement. This is supported by Huang (2021) who stated that if the online learning platform is easy to use and beneficial to their learning, students are more likely to stick with it. Meanwhile, some students will not continue using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they are more interested in using more credible applications and sources. This conclusion contrasts with the findings of Akar and Mardikyan (2014) who found that behavioral intention in using social media is positively affected by perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this research, there are several conclusions that can be drawn. The result indicates that perceptions of English study program students of Universitas Riau on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition is in *high* level (3.78). Nineteen items are at a *high* level, one item is at a medium level, and there are no statements at a low level. It means that students have a positive perception on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. It can be concluded that second-year English study program students of Universitas Riau have a positive perception on using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition.

In the first indicator, Perceived Ease of Use, the overall average score in *high* level (4.01). It means students have a positive perception of the ease of use of Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. They do not have difficulty using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they are already familiar with Twitter which can be accessed anytime and anywhere and Twitter features that are easy to use and easy to understand. In the second indicator, Perceived Usefulness, the overall average score in *high* level (3.81). It means students have a positive perception of the usefulness of using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. Using Twitter increase their vocabulary, help them in classroom learning, and make them more confident in communicating in English. In the third indicator, Attitude Towards Using, the overall average score in *high* level (3.82). It means students have a positive attitude towards using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. Some students like using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they can increase their vocabulary in a more relaxed, fun, and no pressure way. Meanwhile, some students do not like using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they prefer to use apps that are intended for vocabulary learning and they feel that the vocabulary on Twitter is less verified. In the last indicator, Behavioral Intention, the overall average score in *high* level (3.48). It means students have a positive intention using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition. Some students will continue using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they feel the impact on their vocabulary improvement. Meanwhile, some students will not continue using Twitter for vocabulary acquisition because they are more interested in using more credible applications and sources.

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