

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The way people learn and interact with one another has been transformed by the use of technology in educational contexts. Among these technological tools, social networking sites (SNS), also known as social media, have become powerful platforms that facilitate how users communicate and interact. According to Naveen et al. (2025), informal social networking sites were initially designed for connection and information sharing, with billions of users connected from diverse backgrounds. Social networking sites facilitate online discussions, allowing users to easily share and post information, and providing a dynamic, real-time platform that promotes active learning. Unlike traditional classroom learning, which can be passive, social networking sites foster engagement and interest-driven learning.

Given the role of SNS, the platforms are categorized by their specific functions and uses. These include (1) Platforms which promote interpersonal connections are WhatsApp, Facebook, Messenger, and Imo; (2) Platforms which support discussion-based platforms through real-time communication are Skype, Zoom, and Google Meet; (3) Platforms which support multimedia and content sharing are YouTube and Instagram; (4) Platforms which focus on content creation and dissemination of information are Blogger and WordPress; (5) Platform which serves as microblogging platforms are X and Telegram; (6) Gamification integrates entertainment and engagement. Furthermore, popular social media platforms for informal English language learning are YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, X, WhatsApp, and Telegram (Zainuddin et al., 2022).

In the context of Social Networking Sites (SNS), social media platforms can serve as practical tools for learning, offering interactive and engaging features that cater to the preferences of tech-savvy learners in the digital era. According to Sivakumar (2023), social media could provide learners with opportunities to enhance peer knowledge sharing. Social media for language education emphasizes the use of information and communication technologies on the internet for learning, discussion, and communication (Al-Arif, 2019).

The adaptability of social media offers unique features, including open-loop feedback, two-way communication, facilitating real-time interactions, and collaborative learning, where users can work together by exchanging ideas and information for collective learning. These allow people to freely share their thoughts, experiences, interests, information, and knowledge on social media (Al-Rahmi et al., 2018). Through social media, learners can access materials at their own pace, fostering self-directed learning, participation in discussions, and exploration of diverse online resources. Social media is also helping them to connect with others and engage in meaningful learning experiences.

Nowadays, the ways people learn languages, particularly English, and build knowledge have significant changes, with social media playing a key role in this development (Apoko & Waluyo, 2025). English knowledge construction evolved through social media, as learners built their understanding in a connected environment. Knowledge construction involves both integrating and reorganizing existing knowledge to interpret and incorporate new understanding. The process is influenced by prior knowledge, social interactions, and collaborative tools, here through social media (Kimmerle et al., 2015). This knowledge construction

framework is supported by Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which claims that social interaction is linked to cognitive development (Balbay & Dogan, 2018).

Social media platforms, such as X (formerly Twitter), are more than just communication tools. It has been used in educational contexts for knowledge exchange. X could serve as a tool for connecting diverse groups of learners within collaborative learning communities. As social media facilitates deeper engagement with the learning process, learners from diverse backgrounds and skill levels come together, gaining exposure to diverse perspectives while developing essential social, knowledge, and communication skills. Such interactions can increase motivation and confidence, leading to a more inclusive and dynamic learning experience, which in turn could positively impact learners' academic outcomes (Ashraf et al., 2021).

On the X platform, auto-base accounts such as @englishfess_ and @english_menfess are created to facilitate English language learning through user-generated content about English topics and peer interactions. Among the X, the rise of "auto-base" accounts on platforms creates a space for anonymous user submissions and enables community-driven interactions. As stated by Dwiwina & Putri (2021), an auto-base account on X is theme-based. It serves as a platform for sharing opinions, discussing relevant issues, and commenting on them through menfess (anonymous messages). The X auto-base, such as @englishfess_ and @english_menfess, serves as a space for learning English. By having learners share questions, perceptions, and perspectives, these platforms foster discussions on English language topics such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

Through the features of X which are (1) tweets that include multimedia sharing; (2) retweets and replies for re-sharing content from others and interactive dialogue on the public; (3) mentions (@) serves to tag specific users; (4) hashtags (#) serve as keywords for content categorization and discoverability; (5) threads are sequences of connected tweets for extended, (6) space serves as live audio conversations where users can host, join, listen, and engage in real-time discussions, and (7) direct messages which serves as private communication. The X auto-base platforms, such as @englishfess_ and @english_menfess, utilize the auto-direct messaging feature. With this feature, users can send direct messages (DMs) to the account anonymously and automatically post tweets for public interaction.

Given that English language competency remains a critical skill for global communication and language learning success, exploring useful, unconventional social media learning platforms, such as @englishfess_ and @english_menfess X auto-base, is necessary. It leverages its learners' collective knowledge through its features. Thus, collaborative learning shapes knowledge through continuing discussions and peer feedback.

Several studies have examined the use of X for learning, employing various research methods. Firstly, Luo and Clifton (2017) examined the integration of Twitter into educational activities to facilitate collaborative knowledge construction. This study employs a case study, using adapted coding schemes and in-depth analysis of the interactions and the collaborative knowledge constructions. The findings show that collaborative English knowledge construction is closely linked to the types of learner interactions observed during online activities. When learners engage in sharing, comparing information, and negotiating meaning, they

actively co-construct language knowledge through social interactions, which facilitate deeper understanding. Those learners' interactions and the type of knowledge influence the collaborative English knowledge construction process in online environments, enhancing learners' cognitive engagement.

In the context of English language learning, Rosell-Aguilar (2020) employs a quantitative approach, surveying active X users to examine the platform's role in autonomous language learning, emphasizing that it provides meaningful exposure to English-language input, such as linguistic through authentic target language resources, exposure to grammar or vocabulary, and translation of tweets, for cultural context, such as exposure to relevant context, up to date information, and awareness of topics, and opportunities for interaction which found that learners develop positive attitudes toward X through interactions with native speakers or other learners, supporting informal learning.

Furthermore, Wulandari and Muliani (2023) conducted a qualitative-descriptive study that incorporated interviews and library research to explore how X enhances users' English skills. They found that X features, such as Spaces, videos, and voice notes, could improve users' listening and speaking skills. Through shared written content and interactive discussions on X, users improve their reading and writing skills. It emphasized that X can personalize learning through topics of interest, thereby engaging and motivating language acquisition.

Additionally, Melliyani and Mardiyati (2022) conducted a qualitative, descriptive study and a web-based questionnaire to examine how X users enhance their English vocabulary and grammar through the platform. They found that reading and interacting with tweets helped users improve their English skills,

including grammar and vocabulary. Through active use and by providing contextual exposure for both enjoyment and information, the platform facilitates learners' English language acquisition.

Lastly, Gumiandari et al. (2022) investigated the impact of X on learners' motivation and mindset, extending beyond language learning, using a quantitative method with an explanatory questionnaire design. They found that X influences learners' enthusiasm and perceptions of learning by providing access to valuable educational content through educational accounts and informative posts. It reinforces their motivation and fosters a positive learning environment.

These collective studies highlight the role of X as a social media platform for learning by examining usage patterns and interactions through discussion topics and live chats. It highlights the active use of X, its features, diverse resources, and its ability to foster learners' autonomy, motivation, communication, and collaborative knowledge construction, confirming that X functions as more than a networking tool, serving as an interactive educational space.

Despite the usefulness of X for learning, especially for English language learning, none of the studies have explored the X auto-base platforms, such as @englishfess_ and @english_menfess, which are dedicated to English learning and operate through anonymous, user-generated posts and comment-based discussions. These previous studies also have not employed qualitative content analysis to investigate the types of learner interactions and the collaborative English knowledge-construction process within these X auto-base using Luo & Clifton's (2017) framework for learners' interactions in a microblogging (X) based environment and for types of knowledge for collaborative knowledge construction.

This study aims to fill the gap by examining the types of learner interactions and how the interactions among learners on X auto-base, particularly in @englishfess_ and @english_menfess, contribute to the collaborative English knowledge construction through qualitative content analysis of posts and comments

1.2 Research Questions

This study investigates how X auto-base supports English language learning by providing a space for learners to interact, where they can discuss topics, ask questions, and share perspectives on English-related topics, thereby fostering learners' collaborative knowledge construction. Two questions guide this study:

1. What types of learner interactions are performed on X auto-bases platforms, particularly in @englishfess_ and @english_menfess?
2. How do interactions in the comment section on X auto-base platforms, particularly on @englishfess_ and @english_menfess, contribute to the collaborative process of English knowledge constructions among learners?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Social media has become a popular informal platform for English language learning, with an auto-base on X being a notable example based on its number of followers. The objective of the study is to investigate the types of learner interaction in X auto-base, particularly on the @englishfess_ and @english_menfess that serve for English language learning, and to explore the collaborative English knowledge construction process within the comment section on these auto-bases.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the use of X auto-base social media platforms, specifically on @englishfess_ and @english_menfess, since those accounts are used for English learning, for analyzing the types of learners' interaction and collaborative English knowledge construction process among Indonesian users by using Luo and Clifton's (2017) conceptual framework.

It is important to acknowledge that this study has several limitations. First, the data used for this study were limited due to imbalanced data, since the @englishfess_ was suspended, and the @english_menfess account is newly active in July 2025. Furthermore, this study qualitatively analyzed the interactions in the comment sections; the absence of a survey or interview limited the learners' personal perspectives on the use of this X auto-base for the English knowledge construction process.

Despite these limitations, this study provides valuable insights into how learners' interactions contribute to the educational potential of X auto-base as a space for collaborative English knowledge construction.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study highlights the potential of X auto-bases platforms, particularly @englishfess_ and @english_menfess, for constructing English knowledge in collaborative learning environments. This study is expected to contribute to the expanding field of digital learning, offering valuable insights into the dynamics of social media learning through learners' interaction.

For learners, it highlights how social media platforms can serve as complementary tools for English learning when they actively interact in discussions and showcases the benefits of collaborating on social media.

For educators, it highlights how social media can be used in the teaching and learning process, enabling learners to engage in English learning anytime and anywhere beyond the classroom, thereby supporting the development of their English skills.

1.6 State of the Art

The rapid growth of social media has transformed how people learn and interact, making social media such as X valuable for English-language learning. Previous studies have shown that through active use of X, it supports autonomous learning, motivation, and English language skills by providing opportunities for interaction and communication, and by using X's features (Luo & Clifton, 2017; Rosell-Aguilar, 2020; Gumiandari et al., 2022; Melliyani & Mardiyati, 2022; Wulandari & Muliani, 2023). It highlights that X functions not only as a communication tool but also as an interactive learning environment where learners actively engage with knowledge and with one another.

However, none of the studies examine the role of X auto-base accounts, such as @englishfess_ and @english_menfess, in which learners learn English through anonymous, user-generated content and peer-driven discussions. Unlike previous studies that examine X in general, this study addresses a research gap by using qualitative content analysis in exploring how learner interactions within these auto-bases contribute to their collaborative construction of English knowledge.