



## Using Social Media to add Interest and Improvement to English Grammar Lessons: Twitter Tuesday

Zoe Marlowe<sup>1</sup> 

### Abstract

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This paper discusses the power of using social media as an aid for EFL students to learn and improve their grammar by way of Tweeting student pairs-created, grammatically correct sentences on Twitter as part of a grammar lesson in the university preparatory English program context. This lesson, aptly named “Twitter Tuesday” as it occurred during a Tuesday English language grammar lesson, illustrates how using Internet technology as a learning medium allowed student pairs in an English Preparatory course to write interesting, as well structurally correct, plus sometimes rather humorous sentences to be shared, if the students wished, via the social media app Twitter. Sixteen (16) A1-A2 (CEFR) level students participated in the lesson. Working in pairs allowed for a definitive Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to emerge between the participants, who helped their partners to construct sentences which fit the criteria of the lesson (Vygotsky, 1978). After the lesson, a survey was distributed with five yes/no questions, plus one open-ended question which later underwent content analysis which was performed on the responses. Qualitative survey data were analyzed, and several clear themes emerged from the content analyses which were performed.

**Keywords:** EFL, Twitter, Social Media, ZPD

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<sup>1</sup> Assist. Prof. Dr., Biruni University, Faculty of Education, İstanbul, Turkey. [zoeanmarlowe51@gmail.com](mailto:zoeanmarlowe51@gmail.com)  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9078-9978>

## Introduction

With the advent of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and countless others infiltrating nearly every walk of life, especially with younger generations, there is a growing necessity to create and inject more engaging content into the standard EFL curricula throughout the World. Incorporating social media into English lessons is suggested by the author, and other EFL instructors as a way to enhance the teaching of grammar in an enjoyable way which leads to students' grammar improvement, collaborative development, and self-efficacy. According to Zhang (2022), rising technology development has greatly affected teaching English as a foreign language.

Teaching preparatory English can be quite challenging and can also be mystifying at times as to what types of lessons students will respond positively to while trying to learn and improve English grammar. The incorporation of technology into grammar lessons during this time is a seemingly good idea because, as observed in the classroom, many students quickly respond to the current trends supplied by social media. In this vein, a Tuesday grammar lesson became a fun adventure in pair work and collaboration, as well as a forum to share out their creative, grammatically correct sentences to the cyber world. This lesson is known as "Twitter Tuesday" and has emerged in the current context as a 'staple' of grammar lesson teaching which has been consistently conducted by the author as an addition to the necessary coursework which encompasses the required grammar for English speaking, reading, writing, and listening for foreign language speaking students. The context referred to in this paper is about university preparatory English classes in Istanbul, Turkey, and it served as the environment which supported the experiment of using Twitter Tuesday as an interesting and engaging, as well as motivational way to inject a current technology/social media component into grammar learning, especially in the preparatory English program context, which is a requirement for many students who are in preparation for their first year of University in Turkey. Students enrolling in Turkish universities who will be matriculating into degree programs which have an English language requirement, traditionally spend their first year in the English language preparatory program (also referred to herein as Prep), where they will learn the skills in English that are necessary for them to complete the next four years of their particular university curriculum.

Turkish university students in preparatory English courses are similar to foreign university students studying English everywhere in the world, in that their grammar lesson boredom is somewhat unavoidable, and can make learners feel rather restless during the usual rote-rehearsal and memorization-type lessons which are traditionally deemed necessary to master English. The notion of this author to use a social media such as Twitter to help teach students grammar in a more communicative way was inspired, in part by Krashen's CLT (Communicative Language Technique) (1998), which is, according to Sarani and Malmir (2019), the predominantly used communicative language methodology spanning three levels of proficiency. Also, the desire to use authenticity, or real-life scenarios and ideas in English language teaching came to mind. The purpose of conducting the current study is to answer the specified research questions regarding the usefulness of the lesson in helping students improve their English grammar as well as speaking; the enjoyability factor of this specific lesson; whether or not students enjoyed the collaboration with their peers, and whether or not the students' self-efficacy was positively affected by participating in this lesson.

## Literature Review

One of the most interesting and impactful notions of the recent past decades has been to harness the use of social media to help teachers impart learning materials and information to students as well as inspire them to use social media to increase their language-learning skills. As Moeller and Catalano (2015) observed, many classrooms are evolving in that there is a new, highly motivational paradigm which has opened up to teaching and also learning due to the introduction of technology. This new dimension of instruction allows students and teachers to shape the learning environment and also materials according to how they individually harness the power of social media to learn subject matter, experiment with subject matter, and share their production with others in and outside of the traditional classroom.

According to Yadav (2021), social media applications have become the tools which forever changed the ELT horizon regarding the future of teaching and learning English. She also mentions the ease of learning English or another language since the emergence of e-learning and the far-reaching social media nearly everyone has access to. Of course, her ideas also speak to the use of real, authentic materials, issues, and events that can become excellent matter for students to easily explore. This furthers the case of using social media, and to the aim of the Twitter Tuesday grammar lesson due to the fact that the students are given 'free rein' to construct interesting, grammatically correct sentences and share them with others via the Twitter application.

During this type of lesson activity, teachers using it are likely to observe a familiar element arising as a positive example of the Zone of Proximal Development which will usually start occurring naturally during the lesson within the participants' pairings or groupings. Mestad and Kolsto (2014), maintain while the students are formulating their own structural ideas, during discourse or chatter with their partner, they are also able to receive feedback from them or other group members they may be working together with.

In a similar vein, according to Allam and Elyas (2016), positive effects have been found regarding social media enhancing the interactions between students and teachers, as well as between students and their peer groups. These findings reveal that the motivation level of students who use social media related to class activities helps to motivate the other students, and can also result in greater, more successful student outcomes. With this in mind, the students who participated in the Twitter Tuesday experiment actually did create better relationships with the teacher because it allowed for a more direct speaking in the target language between the students and the teacher. Working on the sentences with their peer(s), they were essentially forced to ask a lot of questions in English in order to create the best and most accurate sentences.

Many lecturers claim that mobile social media could be a practical tool for them to help supplement their course curriculum with fun and interesting grammar instruction, which could help engage and motivate their students to learn in a much less traditional and more socio-culturally driven environment (Ganapathy, Shuib, Gunasegaran, & Azeizan, 2016), and findings in their paper illustrate the same sort of reaction from both the teacher and students. The author of the current paper found that students were much more inclined to participate in the grammar lesson knowing that a social media application was going to be the final destination of their well-constructed sentences. Bozanta & Mardikyan (2017), also feel that interaction between students and instructors is positively affected when students use social media, and in turn, such peer

interaction and engagement in this type of learning process have positive effects on learning collaboratively.

Tess (2013), reiterating how the use of social media is ubiquitously present in the educational setting, maintains that there can be some great advantages in promoting the use of social media in these settings and lessons. For instance, in an experimental study which used Twitter for asking questions as well as engaging in conversations amongst health major students, it was revealed that the experimental group using Twitter showed significantly higher scores related to their engagement than the control group who did not use the application.

Another example of active learning comes to mind when examining the discussion of social media use in grammar teaching by Nabati (2018), who posits that during a study which included a pre/posttest scenario it was discovered that the writing accuracy of participants had improved by grammar points being shared through social networking, in this case an application called Telegram. The difference between the participants' scores on the pretest and the post-test revealed a marked improvement in that they performed much better on the post-test, which was attributed to the grammar instruction coming to them via social media.

The subject of self-efficacy is in and of itself a vast one with many implications, and which has gained a great deal of interest in the educational psychology arena in particular. According to Bandura (1977), learners have an expectation of their own self-efficacy, or how they feel equipped to perform a task. Of the several main sources of internal information that students will most likely recall, their prior performance accomplishments will be accessed and called into action during this particular lesson. Since this study took place in a Turkish classroom of English language-learners, many issues can and do affect the students' self-efficacy. As stated by Roofi, Tan, and Chan (2012), there are more than a few factors which affect language-learners' differences with regard to how they learn. Students who are non-native speakers studying English notably experience wide ranges of emotions while engaging in the learning process, as observed by many researchers.

It is also important to mention the work of Singman (2012), who found that social media activities increased the usage of grammar in Taiwanese EFL undergraduates. In a study where an experimental treatment sampling of students gained higher performance results than a control group in a significant way, it was noted that prior knowledge was one of the keys to their performance. Almoswai and Rashid (2017) maintain that EFL students' understanding of grammar rules is crucial for improving their English competency, and to help reduce the instances of grammatical mistakes made by their students, instructors should create a positive grammar-learning condition or environment for their learners which actually allows the students to better-comprehend the necessary grammar points being studied.

In the same vein, Mingle and Adams (2015) offer that students who participated in communication on social media have made improvements in their English language skills including reading, as a result of this participation. Kukulka-Hulme et al (2015) found that the use of social media and mobile-assisted technologies in EAP classes can be a good complement to mainstream English language course books and make the lessons more exciting. Echoing the words of Kukulka-Hulme, et al, one can describe the environment of today's English learners/teachers and the necessity of technology:

“One of the key aspects of successful mobile learning of English that a framework highlights, is the use of activities which exploit a dynamic language and technology environment while drawing on the distinctive capabilities of teachers and learners.”

## Methodology

### Research Design and Questions

The purpose of understanding how Twitter Tuesday impacted students’ grammar learning, sentence writing, and also speaking, plus the immediate use of the newly-learned grammar in their writing of Twitter tweets is explained in detail throughout this paper. Also affirmed is the effect Twitter Tuesday had on the excitement and satisfaction of the participants, and equally as important, the students’ self-efficacy. The study described in this paper was conducted during the second semester in a one-year long preparatory English program at a Turkish university.

The research questions which helped to guide this study:

1. According to students’ perceptions, did they feel that writing Twitter tweets helped to improve their English (including grammar, speaking)?
2. Did they enjoy learning grammar using social media?
3. Did the students enjoy working together in collaboration with their peers?
4. Did the Twitter Tuesday lesson affect the students’ self-efficacy related to language-learning?

The setting for this study occurred in a classroom of preparatory English course students in a university with students whose levels of English ranged from A-1 to B-1, in accordance with the Common European Framework (CEFR), who needed to improve their English level in order to progress on to their chosen field of study (e.g.: English Medicine, English Dentistry, English Translation, and so on). Illustrated in Figure 1 is a condensed version of the Common European Framework chart for reference (Council of Europe, 2022).

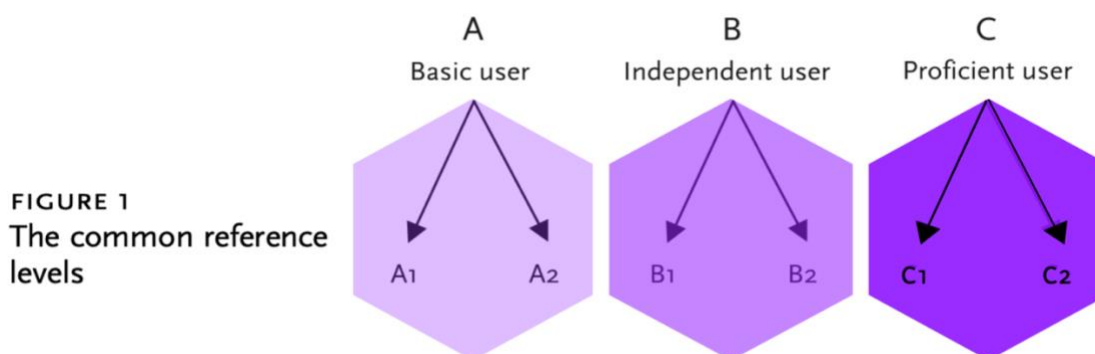


Figure 1. Common European Framework condensed reference levels chart

Despite its limitations (i.e.: focus is on explicit descriptions, limited regarding implicit meaning, ambiguities re: theme development) as far as this study is concerned, the methodology chosen for this particular paper is Content Analysis using a Thematic analytical technique (Vaismoradi, et al., 2016). The rationale for this analysis choice is due in part to the many responses to the open-ended question on the post-lesson survey. It was determined that these types of revealing, and in-the-moment sort of statements would be best analyzed and displayed in a format that was as clear and also as honest as the spirit in which they were given. In other words, the candid responses from

the student participants were a welcomed surprise as well as interesting and are ordered logically in categories which emerged as themes when analyzed by the author.

Students were convenience sampled since there was access to this particular group at the time of their instruction. They were given a criterion which was manageable for their level regarding the grammar/sentence construction. Data were collected and then analyzed to better understand the students' feelings and opinions about the helpful aspects as well as the entertaining and fun aspects of creating sentences for use on social media. The sequence of events in the methodology of the actual lesson are very clearly and descriptively illustrated in the following section.

The Twitter Tuesday lesson began as a type of 'experiment in situ,' and culminated in the yielding of some very interesting results while still keeping the 'light, fun and informal' type of atmosphere of the classroom in which this lesson was presented for the first time. In other words, this was not a 'clinical trial' or 'Smithsonian-style focus group'. The actual focus of collecting data in this particular instance was much more directed toward developing an understanding via observation of whether this social media-driven lesson idea gave the students a more interesting, enjoyable, and engaging task to complete within the constraints of a 90 (2x45 minutes) minute English language class period. Several outcomes resulted over the course of the lesson which were definitely noted and analyzed by the teacher.

As far as how the lesson developed with regard to structural methodology, it was simplistic enough in nature, and also included common grammatical structures with which the students were already familiar, and which needed to be practiced aiding their proficiency in said structures.

The students were instructed to organize themselves into pairs or groups of three (smaller groups work best in the opinion of the author). After this classroom arrangement part was accomplished, the students were then shown some examples of the objective-type sentences on the board by the teacher. These examples included several sentences containing the conditions specified, such as: sentences using any subject matter, any tense (past, present, future), and illustrating a positive connotation, or a negative connotation, or a question, or even a neutral statement. This was also loosely constructed, in other words, the students could write just about anything as long as the grammar and usage were correct. The only constraint which was strictly applied to this lesson was that the sentences conformed to the size of a Twitter Tweet (279 characters including spaces). This presented little challenge for the students, most of whom were familiar with the Twitter character limitations. Examples similar to the following were given:

"She was fighting to save her home from the fire when the police showed up."

"Was it Tuesday or Wednesday when the new house became occupied?"

"Some people like to collect pebbles on the rocky beaches of Bodrum."

After the pairs and groups understood the directions, they began to work quite diligently to construct sentences which fit the criteria. In many cases, the students began to get quite creative and also humorous, which were factors the teacher had not actually thought about during the tutorial where she demonstrated the desired sentence structures. After approximately 30 minutes of constant and excited chatter, writing, and re-writing (sometimes they changed their minds and 'restructured' their answers), the teacher came to the board and instructed the class to stop writing, put their pencils down, and listen to the next set of instructions for the lesson's continuation.

The next portion of the class period was spent on the student pairs or groups handing in their papers containing their six sentences to the teacher. Since this activity brought the class period very near to a class break time, the teacher excused the students to go out of the classroom while she quickly looked at the sentences and chose what she felt were grammatically and structurally the best sentences from each group. Approximately nine sentences were written on the board by the teacher. When the students came back from the break, they observed which sentences of each group or pair had been written on the board. They were then instructed by the teacher to write down their favorite sentence (chosen from those random, anonymous ones she had written on the board) and vote individually on their favorite by writing that sentence on a piece of blank paper which they then turned in. This took a few minutes, and the students were noticeably quiet during this time, which the instructor found interesting. These students were observably taking the whole lesson quite seriously. After the small pieces of paper had all been collected, the teacher tabulated the responses and the sentence with the most votes garnered First Place, the sentence with the second highest number of votes garnered Second Place, and so on until there were five different 'winners.' This portion of the lesson took around 20 minutes or so.

The winning sentence authors then claimed their sentences so the teacher could understand whom the authors were, and at that point, with permission from the student authors, she 'Tweeted' the sentences to her Twitter account and used only the first names of the pair or group of three who constructed the winning Tweeted sentences. The students found this really exciting, and during this time, the students who wished to do so, also 're-tweeted' their sentences to their own Twitter accounts. This part of the lesson was quite noisy and chaotic as well as very much fun for the students. It was really gratifying to see them 'high-fiving' each other for their winning sentences. As it was a particularly successful lesson, the students later requested it to be used again in the future, which it was, and also was quite fun and successful for them all over again. Incidentally, this lesson became the most popular grammar study class for the rest of the semester, and was usually given on Tuesdays, therefore the name "Twitter Tuesday" was unanimously adopted for the lesson. This concludes the methodology of how the lesson was directed and executed by the teacher and students, priming them ready for the post-lesson survey.

### ***Notes and Observations about the Lesson***

Of course, among factors to observe from a teacher's perspective, was whether the enjoyability of the lesson would help to raise the students' accuracy and thoughtfulness regarding their English structural and grammatical usages. Also, this became an opportunity to observe the students verbally communicating together in English rather than constantly in only Turkish, plus walking around and watching them construct their sentences while arguing amongst themselves about the accuracy of those sentences in English, was interesting. Particularly important was also the students' desire and ability to work together in pairs in order to complete the task in a way which fostered cooperation between them. Another equally important factor involved, which has always garnered the researcher's particular interest, was focused on the students' self-efficacy regarding the tasks they performed in this lesson, especially the more they participated in this particular lesson, and then continuing on in their other English language learning opportunities/endeavors via different lessons.

Overall, the lesson became an experiential type of undertaking which was deemed important to capture the essence of, in a way which might give pause to inspire other teachers to include some fun methods to structure grammar lessons to try out in their own classrooms. Of course, some



procedures were used which will become clear as the results of the experiment are tabulated and then discussed in the following sections.

## Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

The participants of this study were convenience sampled, since they were available to the researcher during a school semester in a preparatory English course. During the second half of the second semester (8 weeks total) of the preparatory school English class which encompassed writing and grammar study, 31 students of mixed gender, mixed ability levels in English (A2-B1), and average ages between 18 and 25, began to participate on Tuesdays during their writing class in the lesson named Twitter Tuesday. As stated previously, in the lesson, students worked in pairs or sometimes groups of three if an uneven number of students were attending class that day. The structured lesson procedure and instructions are presented in the actual sequence as they occurred below. This sequence of information could prove quite useful for teachers who would like to try this lesson in their classes.

Using the grammar point which was learned that day or in a previous class lesson, the pairs/groups were instructed to write six (6) sentences using the following criteria:

1. Students were required to collaboratively construct six sentences, each using the grammar point prescribed by the teacher (usually what had been the focus of the current or prior lesson).
2. Two sentences should be positive, two negative, and two questions. These constraints were loosely enforced, in other words, students had the right to create anything that came to their minds for the most part (Any criteria the teacher suggests is acceptable, of course).
3. The sentences had to fit into the character constraints of a Twitter Tweet (279 characters including spaces).
4. The sentences had to be grammatically correct ('near' correct for their level was acceptable, provided they accepted the teacher's feedback and made the necessary edits).
5. Corrected/edited tweets were voted on by the class and those voted for were tweeted with winning places (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and honorable mention).
6. With the students' permission, anonymous, winning tweets were tweeted by the instructor on her Twitter account, and then re-tweeted by the student authors of those tweets on their own Twitter or other social media, if they so desired.

With the known lesson criteria understood, students worked together in pairs or groups of three to complete the task in the allotted time, which was usually 35 to 40 minutes. At the end of the time allowance, the students turned in their papers and the teacher wrote one sentence from each pair or group on the board (without revealing the student authors' names). Students voted via secret ballot for the sentences they liked the most. The sentence with the most votes won first place and the others followed suit (second place, third place, etc.)

In order to collect data from the students who participated in the lesson, a survey with five (5) yes/no type of questions, plus one open-ended question (no. 6), the survey instrument was distributed after the entirety of the activities during the lesson, and before the students left the class for that day. The surveys were then collected before the students exited the classroom. This way, the activity was still 'fresh' in their minds, and also their friends' minds as well. In the author's opinion, it would be very difficult to try and distribute surveys at a different time and day, especially if the lesson only occurred during the Tuesday lesson, by Friday they may well have



forgotten some of the activities and how everything came together while they worked in pairs or groups.

### ***Anonymous, random, actual examples of the student-pairs' or groups' Twitter Tweets:***

1. *“Sometimes we don’t realize how lucky we are.”*
2. *“Did you prepare yourself for the test?”*
3. *“She went early in case the traffic was bad.”*
4. *“He tortured himself for his ex-girlfriend.”*
5. *“He cut himself with an ancient Chinese sword.”*
6. *“She defended herself well during her fight with Darth Vader.”*
7. *“When really lively music starts playing, I start dancing unconsciously.”*
8. *“He was studying; meanwhile, his mother was cleaning the house.”*

### **Findings**

To briefly reiterate the research study questions which are important to this particular paper, we aimed to gain an understanding of students’ answers to the following:

1. According to students’ perceptions, did they feel that writing Twitter tweets helped to improve their English (including grammar, speaking)?
2. Did they enjoy learning grammar using social media?
3. Did the students enjoy working together in collaboration with their peers?
4. Did the Twitter Tuesday lesson affect the students’ self-efficacy related to language-learning?

Following the study period during the 2nd Semester where the preparatory English class students participated in the Twitter Tuesday lesson, the participants were asked to fill out a 6-question, anonymous, multi-choice survey (No.’s 1-5 multi-choice, and no. 6 was an open-ended question) voluntarily regarding their experience with this activity. All of the 31 participants decided they wanted to share their experiences, and filled out the multi-choice responses, and all wrote at least one sentence on item 6, which was the open-ended question. The data have been analyzed and both quantitative and qualitative data are illustrated in this section. The quantitative data have been illustrated in Figure 2. The qualitative sentences from the open-ended question no. 6 have been categorized thematically, have had thematic content analysis performed on them, and have also been organized into tables for ease of reading and are displayed in order below the quantitative chart. The survey instrument itself is pictured at the end of the paper in Appendix A.

### **Validity and Reliability of the Survey Instrument**

In order to ascertain the validity and reliability of the survey instrument, which was used in this paper, several steps were followed by the researcher. Firstly, in most cases, validity speaks to the questionnaire or instrument itself, and whether the items are fulfilling the purpose of the study or not, whereas reliability speaks to the respondents’ and how consistently they responded to the questionnaire items. The content validity of the survey given in this study was based on the satisfaction of the students after they attended the lesson discussed herein. This validity test was based on all of the five (5) aspects of the survey noted in Figure 2 below, which illustrates a frequency distribution of the participants’ responses. The responses revealed that the satisfaction of the students with the lesson they participated in was almost unanimous in positive responses. Based on these five aspects and the responses, the survey is deemed to be valid.

The construct validity, based upon the data collection from the surveys which were tabulated and reported in the table in Figure 2, is the same as the content validity in this case. As far as reliability, all of the study participants filled in surveys completely and correctly for the current research, which fulfilled the researcher's requirement for reliability.

### **Quantitative Survey Data Analysis**

At the end of the semester, each of the students surveyed answered all five questions (based on the survey in Appendix A) whose results were then tabulated and displayed in Figure 2. Question 1 asked the participants to answer yes or no regarding whether they enjoyed creating sentences in English during the Twitter Tuesday lesson. The 31 participants were completely unanimous in expressing their positive feelings regarding their making sentences during the Twitter Tuesday lesson, as they reflected also during and after the lesson, which was very helpful because it was an immediate source of feedback for the instructor, which solidified the future of using this lesson again and also with other classes.

Question 2 asked the students if they felt working in pairs helped to improve their spoken English. The majority (29) of the students surveyed felt that the lesson had helped their speaking ability in English to improve because they were required to speak in English with each other during the lesson in order to create the necessary sentences. They were observed discussing certain aspects of their sentence-creations, sometimes agreeing, other times disagreeing upon the sentences regarding subject matter, structural order, and grammar correctness.

Question 3 asked the participants whether they enjoyed working as a team, i.e.: pairs, and/or groups during the lesson. All were unanimous in their agreement about this, and they worked together very well with any partner(s). These partnerships were indicative also of how the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) worked very clearly in this course of action. Many times, the student whose English was weaker than their partner or other group-mates, depended more on the student(s) who had the greater English level; it was apparent also that the student(s) who had a higher command of English enjoyed 'teaching' the student whose grammar/writing level was beneath theirs.

Question 4 gave rise to a different type of response because it was unknown at the beginning of the study how many of the students used Twitter, and also if they would actually enjoy using it in the course of an English lesson. The response was that the vast majority did enjoy using Twitter for the lesson, with only one student responding negatively.

Question 5 asked whether or not the students felt making Twitter sentences improved their grammar, which produced a positive response from all of those who took the survey.

Question	Yes	No
1. Did you enjoy making sentences on Twitter Tuesday?	31	0
2. Did working in pairs/group help your English speaking?	29	2
3. Did you enjoy working in pairs/groups on Twitter Tues?	31	0
4. Did you like using social media for an English lesson?	30	1
5. Do you feel that making sentences improved grammar?	31	0

Figure 2. Twitter Tuesday survey results frequency distribution graphic

### Qualitative Survey Results

Question no. 6 from the survey was an open-ended question which has been addressed below in Tables 1 through 5 and includes anonymous comments from the students about how participating in Twitter Tuesday affected their English language skills as well as their enjoyment, their opinions on collaboration, and also their self-efficacy. There were many such comments (all 31 participants wrote a comment of at least one sentence), however, several were so similar that only the most dissimilar comments were chosen for inclusion.

Below is how the question no. 6 was posed in the survey (see appendix A for survey). For authenticity purposes, on the following pages, the comments from the student surveys are contained and also unedited as far as students' grammar and usage as it is not a grammar assessment.

#### Question 6. Write any comments you have about the Twitter Tuesday assignment.

##### Theme: General Opinions and Comments About Twitter Tuesday

Question 6	General Responses
<i>Write any comments you have about the Twitter Tuesday assignment.</i>	“Twitter Tues is very good for me because this part helped my English lesson developed.”
	“I like Twitter Tuesday because it's different activity. Twitter Tuesday is better than reading.”
	“I don't use Twitter but I think it's useful for us on Twitter Tuesday. I understand better grammar and vocab we can do practice every day.”

Table 1. General comments about the lesson

**Content Analysis:** Starting from the basic premise of a task-based type of grammar lesson which occurred on a Tuesday, naming the lesson after the social media which would be used by the students to construct, and effectively write the proper grammar points prescribed for that

particular lesson, seemed appropriate. The students' immediate 'buy-in' of the task and how they discussed it during other lessons, many times invoking the name "Twitter Tuesday" was a definite plus going forward. The name had become synonymous with the lesson, and the students kept that momentum going, as can be seen from the thematic table above, the students' written responses revealed their acceptance of this lesson format. This exercise also reinforced that "catchy" terminology can be used in the classroom to evoke some type of excitement about an upcoming activity. Finally, in light of the responses shared by the students, their comments included positive feelings about learning grammar and that they garnered a better understanding by completing this task.

**Result:** These findings are in direct line with and positively answer the first of the questions guiding this study:

1. "According to students' perceptions, did they feel that writing Twitter tweets helped to improve their English (including grammar, speaking)?"

**Theme:** Providing Added Enjoyability to Grammar Lessons

Question 6	Enjoyability Responses
<p><i>Write any comments you have about the Twitter Tuesday assignment.</i></p>	<p>"I think Twitter Tuesday is enjoyable practice. We are learning as well as enjoying. It improves our grammar."</p> <p>"Its fun for us. We learn English with fun it's better than other lessons I guess."</p> <p>"It's so enjoy. Also help for grammar I think. I both have fun and learn while writing sentences."</p> <p>"It was so enjoyable and I learned very well words. It was like Ellen show."</p> <p>"Twitter Tuesday be like a game for me. I think this way very enjoyable for lesson. We used to our dream power. If we want learn English, we will love English."</p>

*Table 2. Comments about enjoyment of lesson*

**Content Analysis:** When a teacher reads a comment such as above, where a student compares their grammar lesson to a highly enjoyable American Variety/Comedy Talk Show (e.g.: Ellen DeGeneres), it can be quite validating. In this case, students took the lesson to a different realm of sorts, making it more 'game-like', and when this happened, it started catching on, as other students quickly started adopting the same mindset during the activities. As a teacher, to see, hear, and read about the enjoyability factor of one of your grammar lessons is quite an eye-opening moment. This essentially gives credit to the ages old fact that students will enjoy learning if we teachers can somehow make it all a bit more 'fun' for them.

**Result:** This set of responses correlates specifically, directly, and positively to the research question number two:

2. “Did they enjoy learning grammar using social media?”

**Theme:** Collaboration During the Twitter Tuesday Lesson

Question 6	Responses about Collaboration
<p><i>Write any comments you have about the Twitter Tuesday assignment.</i></p>	<p>“I think it improved to make sentences. It improved to think of English. When we worked together, we were speaking English so it improved to speak.”</p> <p>“Twitter Tuesday is very different for me because I don't use Twitter but this subject very positive for my class because we want to study together.”</p> <p>“It is important working in pairs for improving English everybody has more fun with that.”</p> <p>“Totally I like Twitter Tuesday. Because I always beat Burak on Twitter Tuesday.”</p>

*Table 3. Comments about collaborating*

**Content Analysis:** The third study question provided much insight into the students’ ideas about collaborative learning in order to accomplish a task. It is an important discovery about this lesson because each answer chosen for this table included some interesting comments as to how the student pairs or groups viewed their particular collaboration. Some students made it a point to comment about how they felt positive on a class-level because they really had the desire to study this lesson together. Another pair thought it helped to improve their spoken English because they were essentially ‘forced’ to speak to each other in English in order to collaborate to make the sentences. Finally, perhaps the most interesting response was the latter one which illustrated the ‘sense of competition’ which existed during the lesson enabling a particular pair to try and ‘outdo’ one another in their grammar construction.

**Result:** Again, there is a positive answer to the third study question, with an added bonus of the spirit of competition.

3. “Did the students enjoy working together in collaboration with their peers?”

**Theme:** Improvements in Structural/Grammatical Self-Efficacy

Question 6	Responses about Self-Improvement
<i>Write any comments you have about the Twitter Tuesday assignment.</i>	“Its program very became successful for us, we can improve ourself, and we enjoyed.”  “Making Twitter Tuesday sentences improve our English. I love to make sentences and share them on Twitter as an English translation student.”  “It improve my English. I make better sentences so I like it.”  “I think it's very valuable. My English was improved by this activity. I can create new sentences. I'm happy for using Twitter Tuesday.”  “It's so good for improve myself.”

*Table 4. Comments about self-improvement*

**Content Analysis:** The fourth study question calls into the understanding of students’ self-efficacy, or as it is written, how do the students feel about their improvement in grammar? This question is probably one of the most interesting to this and other researchers. The students reported finding value in the lesson for their own improvement; they also felt good about themselves, in fact, there were many responses to this question, and in the overall comments it seemed that their self-efficacy increased enough for them to feel more confident about their ability to create correct sentences, which in turn helped them witness the improvement in themselves. When students write something like “I am happy.” (regarding participating in the Twitter Tuesday lesson), this is an important point to consider...how often do we hear this coming from a student participating in a grammar lesson?

**Result:** Resoundingly, the participants positively answered the study question:

4. “*Did the Twitter Tuesday lesson affect the students’ self-efficacy related to language-learning?*”

**Theme:** Participation Resistance toward Twitter Tuesday

Question 6	Negative Responses
<i>Write any comments you have about the Twitter Tuesday assignment.</i>	<p>“I think Twitter Tuesday is good activity. But we need speaking for fluently English. Speaking is better than Twitter Tuesday.”</p> <p>“It is enjoyable spend time but Twitter sounds boring me.”</p>

Table 5. Negative comments about the lesson.

**Content Analysis:** There is not a study question associated with this theme. However, it still requires some type of analysis because out of a class of 31 students who appear to be generally surprised and pleased with the Twitter Tuesday grammar lesson, there must be *some* students who were not as ‘enthralled’ with the whole process. Considering there are only two responses which had any type of negative connotation, teachers can still feel like a successful lesson took place in the overall scheme of things, and the vast majority of students appeared more than happy at the end. If we analyze these negative comments, they do not actually seem quite as negative. One respondent felt that the activity itself was a good use of time, although they felt that the time might be better spent concentrating on only speaking fluency. Notably, speaking was very much an integral part of the collaboration of the pairs or groups while constructing the sentences, as was evidenced by prior comments in the other themed tables (such as the collaboration theme). One other respondent was satisfied and enjoyed the time spent on the lesson but was less than excited about using the social media Twitter. This is perfectly fine... not everyone is a fan of using social media! Overall, these two ‘negative’ comments were not completely negative. It is always important to have an idea about everyone’s opinion of how they viewed a lesson, and this is no exception, as compared to the other responses.

**Result:** There isn’t a study question for this response set, however, it is useful to note that not everyone is going to be satisfied every time. This helps to maintain a healthy balance in our classrooms, just to look at the results another way. The discussion section below sheds some light on the negatives.

## Discussion

### Qualitative Survey Results

Firstly, the qualitative survey responses from all 31 participants were almost completely positive with the exception of two slightly negative responses, which actually were only *partially* negative because the respondents initially mentioned how they enjoyed the lesson or thought it was a good activity. That they took the time to fill out the survey response honestly this way helped to indicate more than one type of opinion of the lesson.

In the responses in Table 1. *General comments about the lesson*, it was revealed that the participants believed in the merits of Twitter in terms of their grammar and vocabulary development, which is in line with Borau et al (2009), who posit that EFL learners require opportunities to create language and then practice communicating with it through any means including social media.



As illustrated in Table 2. *Comments about enjoyment of lesson*, the enjoyability factor is very important to the student participants in Twitter Tuesday. Along with mentioning how enjoyable or fun the activity was for them, they also made sure to include the fact that learning was taking place. The students seemed to experience a great sense of 'self' and also of teamwork in the same moment. This is similar to the discoveries of Suthiwartnarueput and Wasanasomsithi (2012), who maintain that using social media for language practice and also participating in social constructivism in their lessons related to social media enhances the attitudes of the learners, creating a more positive view of themselves and their peers.

Covered in Table 3. *Comments about collaborating*, are responses which were quite revealing as to how the students seemingly enjoyed the activity because they wanted to engage with a partner and work together to create the sentences for the lesson. In this case also, as observed, the opportunity for students to work with another student often gave rise to one of the students helping or prompting their partner with ideas or tips on how to improve the sentences in a positive way, which brings the theory of ZPD (Zone of Proximal

Development) to mind (Vygotsky, 1978). As mentioned earlier, this is where one student in a pair or group who may have a deeper command of English language, assists the other or others who may be struggling with the language more than they are. In the paper by John-Steiner and Mahn (1996), it is discussed how the participatory and social learning can take place in collaboration with a peer who may have a greater level of ability than the other learner or learners. The cooperation and co-learning which occurred and was observed during the Twitter Tuesday lesson shed light upon the working methodology and the participants' values, which speaks to the necessity of researching collaborative learning opportunities as outlined by the cited authors.

Often times, since the first Twitter Tuesday lesson, the same students would team up repeatedly on other pair or group work assigned, perhaps hoping to attain the same positive results. Learners' views on their self-improvement with regard to language acquisition especially relating to grammar are outlined quite positively in Table 4. *Comments about self-improvement*. The students take the fact that they are improving their language skills very seriously, and it is evident when reading the responses to the survey which very clearly illustrate the level to which self-improvement made the students feel pleased after completing the Twitter Tuesday lessons. It is interesting to note that the participants not only applaud themselves individually, but even mention their partner or their group-mates as they celebrate their ability to create better sentences during the course of the grammar lesson they will eventually tweet on Twitter. According to Tayebnik and Puteh (2012), learners who send messages on social media improve their writing ability considerably in the target language, and they also report that discussions they participate in on the Internet are particularly useful for continuing to enhance their writing skills. They also have continuous and spontaneous access to social media making it convenient for them to sharpen their communication skills at any time they wish. Finally, the use of vernacular such as 'us' and 'we' reveals that their social constructivism in learning as they improve themselves is important to them, in that they are participating as a team and are interested in sharing that accomplishment. Self-improvement as they recognize it comes out in the form of correctly-constructed sentences they are proud of, and which will be broadcast on social media for public viewing.

In Table 5. *Negative comments about the lesson*, a slightly different situation is illustrated in that participants in the Twitter Tuesday lesson, although finding it useful, even enjoyable, also commented on some negative feelings they experienced. The two only negative responses from the 31 participants seemed to touch on what the students would 'rather' be doing in the one case, and the other complained about the application Twitter being boring in their opinion. These types of responses can be helpful actually, an indication that the instructor or facilitator of the social media-based lesson should be aware of the fact that not everyone is going to be enthusiastic about the prospect of creating a grammar lesson to be used on a social media application or cyberspace platform. In this case it may be necessary to more carefully plan and structure lessons which require cooperative learning, as stated by Shih (2011), and have the pairs reflect about and perform some type of evaluation of the lesson they have participated in. This way, if anyone has concerns about the learning scenario, they can be discussed and perhaps modified to better-fit everyone's needs.

### Conclusion and Implications for Further Studies

As evidenced by both the quantitative and qualitative data collected by the author, it is clear the lesson was quite well-received, and the four study questions which drove this inquiry were all answered positively through the comment tables in the themes and content analysis portion of the paper. Also, the participants, accomplished their goals by constructing grammatically sound sentences, and had enjoyed themselves in the process of using specified grammar correctly so that the example tweets were actually tweeted (anonymously and with permission of the writers) by the instructor at the end of the lesson.

It is important to mention, in particular, post-lesson self-efficacy levels in the classroom were a positive indicator to the instructor, who witnessed the definitive 'change' in the students' behavior regarding themselves, their partners or group mates, and their overall sense of ownership over their sentences...not to neglect the fact that group collaboration also added to their sense of pride, hence also contributing to raising their self-efficacy. This steps in line with Rahimi & Abedini (2009), who discuss the influential role self-efficacy plays determining people's choices as well as how much effort they expend when facing a challenge.

Further studies going forward are recommended by the current author in order to understand the full impact of using social media as a means to improve EFL, or English language learners' grammar and other language skills. With this in mind, the current study has given the author, as well as the participating students, an overall positive opinion regarding the use of social media in English language teaching and learning in the Turkish university preparatory English program context. Finally, the majority of the student pairs' resulting sentences were creative as well as grammatically correct, culminating in the lesson becoming a sort of 'standard' for that particular class. This resulted in their knowledge and usage of English grammar gaining steady improvement, and consequently, the students reported that they enjoyed the lesson because it was fun for them to be allowed the 'creative license' to make the sentences their own as opposed to something entirely book-learned and then 'rote-rehearsed'.

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## Appendix A: The Twitter Tuesday Survey Instrument

1. Did you enjoy making sentences on Twitter Tuesday using the weekly grammar points?

\_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No

2. Do you feel that working in a group or a team on Twitter Tuesday helped your English speaking as well as your grammar?

\_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No

3. Did you enjoy working together with one or more students in a group on Twitter Tuesday?

\_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No

4. Do you like the idea of using a social network application like Twitter for doing English language use assignments?

\_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No

5. Do you feel as though making Twitter Tuesday sentences improved your English grammar?

\_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No

6. Write any comments you have about the Twitter Tuesday assignment:

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