

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA  
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC  
RESEARCH**

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**The Impact of Social Media Addiction on Students'  
Critical Thinking**

**The Case Study of Third Year EFL Students at the University**

**Center of Mila**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of the Master's Degree in  
**Didactics of Foreign Languages**

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In the name of Allah, the most merciful

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## **Abstract**

Social media has become an integral part of our daily lives, with billions of people worldwide using platforms to connect with friends, share information, and consume media. While social media has the potential to facilitate communication and access to information, there is also concern about the potential negative effects it may have on individuals, particularly learners.

This study examines how third-year EFL students' critical thinking abilities are impacted by social media addiction. The study looked at social media usage patterns and used descriptive and inferential statistics to quantitatively and qualitatively examine the impact of social media on critical thinking. The related literature was examined in order to create a structured questionnaire. 39 students and 3 teachers made up the sample from which the data were taken. The study's findings showed that while social media has a negative and positive impact on students' critical thinking abilities, the negative effects heavily outweigh the positive.

**Keywords:** social media, critical thinking abilities, social media platforms, addiction.

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## **List of abbreviations**

**ICT:** Information and Communication Technology

**SM:** Social Media

**CT:** Critical Thinking

**SMA:** Social Media Addiction

**SMU:** Social Media Use

**CTA:** Critical Thinking Abilities

**CCTST:** California Critical Thinking Skills Test

**HOTS:** higher-order thinking skills

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## **Introduction**

The term "social media" refers to a wide range of activities that merge technology, social engagement, and the generation of both textual and visual content. Some popular examples of social media platforms are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and My Space. Social media has a relatively short history, given that the first recognizable social media platform (Six Degrees) launched in 1997. Since then, the number and variety of social media platforms have grown tremendously, with the emergence of platforms such as Facebook, and Twitter in the mid-to-late 2000s, and the more recent appearance of visual-based platforms such as Instagram and TikTok and with the addition of new tools and features like live streaming, stories, and more. Social media platforms' features and functions have also evolved over time. According to the World Bank, social media users account for 49% of the population of Algeria in 2021 (22 million users), a massive increase from just a few years earlier when the number of internet users was 17 million. It's worth mentioning that the percentage of younger age groups that use social media is significantly higher than other groups, implying that a huge proportion of social media users in Algeria are young people.

A person's ability to think clearly has a significant impact on the quality of his life. Thinking is made possible by the remarkable cognitive capacities of humans, but not all thinking is productive. The capacity for critical thinking helps people in using inductive and deductive reasoning to draw conclusions, examine statements, evaluate, reach decisions, and resolve a lot of issues. These abilities, precisely the ability to think critically, are increasingly necessary and highly regarded in practically every academic field. Because of it, the students will be able to think critically, analytically, and creatively. They may use those abilities to effectively collaborate and communicate with others to meet the difficulties of the modern world. It is worth noting that there

are different factors that can influence and affect this ability by either raising its level and effectiveness or by weakening it and limiting its use.

Many studies have argued that there is in fact a relationship between social media and critical thinking and that the former affects the latter. Some argue that social media is beneficial for developing critical thinking because it is engaging to students and it leads to information literacy due to the fact that students become focused on learning and manipulating its tools. While others argue that social media discourages critical thinking among EFL learners by interfering in their daily interactions forcing them to focus their attention on multiple things at the same time.

### **1 Statement of the problem:**

The surge of social media adoption in education has sparked worries over its potential sway on students. Meanwhile, critical thinking remains crucial for EFL learners' academic and professional success. The objective of this study is to tackle the possible influence of social media addiction on students' critical thinking. And with the rising prevalence of social media in our routine, it is vital to comprehend the possible merits and demerits of overindulging in social media and to pinpoint tactics for countering any unfavorable impact on a student's cognitive and academic progress.

### **2. Research questions:**

How does social media use impact the critical thinking of EFL learners?

To what extent and in what ways does social media use influence the development of these skills among EFL learners?

### **3. Hypothesis:**

One possible hypothesis for this research is that Students who are addicted to social media will show lower levels of critical thinking compared to those who are less addicted. This hypothesis suggests that there is a negative relationship between social media addiction and critical thinking, such that students who are heavily addicted to social media will tend to score lower on measures of critical thinking skills compared to those who are less addicted. It is important to note that this is just one possible hypothesis, and the actual relationship between these two variables may be more complex or nuanced.

#### **4. Significance of the study:**

The importance of critical thinking for EFL learners cannot be overstated. this skill is essential for academic success and is highly valued by employers. However, the increasing prevalence of social media in education raises questions about its potential impact on the development of this skills. By exploring the relationship between social media use and critical thinking in EFL learners, this study aims to shed light on the role of social media in its development. The results of this study have the potential to inform EFL teachers on the use of social media in the classroom. If social media use is found to have a positive impact on critical thinking and writing skills, it may be advisable to incorporate it into EFL instruction. On the other hand, if social media use is found to have a negative impact, it may be necessary to consider limiting or regulating its use in the classroom. Either way, the findings of this study will be valuable for EFL teachers and educators as they consider the role of social media in their classrooms."

#### **5 Methodology:**

This study uses a survey mixed with a semi-structural interview design to assess the relationship between social media use and critical thinking and writing skills in EFL learners. It will include 2 groups of participants: ESL teachers and EFL students. The survey is to be administered to a sample of 39 3rd year EFL learners at an intermediate level of proficiency, and data were collected using a self-reported questionnaire. The questionnaire includes measures of social media use, critical thinking skills, and all responses were collected anonymously. The interview interviews will be conducted with 3 ESL teachers to explore their perspectives on the impact of social media on the critical thinking and writing skills of their students.

## **6 Data collection methods:**

To gather data for this study, 2 methods are to be used to ensure maximal results. An interview was designed for EFL teachers and an online questionnaire to be administered specifically for the sample students. The questionnaire consists of both multiple-choice and open-ended questions, which allows the researchers to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The multiple-choice questions may include a variety of response options. The open-ended questions may ask participants to provide more detailed responses, such as their thoughts and experiences related to social media use, critical thinking skills, and writing proficiency. The online questionnaire will be administered using Google Forms, which is a free web-based survey tool that allows researchers to create and distribute surveys online. To ensure the anonymity of participants, all responses are to be collected anonymously. This means that the data collected will not identify any information (such as names or email addresses) from the participants, and the responses cannot be linked back to specific individuals. Anonymity can help to increase the honesty and candidness of responses, as participants may be more willing to share sensitive or personal information if they do not have to reveal their identity.



**Structure of the study:**

This study will contain 2 main parts, a theoretical and a practical part:

The first part is designed to give an overview of the topic and its variables (social media and critical thinking) while revisiting some of the previous works done on the topic and identifying their limitations. It will also mention some of the relevant theories that have a noticeable impact on the topic of the research.

The second part is about practical work. It will include a specific description of the research design and the methodology used in said research, it will also include a detailed analysis of the DATA collected using the aforementioned qualitative and quantitative methods (the interview and the questionnaire).

## **I. Chapter one: social media**

### **The introduction:**

The most significant aspects of contemporary social media are discussed in this chapter. Beginning with the definition of social media, then, at that point, moving to the historical backdrop of social media then zeroing in on the features of social media. This chapter also discusses the major social media platforms that are used in Algeria in 2023. It also emphasizes the use of social media for educational learning, focusing on cooperative and collaborative learning with social media. Finally, it discusses the use of social media in higher education and some of its advantages and disadvantages

### **1. Definition of social media:**

Social media is a phenomenon that has promoted communication between people globally. There is an intense shift in communication practices where people do not only send emails but are able to invite, cyber-hug, request, send virtual gifts, block, and 'poke' each other through social media (Griffiths, Heinze, Light, Kiveal, & Sethi, 2010). Manning (2014) defined social media as the term used to denote new methods of media that involve interactive participation. Terminology and nature of connections differ from site to site. Social media allows people to meet strangers/friends, and it permits users to share their views, beliefs and experiences. Most individuals who participate in social media do not necessarily intend to meet other individuals but they mainly wish to connect with other people to build their extended social network. In the past few years, social media has become a common platform used to convey educational material and to link individuals to networks of expertise and knowledge that could possibly lead to new practices in education and learning (Friesen & Lowe, 2011). The use of social media has converted

everyday experience in many user's lives, progressively attracting the attention of students, researchers and academics. In 2000, various social media sites began to allow individuals to share movies, photos, educational matters, and music. (Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame, Watson, & Seymour, 2011). Other than interaction, social media maintains existing contacts, keeps an individual up to date with developments in different fields, and can promote an individual's work by making it accessible to associates and to outside societies such as practitioners, industry, and the community as a whole.

## **1.2 History of social media:**

People believe that social media sites began with the appearance of Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, but indeed they started long before. In 1997 the first social media site was created called "SixDegrees.com" this site which does not work anymore. Whereas in 2000, SixDegrees failed and was definitely stopped (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Then, social media sites started prospering with the introduction of Friendster in 2002, MySpace in 2003. The year of 2004 marked the birth of Facebook, two years later, in 2006, Twitter was created. Since then a new age of social media sites came to take place at the present time

## **1.3 features of Social Media:**

According to Tesorero (2013) social media is about and characterized by :

- Openness: Voting, making comments and sharing information are to be encouraged, As a result the majority of social media platforms are open to all users.
- Participation: people who are interested are encouraged to provide their contributions and feedback.

- Community: Communities are now able to form rapidly and communicate effectively due to the presence of social media.
- Connectedness: This characteristic is one among many reasons that has contributed to the success of social Media
- Conversation: Social media developed from the traditional media about transmitting or distributing information to an audience "broadcast" to "two-way conversation ".

#### **1.4 Major social media platforms in Algeria:**

According to Dewing (2010,p.5) , social media Web sites, such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, have become extremely popular among Internet users who wish to share their ideas, videos, and other activities online . Social media covers many digital tools such as: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, twitter, linked, del.icio.us, MySpace. Even Email and SMS are social media tools. In point of fact, Algeria is well-known for its heavy Facebook use, particularly among youth and EFL students who rely on these platforms for their studies and communication with people from all over the world. ( Bouchikhi and Bouanani, 2017).

**1.4.1 YouTube:** Google Inc. purchased and launched YouTube from PayPal employees. YouTube is located in California and it uses Adobe Flash Video Technology (Edosomwam et al., 2011). Individuals can upload and share videos on YouTube. In the survey conducted by Berk (2009), YouTube videos were frequently viewed and top-rated by college age individuals. Due to the attractiveness and pressure to incorporate ICT in the curriculum, teachers are advised to utilize YouTube owing to numerous advantages it offers (Pecay, 2017). Albantani & Madkur (2017) believed that YouTube can be used for learning Arabic with a view to attract more enthusiasts and it was also acknowledged for educating students to learn self-taught courses. According to

Almurashi (2016), YouTube is regarded as a basis of online content that can perform a major part in the teaching learning arena. In addition, students perceived that some videos shared on YouTube were more helpful than others (Fleck, Beckman, Sterns, & Hussey, 2014) and that YouTube can be used for knowledge generation over social interactions and observations (DeWitt, Alias, Siraj, Yaakub, Ayob & Ishak, 2013).

**1.4.2 Facebook:** Mark Zuckerberg officially launched Facebook in February 2004 with over 3 million active users (Friesen & Lowe, 2011). It is also reported that in 2009 Facebook was the most frequently used social network platform internationally (Edosomwan et al., 2011). It has also been hailed as distributing new, socially-involved scholastic involvements for students, self-reliant individuals, and other educational segments. Additionally, Facebook has integrated chat, email and other communicative functions within its online environment. Users of Facebook are able to exchange messages, get notifications, upload photos, received comments, create their own profiles, add other users as friends, and link mutual interest user groups whether in college, workplace or in many other environments.

**1.4.3 Twitter:** Jack Dorsey launched twitter in 2006, and it gained popularity because some of the celebrities were among its users as it offered diverse opportunities such as micro blogging (Edosomwan et al., 2011). Twitter has over 100 million active users over the world (Mayer, 2013), and its mandate was to bring together two subcultures; new media coding culture, dispatch enthusiasm and radio scanner (Weller, Bruns, Burgess, Mahrt & Puschmann, 2014) to distribute information online (Sevin, 2013). The use of Twitter has supported learning organizational skills and it avoids time consuming complications in face-to-face learning (Cohen & Duchan, 2012). Twitter facilitates communication by providing an easier, economical, and faster means to interact with an intended audience worldwide (Yolcu, 2013).

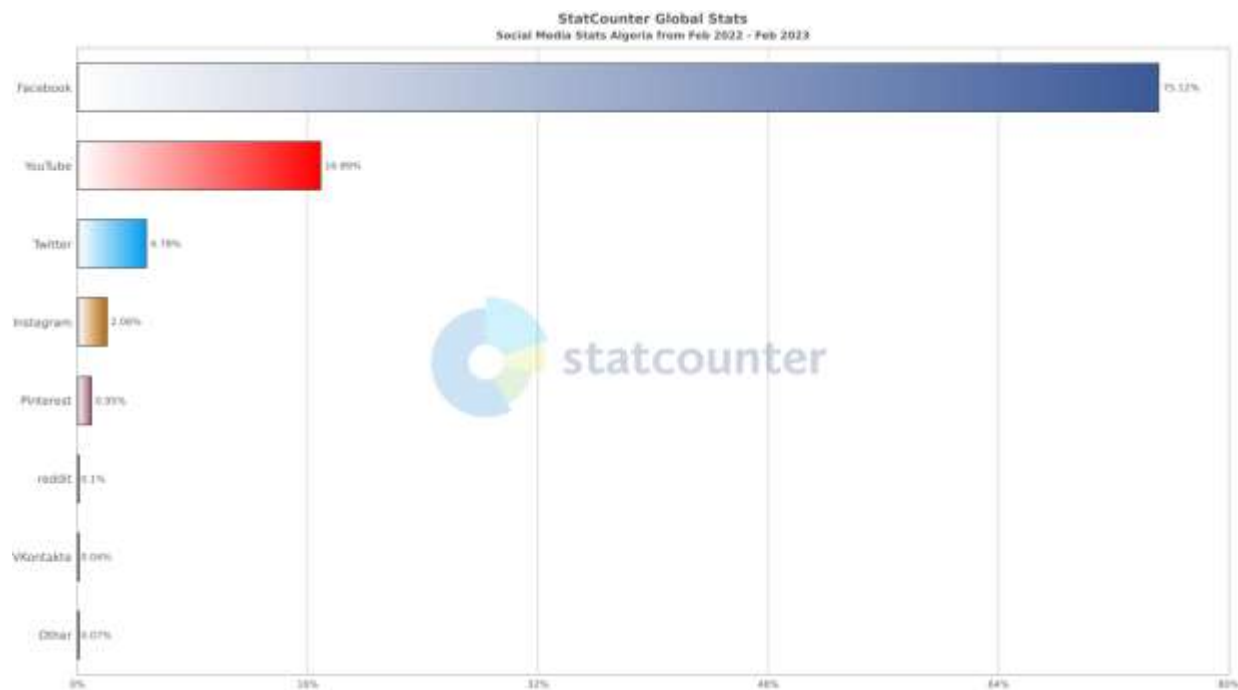
**1.4.4 Email:** short for “electronic mail,” Margret (2005) defined Email as “the telecommunication exchange of computer-stored messages”. Along with the internet, it is one of the most commonly used features of the internet. E-mail helps users to send and receive messages to anyone in the world who has an email address (Christenson, 2014; Herizi, 2019 ).

**1.4.5 Instagram:** is a mobile-only social media site that focuses on the photo and video sharing. The users of this platform can create, edit, and post visual content for their followers to like, comment.

**1.4.6 Tik Tok :** TikTok 'gives an assortment of full-screen vertical short-structure video content, spearheading the pattern of video utilization all over the planet' (TikTok, 2020). As the principal part of this application is Client produced Content (UGC) where TikTok clients create their own inventive short circling video (Ahlse, Felix and Sandström, 2020, p.6). The web-based entertainment application was sent off as Musical.ly in 2014 yet it became known as TikTok in 2017 after it was procured by a Chinese organization ByteDance (Meola, 2020). Before the application was presented and made available around the world, the Chinese adaptation of TikTok which is called Douyin was sent off in 2016, by its parent organization ByteDance. Both Douyin and TikTok look and feel equivalent to well as have something similar software.\*As of now there is not a reliable source that accurately indicates the number of active tik tok users in Algeria but the number is most likely high.

*Figure 01*

figure showing the popularity of some social media platforms in Algeria



## 2. Social media use for educational learning:

Bouwen and Taillieu (2004) expressed that ICT advancement empowers globalization that calls forward the point of view of learning in associations and social orders. According to Mitchell & Honore (2008), online education has recently seen a significant increase in the academic world because students now have the option of continuous learning in addition to saving time and money on travel. In social media, there are four significant highlights: ' Dialog, Participation, Support, and Control.

**2.1 Dialogue** is associated with different media communication, in different forms, among students as well as students and instructors. By developing the information system concepts, dialogue-based collaboration has been changed and getting better over time (Bouwen & Taillieu, 2004). “When using a computer connected to the Internet with appropriate software, it is possible to communicate

with others by using language ” (Hrastinski, 2007), real-time/synchronous or asynchronous communication, forums for group discussion or debate, e-mail, bulletin boards, and texting, are some of the dialogue’s examples (Hrastinski, 2009; Stephenson, 2001). As Selwyn and Robson (1998) stated, e-mail is a hybrid of oral and written communication to simplify acquiring and exchanging information. The study findings by Margaryan and Littlejohn (2008) show that e-mail is the main online medium that learners use to interact with lecturers. However, “Students use their own tools (mobile phones, instant messaging) to contact peers and discuss relevant issues or collaborate whenever they need to” (Margaryan & Littlejohn, 2008). Computer-based media is thus important for communications in distance learning and design of computer dialogues in online education (Dillenbourg, 1999).

**2.2 Involvement** regards activities like student direction and collaboration in structured tasks, flow and motivation, and active engagement with material (Stephenson, 2001).

**2.3 Support** refers to the essential feature related to feedback on performance, peersupport, support service and software tools (Stephenson, 2001). Online technical support is also important for learners’ interactions in online learning. Moreover, Miller and Lu (2003) present some strategies for online learning support, such as offering some additional materials like reference links, study links, assignment options, or posting exemplary past student work. This support tools can be implemented by using online technology, e.g., VLEs and e-mail, as supportive ways to support educational learning.

**2.4 Control** is about learners’ authoritative power over important learning performance and the way to exercise that authority (Stephenson, 2001). Dron (2007) pointed out the fact “being a learner implies a lack of knowledge and consequently requires control to be delegated to one who



possesses that knowledge and is willing to communicate it, whether directly or mediated through a book, web page or computer program”. Stephenson (2001) argued that controls can cover responses to exercises, purposes, learning outcomes, overall direction and assessment of performance over the spent time on the course. Another issue pinpointed here is the ability of social media to enhance educational learning by supporting students’ cooperation and collaboration, explained in the next subsection.

## **2.5 Social Media in Cooperative and Collaborative Learning:**

This study focuses primarily on the issue of social media interaction between students, which is a significant component of cooperative and collaborative learning in campus education. Cooperative and collaborative learning are frequently used interchangeably or interchangeably; However, depending on the degree of task division, these terms differ significantly in some studies.

### **2.5.1 Collaborative vs. Cooperative learning**

‘**Collaborative learning**’ is a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together” (Dillenbourg, 1999). In collaborative learning, all 14 participants contribute in doing sub-tasks and they work together. As Dillenbourg (1999) noted, ‘together’ in this context can be referred to different interaction forms, such as face-to-face as well as web-based, synchronous or asynchronous, frequent or infrequent interactions . Collaborative learning is an interaction between multiple learners, who are in some level of understanding (Dillenbourg, 1999); this notion of collective learning is formed or developed from the fundamental building blocks. Given that social lives are highly interconnected, Bouwen & Taillieu (2004) stated that in collaboration and virtual teamwork, independent actions of each individual may produce consequences on others’ outcomes. In ‘**cooperative learning**’, Dillenbourg (1999), “partners split the work, solve sub-tasks individually and then assemble the partial results into the final output”.

In conformity, Curtis and Lawson (2001) stated, in cooperative tasks, participants could agree on and distribute the elements of the task across group-members to work and complete the component independently. They can afterwards send the completed sub-tasks to the other members via synchronous or asynchronous communication tools. In cooperative work, sub-tasks are explicitly divided at the outset, which means roles and responsibilities are fixed, and not flexible to be shifted (Dillenbourg, 1999).

### **3. The implementation of social media in higher education:**

The majority of literature in the field of education has focused on the educational use of social media by students, the use by instructors, and pedagogical values of social media. Since social media tools are designed specifically for communication and social interaction, the use of these tools for educational purposes do provides a number of pedagogical benefits that are useful for students and instructors in teaching and learning environments (Ferdig, 2007). Because of these pedagogical values, many higher education Social media, as one of the mainstream research areas, has instructors have started to invest their time and effort into the technology to facilitate and enhance their instruction (Selwyn, 2010). Several studies on social media in higher education suggest that social media can be used in a classroom to support social learning (Ajjan & Hartshorne, 2008; Buzzetto-More, 2012) and promote interaction among students and instructors, which improves active learning (R. Taylor, King, & Nelson, 2012) and foster student-centered learning activities that are highly constructivist (BuzzettoMore, 2012).

According to Lee & McLoughlin (2008), the primary reason students use social networking sites as educational tools is that they can easily discover and share knowledge while also communicating with and receiving support from peers. The investigation of 64 understudies and

30 scholastics from Romania instructive establishment by Stanciu et al., ( 2012) discovered that teachers can benefit from “face-to-face” classroom communication via social networking.

Sobaih, Moustafa, Ghandforoush, and Khan (2016) looked into the question of whether social media platforms like Zoom, Facebook, web journals, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube should be used for research in advanced education in non-industrial countries. The review framed significant scholastic exercises for understudies, for example, further developing talk notes and getting ready for tests. The findings suggest that students should utilize social media because they will be able to develop their personality and competence in a variety of ways throughout their academic studies, preparing them for the future. As per Junco (2014), understudies utilize social media to decisively design scholarly exercises like tasks, proficient tests, learning, exploration, and appraisals

### **3.1 Advantages and disadvantages of social media use in academia**

#### **3.1.1 Advantages:**

Social media assists learners and teachers to work together on team projects by spreading information and gauging opinions in an inexpensive way. Furthermore, online sharing of information and knowledge is one of the key benefits of social media. Moreover, social media stimulates growth in the communication skills amongst students/learners at educational institutions. In a study conducted by Baruah (2012) on the utilization of social media as an educational drive, many respondents believed that social media is broadly used for educational purposes while a few believed otherwise. Social media have accomplished an admirable task by narrowing the communication gap between the people. In addition, through the use of social media, communication skills among scholars and lecturers in academic institutions can be enhanced.

It may also be challenging for learners to connect with their lecturers during school hours for either some guidance or mentoring, and social media offers a more approachable and easier

technique to reach school officials and lecturers. A rising number of institutions are recognizing the importance of bringing social media into the classrooms/lecture rooms. Furthermore, learners are being taught about common threats in social media which include the potential for reputational harm, compromised student's safety and privacy which results from posting inappropriate and personal information, dangers of cyberbullying and sexting, dangers of depression and isolation as a result of over-use of social media, awareness of websites which promote unethical and unsafe content like drug use, pornography, self-cutting, etc. (Papandrea, 2012). In addition, students can now write more fun, long and creative essays due to the practice of social media (Andersons, Hatakka, Gronlunda & Wiklund, 2014).

Manasijevic, Zivkovic, Arsic and Milosevic (2016) accepted that social media without a doubt adds to understudies' scholastic advancement. Through various social media platforms, students are able to connect with one another, provide and share academic scaffoldings, and share academic information. According to Akcaoglu & David (2016), social media can also play a significant role in involving students in the learning process, bringing them closer to the course material, and demonstrating a greater level of involvement on the part of teachers and instructors. Students' use of social media can encourage them to learn at their own pace and in their own location (Lambic, 2016) and facilitate collaborative learning (Sharma et al., 2015).

The arrival of information communication technology has fashioned an opportunity wherein web platforms have become essential sources of information sharing among individuals (Hassan, 2017). Social media has become a significant part of life due to its prompt source of information from the massively accessible matters (Hamid & Bukhari, 2015). It has also assisted students with useful material for their academic activities, and also allowing them to connect with the formal and informal setting learning environment (Hamid & Bukhari (2015). Social media

platforms are now becoming essential gears for students, teachers, and researchers in seeking for information (Hamid & Bukhari, 2015). The information seeking activities include interacting, informal searching, following, deciding, saving and verifying (Bukhari, Hamid, Ravana & Ijab, 2018) while sources include face-to-face, search engines, and social media settings. Online content can be anything found online on social media such as interactions with the contents posted on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or LinkedIn. In addition, convenience and easy access to information are some of the factors that motivate students to seek information using social media, Hyldegård (2014).

In the review directed by Bukhari et al. (2018), it was discovered that face-to-face and search engine communication are more prevalent than social media. The same conclusion was reached in the study by Reaves and Bianchi (2013), which found that university students use social media content as a significant source of information to enhance their learning. In addition, the study revealed that students can access health-related information from a variety of social media platforms, including Twitter, Myspace, and Facebook. Hamid, Bukhari, and Others (2016) found that international students use social media as a resource for information. Additionally, despite the fact that, according to Kaspar & Muller-Jensen (2019), Facebook was initially intended as a social network, the platform has successfully evolved into a rich information resource for its users. Clients can peruse and post about events that are moving worldwide.

### **3.1.2 Disadvantages:**

Students may be encouraged to use social media for academic purposes, but these platforms are not always regarded as trustworthy sources of information. When Boyd and Ellison (2008) looked into the potential dangers posed by social media, they found that privacy and safety were the most important concerns. Another investigation discovered that around 66% of researchers utilized electronic media while in their homerooms, when they ought to have been tackling their tasks, homework or considering. This influenced adversely on their grades (Jacobsen and Forste,

2011). According to Wang, Chen, and Liang (2011), this multitasking is a distraction that hinders students' ability to complete their coursework and has a negative impact on their performance. In the research carried out by Wang et al., (2011), where the example was 102 undergraduates, scholarly execution of the greater part of the undergraduates who were dynamic via social media had weakened. Additionally, the findings of Kalpidou, Costin, and Morris (2011) have demonstrated that students' grades are closely linked to their use of social media. Students who use Facebook devote less time to their studies and receive lower grades than students who are not active on social media, according to the same study. The majority of students in the Baruah (2012) study who were questioned about the use of social media as a means of communication believed that it endangered their privacy, trust, and safety.

The utilization of social media can oblige social, municipal and individual lives. According to Krutka and Carpenter (2016), educators and students must therefore approach social media objectively. Yeboah and Ewur (2014) found that in one study, WhatsApp had a negative impact on the academic performance of Ghanaian scholars. The same study found that the more time students spent on social media, the more they became distracted and failed to complete their assignments. Students become less able to concentrate during lectures as a result, and their ability to correctly use grammar and spelling as well as construct sentences is affected. The same is true for students at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, where students' academic performance has been negatively impacted by social media (Lau, 2017).

Openness to unregulated data and interruptions is one of the shortcomings of utilizing social media (Ahada and Lim, 2014). It is established that excessive use of social media causes technology stress, decreased happiness, and lower performance. Jumoke, Oloruntoba, and Blessing (2015) found that students are negatively impacted by social media. They invested more energy in their cell phones, focusing on talking and music while disregarding scholastic exercises.

## **Conclusion:**

Social media all in all reformed the environment of advanced education some would agree to improve things and some could say for most obviously terrible, however, one thing is without a doubt and that is The rise of social media has brought about a tremendous change in individuals' regular routines and such online platforms like Facebook, TikTok and Instagram assumed the principal part in this change. Albeit online entertainment has great characteristics like making access to data simpler and it is most certainly an imaginative apparatus for educating and learning, it additionally makes global correspondences feasible for everybody except each of that comes at a cost, for example, in the event that social media use is not deliberate will prompt recognizable issues in fixation and concentration, composing issues as per various examinations led in various nations that without jumping into the entire protection and security gives that accompany the utilization of social media platforms. In general, social media has a significant negative impact on university education and critical thinking and the next chapter is a practical study that was done shed more light on this phenomenon.

## **Chapter 02: Critical Thinking**

### **introduction**

In an attempt to provide information about the broad subject of critical thinking, this chapter discusses multiple aspects of this notion. First, an overview and set of definitions of critical thinking are given. Moreover, some of the important aspects related to critical thinking are also explained in this chapter like its importance in EFL and its most important theoretical foundations.

## **1. Overview or critical thinking**

### **1.2 History of critical thinking**

Throughout history, there has been much discussion and disagreement about critical thinking, particularly in the area of education. Over time, scholars have used numerous definitions of the term. American philosopher and psychologist John Dewey coined the phrase in 1910 and referred to it as an educational objective in his book. Dewey was a key figure in the progressive education movement and is arguably most recognized for his beliefs in the significance of critical thinking and learning through experience. He believed that students should actively participate in their own learning and that the goal of education should be the holistic development of the child rather than only the imparting of information. Dewey's contributions significantly influenced American educational theories and methods and they played a key role in the development of the Eighth-Year Study. He gave critical thinking many different names including "reflective thought", "reflective thinking", or just "thought" or "thinking".

In 1930, some schools in the US participated in The Eighth-Year Study, which was sponsored by the Progressive Education Association. The experiment aimed to test how progressive schools could prepare students for college without adhering to college admission requirements. Over 300 colleges agreed to be a part of this experiment by considering graduates of 30 selected secondary schools all over the United States. John Dewey's previously advocated ideas about critical thinking were applied during this study. The general belief at the time was that



young people, primarily students, should develop the skill of reflective thinking. Based on this belief, students' work in the classroom revolved more around problem-solving than lesson learning. The schools focused on giving students experience in clear, logical thinking as they solved problems. One of the experimental schools, the University of Ohio, reported:

"Critical or reflective thinking originates with the sensing of a problem. It is a quality of thought operating to solve the problem and to reach a tentative conclusion that is supported by all available data. It is really a process of problem-solving requiring the use of creative insight, intellectual honesty, and sound judgment. It is the basis of the method of scientific inquiry. The success of democracy depends to a large extent on the disposition and ability of citizens to think critically and reflectively about the problems which must of necessity confront them, and improving the quality of their thinking is one of the major goals of education" (Commission on the Relation of School and College of the Progressive Education Association 1943: 745–746).

Critical thinking dates back to philosophers long before John Dewey. Its intellectual roots are traced back to Socrates 2500 years ago. He established that to accept ideas worthy of belief, one must ask deep questions that probe profoundly into his thinking. This method of his is now referred to as "Socrates questioning" and it is the best-known critical thinking strategy. Socrates was then followed by Plato's critical thinking, Aristotle, and the Greek skeptics. They all had the same emphasis that things are very different from what they appear to be and that only trained minds are prepared to see through the way things look to us on the surface to the way things are beneath the surface (Vardyan & Asadyan).

In the Middle Ages, the rise of Christianity and the dominance of the church heavily influenced critical thinking. St. Augustine, a Christian theologian and philosopher, emphasized the

importance of using reason and logic to understand religious texts. He argued that faith alone was not enough and that reason (critical thinking) needed to be used. Augustine's biggest contribution to critical thinking is the concept of "doubt". He argued that doubt is a necessary component of critical thinking as it allowed individuals to question and examine their beliefs to gain a deeper understanding of truth and develop a strong faith. Another important character in the development of critical thinking in that era was St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 CE). He emphasized St. Augustine's idea by showing the importance of using reasoning and logic to interpret religious texts.

## **1.2 Definition of critical thinking**

The concept of Critical thinking (CT) is not new for scholars, the ability to precisely define it, however, has been the subject of discussions and arguments over the past 20 years. According to academics, critical thinking is a vague notion (Mc Peck 1990) that can be acquired only through unconsciously engaging in social practice (Atkinson 1997). Atkinson (1997), based on the result that many American university professors were not able to provide a clear definition, concluded that critical thinking is not a definable educational concept. Davidson (1998), however, insisted that such findings only reveal that we still lack a clear understanding of critical thinking, rather than presenting evidence that casts doubt on its definability. Although it is not easy to define and assign a definite and precise definition to critical thinking, those who consider it to be an important concept have attempted to describe what it is.

CT has been defined as "the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it" (Paul & Elder, 2009). This definition argues that critical thinking revolves around recognizing assumptions, ideas, and beliefs that underlie arguments and analyzing evidence to develop well-thought-out conclusions. The strength of this definition lies in the fact that it

emphasizes the importance of being systematic and disciplined in one's way of thinking, which is a key factor in avoiding errors and mistakes that come from unorganized thinking. However, this definition is not devoid of weaknesses. It focuses heavily on analysis and evaluation while ignoring other sides of critical thinking, such as critical thinking and problem-solving, which are also very important.

According to Paul (2007), "It is a system for opening every system (that exists). It opens up business, chemistry, sports, history, and professional practice. It opens up ethics and enables us to see through ideology. It enables us to put things into an intellectual perspective. A system that opens up systems is one way to think of critical thinking" (p. 10). This definition emphasizes the importance of the critical thinking skill. Paul states that critical thinking is not just a way to analyze information but an intricate system that allows us to open every system in existence. What he means by this is that critical thinking is unlimited and cannot be limited to only one specific field. It can be applied in every situation and every discipline.

### **1.3 Importance of critical thinking**

Critical thinking is of pivotal importance in people's daily lives. The need for it is substantial in every field, including academic fields. Here is an example of how important critical thinking is: In the late 1800s, doctors in the United States believed that babies could not feel pain, so they operated on them without using any type of anesthesia. It was not until later that some professors started thinking critically about the matter and started asking questions and making assumptions until they discovered that babies do feel pain. This example shows just how important critical thinking is and that, without this skill, doctors would have continued to harm their patients without actually knowing it. The role of critical thinking in the process of decision-making cannot

be ignored, as it helps individuals in gathering and analyzing relevant information, evaluating different options, and making informed decisions that are supported by logical reasoning.

## **2. Theoretical foundations of critical thinking in EFL:**

CT has a long history in the field of education being recognized as one of, if not, the most essential skills for learning and teaching. Many scholars throughout the years emphasized its importance in their teachings. John Dewey emphasized its importance in education as he argued that education should not be simply the memorization of facts but rather the development of the ability to think critically to solve problems. In the latest years, CT has become one of the most important skills due to the rapid spread and advancement of technology and its increasing complexity. It is now proven that the ability to think critically and logically based on evidence and reasoning is needed for success in the 21st century in every field including education.

### **2.1 Bloom's taxonomy:**

#### **2.1.1 overview**

In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Benjamin Bloom and his team introduced the world to Bloom's taxonomy. It is considered the first effort of identifying the nature of cognitive skills (1956, cited in Bender, 2003). Bloom's taxonomy is a six-leveled classification system that observes students' behavior and uses it to infer the level of student achievement. It is classified as follows: remembering, understanding; application, analysis, evaluation, and creation. Bloom's taxonomy is hierarchical in its nature as starts with the lowest and simplest thinking skills such as remembrance, understanding, and application then it moves on to a more complex skill set such as analysis; evaluation, and creation. The last three levels of thinking are considered higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). Bloom's taxonomy was created as a tool to facilitate discussion among

academics working on ways to compare student accomplishment as part of a larger effort to develop standardized testing (Bloom, 1956). However, before it came to light, some scholars designed similar models to which Bloom's taxonomy can be compared. Johann F. Herbart (1776-1841), a German philosopher-psychologist came up with the apperception theory and the 5 steps of learning. He developed a learning model comprised of 5 steps which are: preparation, presentation, comparison, abstraction, generalization, and application. His model heavily influenced American education in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and Bloom's taxonomy was seen as an enhancement and improvement over its predecessors. According to Athanassiou, McNett, and Harvey (2003), Bloom's taxonomy can be seen to take the next step, anchoring and reconciling Herbart's model to behaviorism (p. 2).

### **2.1.2 Use in general education:**

Bloom's taxonomy is a six-leveled classification system that uses observed student behavior to infer the level of student achievement. When the original Bloom's taxonomy was first introduced, the term "taxonomy" did not bode well with the general population. But when the readers started noticing the huge potential it had especially in the field of education, it immediately skyrocketed and ended up being translated into 22 languages and used all over the world. According to Krathwohl (2002), One of the most frequent uses of the original Taxonomy has been to classify curricular objectives and test items in order to show the breadth, or lack of breadth, of the objectives and items across the spectrum of categories (p.213). However, there was a sense of "unidimensionality" in the framework as one of its categories (knowledge) was considered dual in its nature (Krathwohl,2002). Let's look at this objective for example: "The student will be able to remember the rule of the present simple tense". The first part of the example ("the student will be able to remember") is applied to basically every type of objective seeing that objectives are things

that students are supposed to learn. The second part (“the rule of the present tense”) embodies what the student is supposed to remember. These two parts both fall into the category of “knowledge”, therefore, it is dual in its nature. The revised taxonomy eliminated this problem by organizing the taxonomy into 2 separate dimensions. The cognitive dimension (contains the six levels of thinking skills) and the knowledge dimension (contains four categories which are: Factual, Conceptual, Procedural, and Metacognitive). (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001).

Fink (2013) used Bloom’s taxonomy as a model or framework to develop his taxonomy of significant learning. His approach is a 6-leveled classification of learning goals for students that is comprised of foundational knowledge, application, integration, human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn. His taxonomy tends to focus on non-accounted-for objectives like developing new values or becoming a better student for the purpose of helping students to engage with material at a deeper level.

### **2.1.3 criticism**

Although Bloom’s taxonomy’s principles are sound when it comes to critical thinking, it does have problems. Ennis (1981) emphasizes that the conception that Bloom’s taxonomy is hierarchical in its nature is false and that its levels are more independent than hierarchical. For example, even though synthesis and evaluation do require analysis, the analysis generally requires evaluation and synthesis (Ennis, 1981). He also argues that its upper three concepts are too vague to guide in developing and accessing critical thinking.

## **2.2. Ennis’s model**

### **2.2.1 introduction**

Scholars were investigating the idea of critical thinking and defining its cognitive processes in the 1950s. Robert Hugh Ennis, an American philosopher who made substantial contributions to the study of critical thinking, especially in the areas of defining and rating critical thinking abilities, was one of these researchers. He defined critical thinking as "reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do" (Ennis, 1987). He introduced the idea that Critical Thinking is not just about developing skills, it should also influence a person's decision-making and behavior. Ennis developed a set of critical thinking dispositions and critical abilities that according to him can serve as a set of comprehensive goals for a critical thinking curriculum and its assessment (Ennis, 1987).

### **2.2.2 Critical Thinking Dispositions:**

Ennis proposed that critical thinking involves a set of dispositions or attitudes that facilitate the process of critical thinking. He defines them as characteristics that predispose people to engage in critical thinking. He also mentions that some of these characteristics or dispositions are important for developing critical thinking skills.

According to Ennis, Ideal critical thinkers are disposed to:

1. Seek and offer clear statements of the conclusion or question
2. Seek and offer clear reasons, and be clear about their relationships with each other and the conclusion
3. Try to be well informed
4. Use credible sources and observations, and usually mention them
5. Take into account the total situation
6. Keep in mind the basic concern in the context
7. Be alert for alternatives

8. Be open-minded

a. Seriously consider other points of view

b. Withhold judgment when the evidence and reasons are insufficient

9. Take a position and change a position when the evidence and reasons are sufficient

10. Seek as much precision as the nature of the subject admits

11. Seek the truth when it makes sense to do so, and more broadly, try to "get it right" to the extent possible or feasible



### **2.2.3 Criticism and weaknesses of Ennis's Model of Critical Thinking:**

Even though the Ennis model of critical thinking is one of the most widely recognized and respected models of critical thinking due to its importance in developing critical thinking skills, some scholars criticized it over the years.

According to Siegel (1988), while Ennis's conception of CT acknowledges the tendency to utilize proficiencies and be a critical thinker as a component of critical thinking, it nevertheless in certain respects undervalues that component. (p. 9)

McPeck criticizes Ennis's model of critical thinking and critical thinking skills/abilities as he argues that the exclusions of value judgments are wrong and have serious damage on critical thinking in general. The most serious effect of this exclusion according to Mcpeck is that it unwittingly excludes the pragmatic dimension from critical thinking. (Mcpeck,1981, p54). Mcpeck (1981) reports "Critical thinking is shot through the value judgments on almost every level; the pragmatic dimension assures this. Failure to appreciate this has the unfortunate result that Ennis's conception is inapplicable in the most common of circumstances and must run foul of its own dimensional parameters". (p55)

### **2.2.4 Ennis's Three Models for Critical Thinking Instruction in Education:**

According to Fahim and Eslamdoost (2014), Ennis (1989) introduced an illustration that suggests three models: a general, an infusion, and a mixed model toward CT instruction. The general approach is taken to mean teaching generalized CT skills in a CT course. Additionally, the infusion approach is suggestive of the required self-consciously teaching CT skills that form within the subject course. Eventually, a mixed-model approach is introduced as a combination of a general course with either an infusion or immersion approach. (Fahim and Eslamdoost, 2014, p 146)

## **2.3. The Paul-Elder model:**

### **2.3.1 introduction**

The Paul-Elder model of critical thinking is a comprehensive framework developed by Dr. Richard Paul and Dr. Linda Elder and it was first introduced in their book "Critical Thinking: Tools for Taking Charge of Your Learning and Your Life" in 2001. Its purpose is to help in the process of developing and improving critical thinking skills. This framework has three components: elements of thought, intellectual standards, and intellectual traits.

### **2.3.2 Elements of thought (reasoning):**

According to Paul & Elder, these elements include all key aspects of any critical thinking process and they must include:

1. All reasoning has a purpose.
2. All reasoning is an attempt to figure something out, to settle some question, or solve some problems.
3. All reasoning is based on assumptions.
4. All reasoning is done from some point of view.
5. All reasoning is based on data, information, and evidence.
6. All reasoning is expressed through, and shaped by, concepts and ideas.
7. All reasoning contains inferences or interpretations by which we draw conclusions and give meaning to data.
8. All reasoning leads somewhere or has implications and consequences.

### **2.3.2 intellectual standards:**

They refer to the criteria that we use to evaluate the quality of our thinking, according to Paul and Elder, they should include:

**Clarity:** Could you elaborate further on that point? Could you express that point in another way? Could you give me an illustration? Could you give me an example?

**Accuracy:** Is that really true? How could we check that? How could we find out if that is true?

**Precision:** Could you give me more details? Could you be more specific? **Relevance:** How is that connected to the question? How does that bear on the issue?

**Depth:** How does your answer address the complexities in the question? How are you taking into account the problems in the question? Are you dealing with the most significant factors?

**Breadth:** Do we need to consider another point of view? Is there another way to look at this question? What would this look like from a conservative standpoint? What would this look like from the point of view of...?

**Logic:** Does this really make sense? Does that follow from what you said? How does that follow?

**relevance:** How is that connected to the question? How does that bear on the issue?

**Fairness:** Are we considering all relevant viewpoints in good faith? Are we distorting some information to maintain our biased perspective? Are we more concerned about our vested interests than the common good?

### **2.3.3 Intellectual traits:**

They refer to intellectual personal characteristics that are needed for effective critical thinking. The Paul-Elder model lists 8 personal traits which are:

1. Intellectual humility
2. Intellectual courage
3. Intellectual empathy

4. Intellectual autonomy
5. Intellectual integrity
6. Intellectual perseverance
7. Confidence in reason
8. Fairmindedness

According to Paul and Elder (2001), Critical thinkers routinely apply intellectual standards to the elements of reasoning in order to develop intellectual traits.

### **3. The necessity of students for critical thinking:**

Education has changed nowadays. Academic success keeps getting increasingly difficult and the old ways are not proving to be working as students face new challenges and pitfalls. In order to overcome these challenges, students must learn to adapt to new ways and start developing skills as the world nowadays needs people with a lot of capabilities. However, there are certain foundations of education that are still standing the test of time and critical thinking is one of them. According to Shakirova (2007), Critical thinking skills are important because they enable students to deal effectively with social, scientific, and practical problems (p. 42). So, we conclude from this that students who can think critically are faster and better at problem-solving in the classroom.

According to Tilak Raj, Prashant Chauhan, Rashmi Mehrotra, and Meenakshi Sharma (2022, p.127-128), critical thinking is essential for students for these purposes:

**Increasing curiosity and creativity:** Critical thinking allows students to develop curiosity, making them eager to evaluate and process ideas and eventually generate their own original ideas and start thinking more creatively which is a much-needed skill in every academic field.

**encouraging self-awareness and self-reflection:** Critical thinking is essential in the process of self-reflection. According to Raj, Chauhan, Mehrotra, and Sharma (2022), it aids every student in finding out how to make sense of things based on their own observation and expertise and gives them confidence and self-assurance because they realize that the outcome is the result of a cognitive process that creates results.

**improving job possibilities:** With the surge of AI, it is projected that numerous occupations will cease to exist in the near future and will be replaced by it. So, the jobs that will be needed at that time are the jobs that require creativity, and this is where the role of critical thinking comes in for students as pupils with high critical thinking skill levels will likely land the best jobs.

**Developing related life skills:** Critical thinking encourages students to develop certain skills that are beneficial for them in life. These skills include organization, planning, open-mindedness, and communication. It also enables them to overcome all types of challenges whether they are academic challenges or personal ones.

**Saving Time:** It is well known that using critical thinking skills can save loads of time as students learn to study sharply by identifying and prioritizing only essential resources and relevant information.

## **4. Technology and critical thinking in EFL education:**

### **4.1 Overview of blended learning:**

#### **4.1.1 history**

Blended learning is an instructional framework that combines face-to-face teaching with online tools and materials in order to provide a more interactive classroom environment and facilitate the learning process as students gain access to course materials and complete assignments at their own pace and convenience while at the same time participating in collaborative activities with their classmates. Blended learning was first applied in higher education back in the 1960s. However, in 1999, the American Interactive Learning Center first used the term to launch software programs designed for teaching via the Internet (Fedorova, Anna, 2020, p.1).

#### **4.1.2 definition**

Over the years, many scholars, depending on the context, attempted to formulate and provide a clear definition for blended learning.

The University of Central Florida's Center for Distributed Learning defines blended learning as "a course design that integrates face-to-face and online learning" (University of Central Florida, n.d.).

while the Clayton Christensen Institute gave an even narrower and more specific definition:

“Blended learning is a formal education program in which a student learns: at least in part through online learning, with some element of student control over time, place, path, or

pace; at least in part in a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home; and the modalities along each student's learning path within a course or subject are connected to provide an integrated learning experience.” (Horn & Staker, 2015).

Garrison and Vaughan (2008) also defined blended learning in higher education in which as “the organic integration of thoughtfully selected and complementary face-to-face and online approaches and technologies” (p. 148)

#### **4.2 Blended learning and critical thinking:**

It has been proven by many scholars through many studies that there is a relationship between blended learning and critical thinking in terms of education seeing that blended learning can trigger the critical thinking skills of students by indulging them in a variety of learning experiences that challenge them to think deeply and critically about complex topics.

Yu (2015) and Tsai and Tang (2017), through their studies, found that the application of blended learning has a positive effect on problem-solving skills and the improvement is more substantial compared to traditional learning. A similar finding by Wahyuni et al. (2019) argued that blended learning influences students' learning results in multiple positive ways.

In 2020 A meta-analysis study was conducted by Hasanah and Malik (2020) that examines the effectiveness of blended learning in enhancing students' achievement. The results of the meta-analysis concluded that “the blended learning model is effective to increase students' critical thinking and communication skills. Furthermore, the improvement of these skills in the experimental group was more significant than in the control group taught with traditional learning. This condition is influenced by the positive aspects of the blended learning model, which in this



case requires students to actively involve in the learning activities in both the classroom (offline) and outside the classroom (online).”

## **5. Teaching and assessing critical thinking:**

### **5.1 Teaching Critical Thinking:**

Many curriculums acknowledge the fact that critical thinking has become an essential skill in modern-day education as it has always been a necessary skill for students to master in order to succeed and become an important-contributing member of society. However, behind this ideology, a question poses itself: can critical thinking actually be taught? And if yes, how?

This question has stirred up a big debate. There are those who believe that critical thinking is too complex of a concept to be taught (Simpson and Courtney 2002; McPeck 1990) or as Atkinson (1997) reported that it can only be acquired unconsciously through social practice. However, most scholars agree that critical thinking skills can and should be taught. In fact, some even believe that developing CT is the primary aim of formal education, and A Wall Street Journal analysis of student critical thinking assessments found that students in many colleges make little progress in that dimension (Belkin, 2017)

Halpern (1998) argued as well that critical thinking can in fact be learned and proposed a 4-part empirically based model to guide teaching and learning for critical thinking: (a) a dispositional component to prepare learners for effortful cognitive work, (b) instruction in the skills of critical thinking, (c) training in the structural aspects of problems and arguments to promote the trans contextual transfer of critical-thinking skills, and (d) a metacognitive component that includes checking for accuracy and monitoring progress toward the goal (Halpern,1998, p 449)

## **5.2 Assessing Critical Thinking:**

Many scholars argued over critical thinking and whether it can be definable, teachable, and assessable. However as shown in the previous parts, it is in fact definable and teachable. And just since it can be taught, it can also be assessed.

### **5.2.1 California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST):**

In 1990, Peter Facione and his colleagues at the University of California, Santa Barbara developed and introduced the California Critical Thinking Skills Test as a tool for measuring critical thinking. Since then, it has since become one of the most widely used standardized assessment tools for measuring critical thinking skills. It is comprised of 34 multiple-choice questions that are designed to measure a student's ability to understand and evaluate arguments, analyze and interpret data, and make logical inferences.

## **6. Impact of social media on Student's Critical Thinking Skills in EFL:**

In recent years, social media has been on the rise seeing that it is incorporated in almost every domain. And while it has its benefits, it has raised a lot of concerns about its effects, especially on people who are addicted to it since social media platforms are designed purposely to be highly addictive, often leading to excessive use. And as we know, critical thinking is a must nowadays. So, the fears that social media addiction can impair the development and use of this skill leading to poor decision-making, lack of attention, and a decreased ability to perform in an academic environment are heavily well-founded. Research has suggested that social media addiction can have a negative and a positive impact on critical thinking skills.

According to Cheng et al. (2019), social media use is a twofold phenomenon, it is an important tool for users to obtain information, perform social interaction and enrich their spiritual

lives. Nevertheless, excessive dependence on it may hinder the development of CTA especially since it is full of massive spam, rumors, and fake news and it consumes time and energy.

A study by Junco (2011) indicated that time spent engaged in certain Facebook activities can be positive just as it can be negative and that the use of Facebook is not detrimental to academic incomes and can be used in ways that are advantageous to students.

Rosen, Carrier, and Cheever (2013) conducted a study which concluded that students who accessed Facebook during their short study period had lower GPAs than those who had no access to social media and the reason for this is task switching which makes it more difficult to think critically. The study reported:

“It is indeed striking that students who had lower GPAs were those who accessed Facebook one or more times during the short study period. From the study design, it is not clear what activities an individual participant was performing on Facebook so it is not possible to assess the rationale for this task-switching behavior. However, it is likely that the switch from studying to Facebook may have been promoted by the inherent emotional gratification that is engendered by reading posts from friends, posting status updates or commenting on posts or photos. (Rosen, Carrier, & Cheever, 2013, p. 955-956)”

Another study by Pennycook and Rand (2017) suggested that social media contributes to the spread of fake and false news which can heavily undermine critical thinking skills by promoting false or misleading information.

Overall, the previously presented evidence suggests that SMU can be both positive and negative when it comes to CT and its effects depend on how it is used.

**Conclusion:**

Chapter one is divided into multiple sections, each one tackles an important aspect of critical thinking. from its history, and its multiple definitions to its use in EFL and its most important theoretical foundations.



## **Chapter 2**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the data collected through the research tools mentioned in this work. Data is gathered from a sample of 39 third-year students at Mila University Center and 3 experienced university-level teachers. The main purpose of this study is to identify the effects of social media addiction on the critical thinking of 3<sup>rd</sup> year Mila University students and to which extent this effect protrudes. The sample is chosen specifically and takes into consideration the students' use and exposure to social media.

### **1. Population and sampling**

#### **6.1 Participants:**

The participants for this study were:

39 undergraduate 3<sup>rd</sup>-year students enrolled in a university center of Mila in Algeria. The sample comprises a diverse group of males and females, with an age range of 18 to 24 years old. The inclusion criteria for the study were: (1) being enrolled in an undergraduate program, (2) being proficient in English, and (3) having regular access to social media. Exclusion criteria included: (1) having a diagnosed mental health condition that could affect their use of social media, and (2) not having regular access to at least 2 social media platforms.

3 EFL teachers at the university level. The teachers will serve as expert informants for the study, while the EFL students will provide data on their social media use, critical thinking skills, and academic proficiency.

## **2. Data collection**

First, a questionnaire was administered to 39 3<sup>rd</sup> year students. The points that are analyzed by the questionnaire are the student's attitudes toward social media and critical thinking. This questionnaire inquired about their habits of using social media, their attitude towards critical thinking, and their opinion about the two terms conjoined together. Second, an interview was conducted with 3 teachers with experience in teaching EFL. The point of the interview is to inquire about the student's academic performance and their use of critical thinking skills in the classroom.

## **3. Description of the Questionnaire:**

A questionnaire of 25 questions was given to the sample of students in order to intensively deal with all the aspects of the research topic. A Google form link was sent to the sample's messenger promo group. 39 students managed to give well-structured answers. The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections. The first section contains general information about the sample such as their age, gender, years of studying English, and their habits and attitudes toward it.

The second section is about the student's attitudes and habits of using social media. The third section tackles the aspect of critical thinking and its use in the classroom by the students. The 4<sup>th</sup> section deals with the effects of social media on critical thinking.

The students were asked about their years of studying English, their daily social media use, their perception of information on social media, their critical thinking use, and instruction in the classroom. they were also asked whether social media was helpful to them in their academic progress. The questionnaire's aim is to be informed on the student's attitudes toward social media and critical thinking in terms of academia.

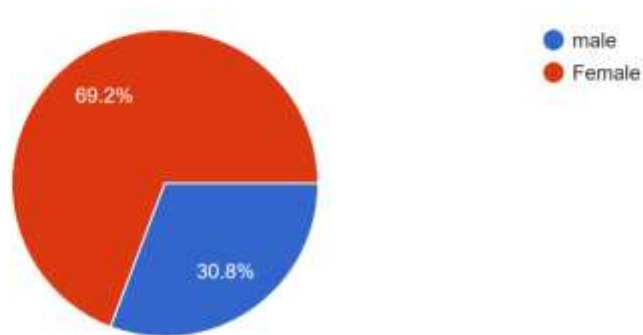
#### 4. Analysis and interpretation of the results:

##### Section One: General Information

##### Question 1:

##### Figure 02

*The participant's gender*



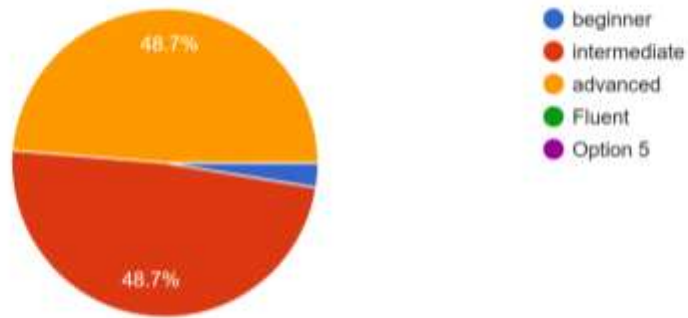
As shown in Figure 2, 27 participants representing 69.2% of the sample are females; while 12 participants representing 24.2% are males. This indicates that the majority of the participating population in this work are females.



## Question 2:

### Figure 03

*The participant's level of English proficiency*

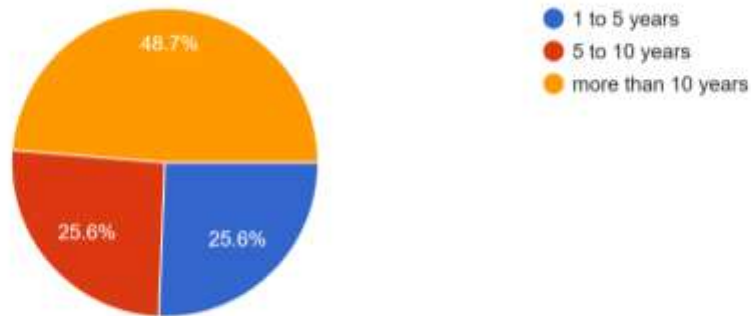


The previous figure shows that 48.7% of the students see themselves as advanced learners, another 48.7% of the students see themselves as intermediate-level learners and a small 2.6% consider themselves as beginners.

**Question 03:**

**Figure 04**

*The number of years learning English*

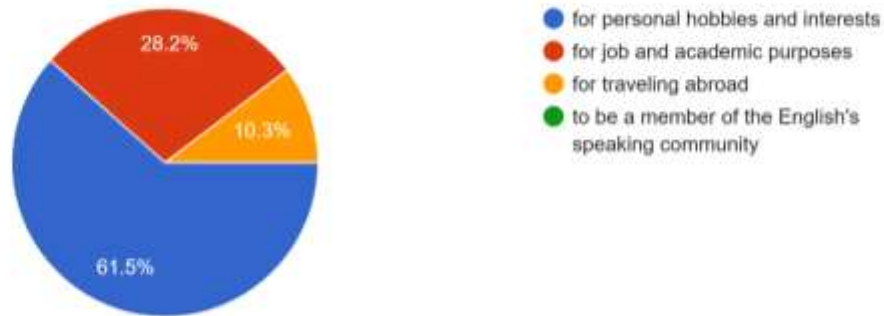


As it is shown, 48.7% of the sample students have been studying English for more than 10 years, 25.6% have been studying it for 1 to 5 years, while the other 25.6% have been studying the language for 5 to 10 years.

#### Question 4:

#### Figure 05

*The participants' reason for studying English at university*



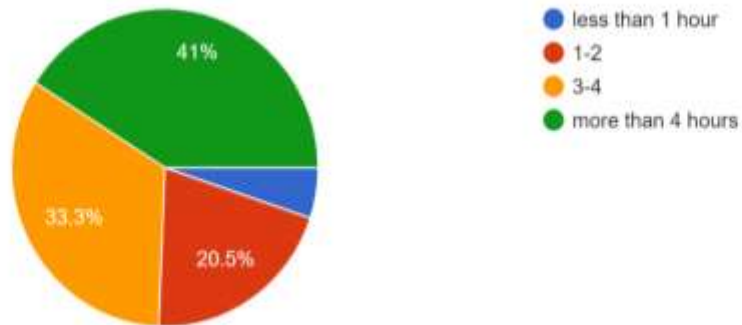
61.5% of the sample chose to study English in university for their personal hobbies and interests. This suggests that they chose to study English based on their genuine interest and they actually enjoy learning the language. 28.2% chose to study it for academic purposes. This indicates that a significant portion considers English to be crucial in their academic pursuits. A mere 10.3% study English to travel abroad which suggests that a small portion of students attribute their english studies with their desire to travel abroad.

## Section Two: social media

### Question 1:

#### Figure 06

*Daily time spent on social media by participants*

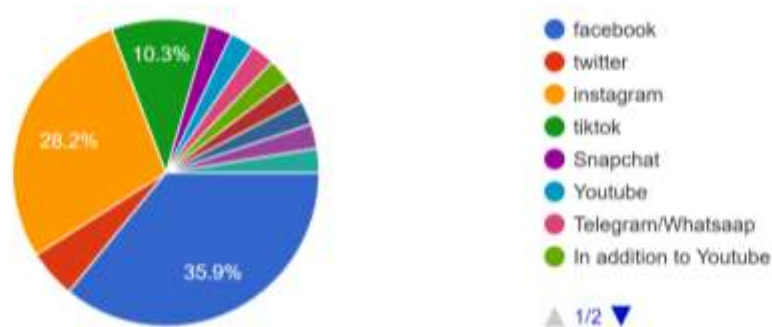


As shown above, (41%) of the participants use social media more than 4 hours a day probably because they have been using social media for a long time and could be seen as a sign of addiction, (33.3%) of them use it for around 3 to 4 hours which is still considered as addiction. (20.5%) of them use it for somewhere between 1 and 2 hours and comparison with the previous two, we can safely say this is moderate use and it can't be considered addiction. finally a small percentage of them use it for less than one hour these are the people who barely use social media and only use them for necessity.

## Question 2:

### Figure 07

*Social media platforms used frequently by participants*

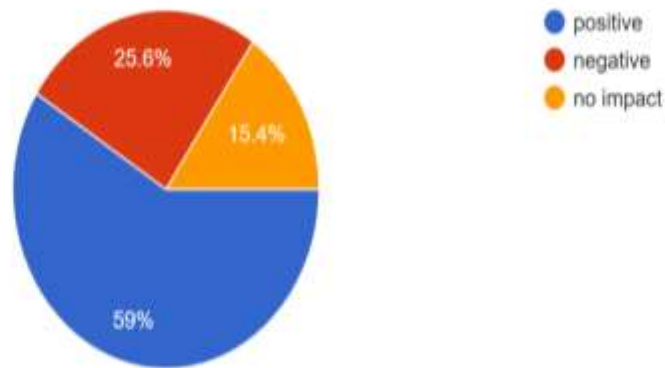


The upper pie chart points out that a staggering (35.9%) of the respondents prefer using Facebook which is expected due to Facebook being the oldest and the most known social media. (28.2%) of them choose Instagram as their favorite social media which is also expected and the reason for it being that Instagram and Facebook are from the same company. (10.3%) of participants chose TikTok which is very interesting considering that TikTok was only out for a few years yet it has accumulated such a user base due to its special algorithms and way of service, in addition, this number is most likely going to increase in the upcoming months and years. the rest 25.6% of the respondents chose other apps such as Twitter, Snapchat, telegram, WhatsApp, and YouTube, most likely the large percentage is meaning YouTube due to its informative nature and the other 3 apps being outdated or just used for communication which Facebook is doing just fine.

### Question 3:

#### Figure 08

*The type of social media effect on participants' academic performance*

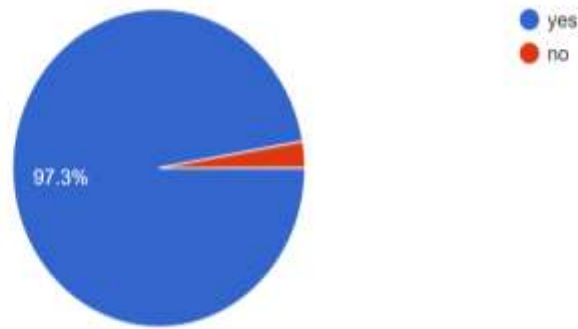


(59%) of the respondents think that social media use had a positive impact on their overall academic performance, this opinion should be taken with a grain of salt as seen before that a large percentage of the respondents are addicted to social media which will lead to a biased opinion towards social media impacts. (25.6%) state that they experienced a negative impact on their Academic performance, this opinion most likely came from the bunch that used social media moderately which means they are not addicted, their opinion is not biased, and can be taken into account. The remaining (15.4%) didn't experience any impact whatsoever, again, when it comes to accurate judgment of social media use learners can't be believed fully due to their addiction and dependence on it so a much more reliable judgment would be coming from their teachers.

**Question 4:**

**Figure 09**

*Participants' enjoyment of social media*



As this pie chart shows, (97.3%) of the participants enjoy spending time on social media which is absolutely expected due to the previously mentioned addiction fun that social media provides, while only a small percentage of (2.7%) don't find it enjoyable most likely because they aren't addicted or they aren't used to it to begin with.

**Question 5: how do you feel social media has affected your ability to concentrate on your English language studies?**

Question 5 was open ended and it was as follows, How do you feel social media has affected your ability to concentrate on your English language studies?

And the students gave multiple and varied answers depending on their experience of social media, here are some of their answers that stood out:

-One of the most notable ways that social media has influenced the English language, is through the appropriation of existing vocabulary.

-It made me unable to concentrate for long time.

-its only effect is taking away from the time that is supposed to go towards studies.

-Through watching movies and being active in native speaker's chat groups.

-it deteriorated my concentration.

-it helped to an extent but you can get distracted by many things.

-I know how to control using social media especially when studying, for instance, while interrogations i do not use it at all

-It did affect my ability to concentrate. It distracted me from my studies and I became kind of addicted to it because all I thought about was social media for example how many likes and followers did I get and so on.

-during exams, social media keeps me distracted from concentrating on my study.

-it did effect it in a Bad way especially since I'm addicted to TikTok and as u know, TikTok videos are kind of short it made me less concentrated and lose focus easily+ can't watch vids that are long anymore without skipping

- Mostly affected by infinite scrolling as going throw multiple short videos in a short periods of



time gives me some kind of joy and satisfaction , it become hard for me to concentrate on one subject for long time in this case my English studies.

- It distracts me from my immediate learning priorities...For example instead of using it to research relevant topics to my field, I end up exploring other stuff that are not exactly relevant to my career at that moment.

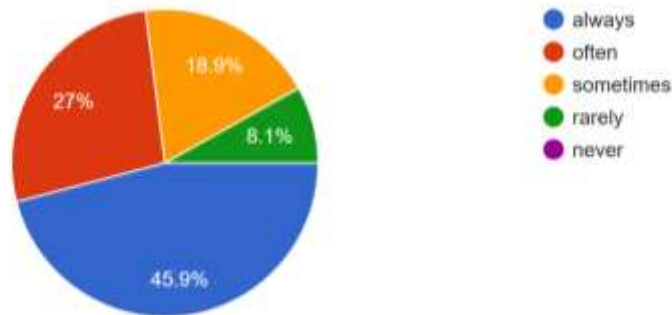
\*Upon closer inspection of these answers and the others not mentioned here, it becomes clear that some positive impact was noticed when it comes to learning English vocabulary but a clear pattern emerged that points out to the fact that social media use effected their cognitive abilities negatively by lowering concentration and being a distraction from their studies, this alone can be seen as clear indicator that social media has some positive effects but the negatives far outweigh it in terms of critical thinking capabilities because without concentration one can't even gather enough data to critically think about, furthermore, some of the learner appear to actually care and use social media strategically but the majority simply just consume it without care.

### Section 03: Critical Thinking

#### Question 01:

#### Figure 10

*The frequency at which participants question ideas and beliefs presented to them.*



This question aims at finding out whether the students are actively engaged in questioning what is presented to them in the classroom. The majority of students (45.9%) declare that they “always” question the ideas presented to them. This suggests a high level of critical thinking skill use as they consistently challenge what’s presented to them which leads to a better understanding and knowledge acquisition. A significant minority (27%) “often” question these ideas. Even though it’s lower than the first group, they still show a considerable level of critical thinking.

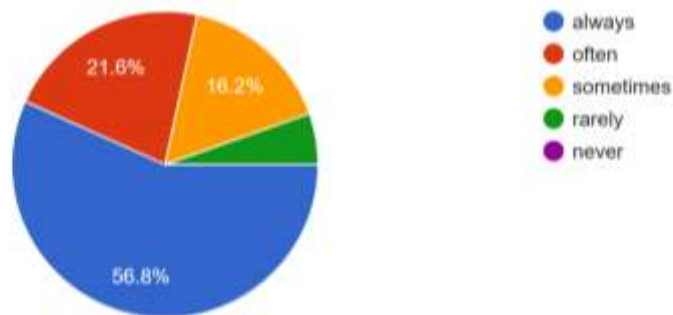
A smaller proportion of students (18.9%) sometimes question ideas and beliefs. It means that they occasionally try to question ideas presented to them that could prove to be somehow insufficient.

Only 8.1% “rarely” question what is presented to them. It means that their questioning is limited and they are more accepting of information without questioning it.

#### Question 2:

## Figure 11

*The frequency at which participants search for alternative solutions for problems*



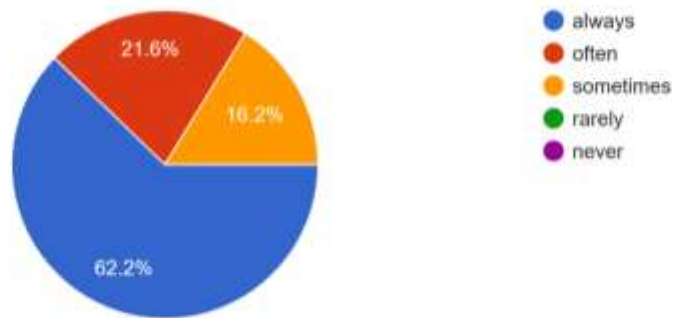
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The purpose of this question is to determine if the students are engaged in problem-solving or not. As shown in the previous figure, the majority of the students either “always” (56.8%) or “often” (21.6%) try to search for alternative solutions to a problem that is presented to them. While a smaller proportion of the students “sometimes” (16.2%) or “rarely” (5.4%) try to do so. This means that the majority of students are engaged in critical thinking by solving problems and trying to find solutions regularly. The smaller portion demonstrates a lower level of critical thinking in terms of problem solving and would benefit from encouragement and a fostering of a problem-solving set of mind.

**Question 03:**

**Figure 12**

*The frequency at which participants evaluate the evidence before making a decision.*

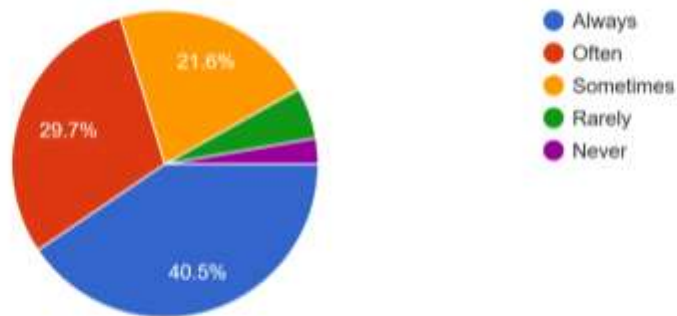


As it is shown, the majority of the students (62.2%) always evaluate the evidence before making a decision while smaller proportions either “often” (21.6%) or “sometimes” (16.2%) do so. This indicates that the students are actively assessing and evaluating the information they get instead of absorbing it directly. The data appears to be mostly positive as students show active engagement in evaluating evidence before making a certain decision and having the required awareness of the need to critically assess information before making choices.

## Question 04

**Figure 13**

*The frequency at which participants seek out different opinions and views on a topic*



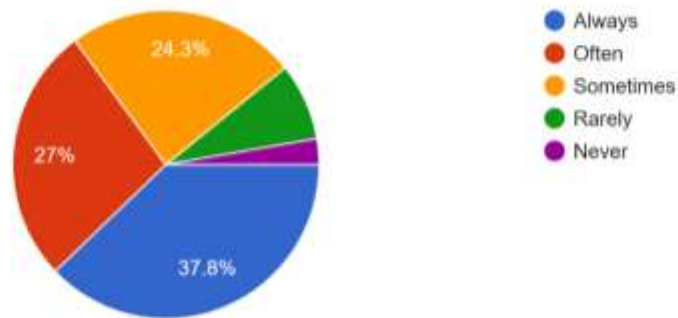
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The majority of students in the sample either “always” (40.5%), “often” (29.7%), or “sometimes” (21.6%) seek out different opinions and views on a topic while a small proportion either “rarely” (5.4%) or “never” (2.7%) do. This shows that most of the students do not judge matters directly, instead, they try to look for different views and opinions before making the right judgment. This is a sign of critical thinking and intellectual curiosity.

## Question 05

**Figure 14**

*The frequency at which participants analyze to identify key points*



The majority of students either “always” (37.8%) or often (27%) analyze information to identify key points. A significant proportion of the sample (24.3%) “sometimes” does while the rest either “rarely” (8.1%) or “never” (2.7%) does so. This suggests that most students analyze ideas presented to them to identify the key points which is an important critical thinking skill. It is however important to note that a small percentage of the students reported that they either never or rarely do this which could suggest that their critical thinking skills are not developing properly.

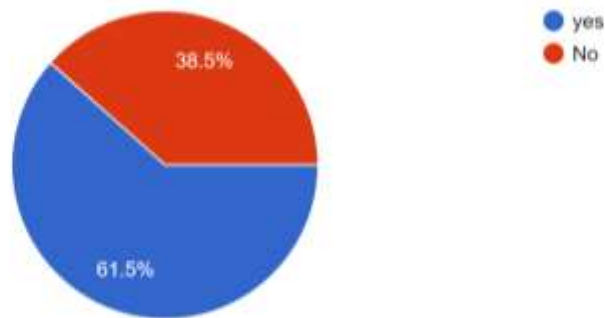
**Question 06: What strategies do you use to improve your thinking skills in your English language studies?**

For this question, we asked students about their strategies to improve their thinking skills in the classroom. We received a diverse range of strategies being used by different individuals to improve their thinking skills in English language studies. Some students mentioned strategies like reading books, articles, and news, watching movies and videos, listening to native speakers, practicing and speaking with others, analyzing information critically, and challenging themselves with difficult material. The wide range of suggestions and strategies show that students actively try to improve their critical thinking skills as they recognize the importance of active engagement, using a variety of sources, and refining their critical thinking skills.

**Question 07:**

**Figure 15**

*Participants' reception of critical thinking instruction in the classroom*



It seems that a majority of the respondents (61.5%) have received some instruction on critical thinking skills in their English language classes, while a significant minority (38.5%) have not. This suggests that curriculums have incorporated the instruction of critical thinking. The incorporation of critical thinking in curriculums indicates a recognition of its importance in developing evaluation and analysis skills among students.

However, it is concerning that a significant minority did not receive such instruction. It highlights a gap in educational systems that may limit the student's abilities to critically analyze complex issues and assess information in order to make appropriate judgments.



**Question 8: In your opinion, what role should critical thinking skills play in English language learning and education?**

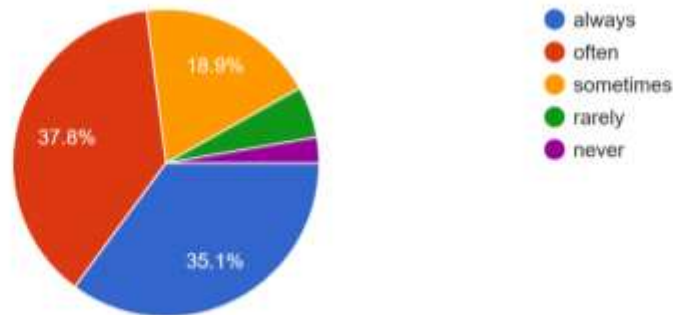
Based on the responses, it seems that most people believe that critical thinking skills should play an important role in English language learning and education. Some view it as a crucial or essential role, while others see it as a major or significant role. Many believe that critical thinking skills are necessary for evaluating new ideas, expressing oneself effectively, and making rational decisions. Additionally, some see critical thinking skills as important for problem-solving, creativity, and academic performance. However, it is worth noting that a few respondents did not have any opinion on the matter which could be due to a lack of awareness on the matter.

## Section 04: social media and Critical Thinking

### Question 01:

#### Figure 16

*The frequency at which participants evaluate the information they find on social media*



It seems that the majority of the students either “always” (37.8%) or “often” (35.1%) evaluate information on social media while a significant minority “sometimes” evaluate this information. A small percentage either rarely or never evaluate info on social media. The results show that the majority of students evaluate what is presented to them on social media which indicates that they check the credibility, reliability and relevance of the content they come across. This suggests a recognition of the potential risks social media could impose on them with fake and misleading information. The small percentage of students who “rarely” or “never” evaluate information on social media poses a problem. This group is in danger of being susceptible to the negative influence of social media as it could affect their thoughts, opinions and attitudes potentially compromising their ability to make informed decisions.

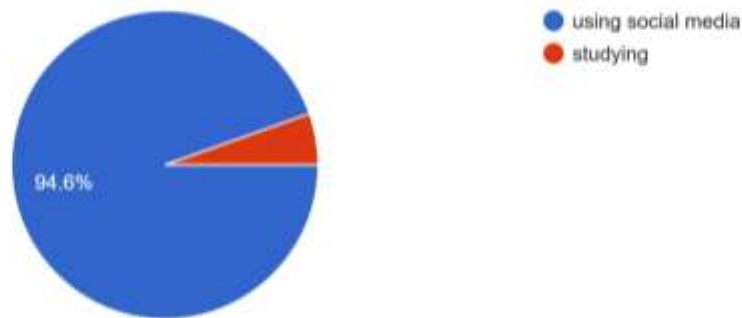
**Question 02: How do you feel social media has affected your ability to concentrate on your English language studies? Please explain your answer.**

According to the given responses, it seems that social media has both positive and negative effects on the concentration of students when it comes to English language studies as it helps with fluency and knowledge. While some find it a helpful learning tool, a lot feel that it can be a major distraction and a time-waster. It also affects the ability to concentrate.

### Question 03:

#### Figure 17

*Participants' enjoyment of social media versus studying*

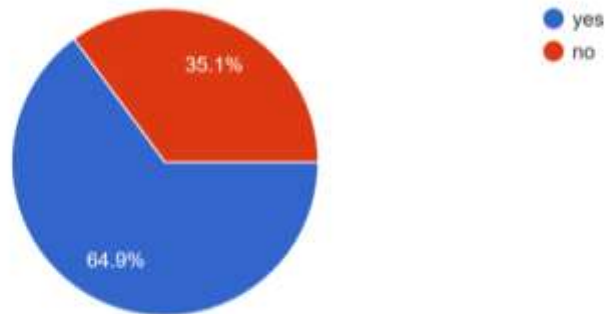


According to the previous figure, 94.6% enjoy using social media instead of studying while a low 5.4% enjoy studying more. This result indicates the probability of social media being a heavy distraction for students. The overwhelming preference of students for social media over studying raises a substantial concern about its potential impact on students. This result suggests that social media may be a significant distraction to students, diverting their attention away from their academic responsibilities and hindering their ability to engage in activities that require critical thinking.

#### Question 04:

Figure 18

*The impact of social media on the participant's analysis and evaluation ability*



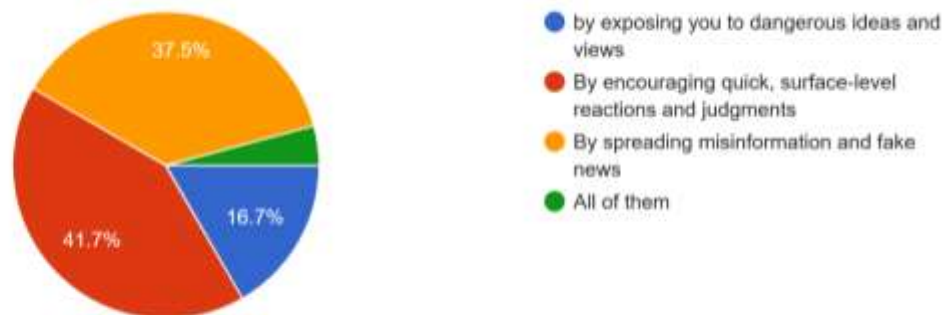
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It seems that the majority (64.9%) agree that social media can sometimes hinder one's ability. This implies that the majority of students actually acknowledge and agree about the fact that social media can be of negative effect and they perceive negative drawbacks associated with the use of social media platforms. These drawbacks are varied from a lack of concentration which leads to a decreased productivity, to excessive time consumption.

On the other hand, the minority opinion, comprising 35.1% of respondents, disagreed with the statement that social media hinders their ability. These individuals likely believe that social media has little to no impact on their abilities or may even argue that it enhances their capabilities in certain ways. For instance, social media can connect individuals with like-minded communities, provide exposure for creative pursuits, or facilitate knowledge-sharing and learning.

## Figure 19

*The way social media impacts students' analysis and evaluation ability*



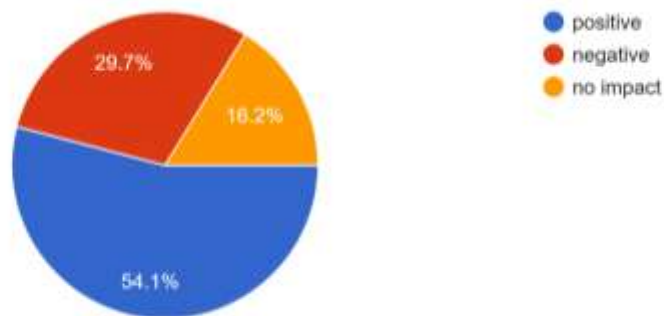
When asked how, the students who said yes were given multiple answers to choose from. The majority agreed that SM can hinder your ability to analyze and evaluate info by encouraging quick surface-level reactions and judgments (41.7%) and spreading misinformation and fake news (37.5%). This suggests that these students perceive these aspects of social media as detrimental to their analytical and evaluative skills and are aware that the spread of misinformation and fake news can pose challenges for individuals trying to assess the credibility and reliability of the information they encounter, potentially undermining their ability to make informed judgments.

An important minority (16.7%) think that it can hinder their ability to analyze and evaluate by exposing them to dangerous ideas and views while the rest think it's all of the above. This highlights another drawback of social media because it is proven that SM can expose people to dangerous ideologies that could lead to serious consequences.

**Question 05:**

**Figure 20**

*Participants' opinions on the impact of social media on their academic performance*



When asked about the impact of social media on academic performance, the majority of the students (54.1%) reported that SM has a positive impact, a significant minority (29.7%) reported that it had a negative impact while 16.2% reported it to have no impact whatsoever.

When asked to explain, the students gave a variety of responses. Based on those responses, it looks like the impact of social media on academic performance depends on the student's use. The majority of respondents believe that social media has a positive impact on their academic performance, mentioning its ability to provide access to information, connect with native speakers, and improve their language skills and knowledge in multiple areas. Others, however, believe that social media has a negative impact on their academic performance, specifying its distractions, addiction, and superficial content.

#### **4. Description of the interview:**

The interview was done face-to-face with 3 teachers from the Department of Foreign Languages at Mila University Center. The teachers had at least 7 years of English teaching experience at a university level. The interview contained four main questions with some follow-up questions, all of these questions target their opinion and experience with critical thinking instruction, students' social media use, attitudes, academic performance, and use of critical thinking skills. Significantly, the interview is meant to know their opinion regarding the effects of social media addiction on critical thinking.

#### **5. Analysis and interpretation of the interview:**

**question 01: In your experience, how is the student's level of critical thinking and what are some of the most common challenges that university students face when it comes to developing their critical thinking skills?**

When asked, all the teachers expressed their total dissatisfaction with the student's critical thinking level saying that they do not possess high critical thinking skills that are required for the course they're taking.

Teacher 02 mentioned that the biggest challenge and obstacles students face is the lack of foundational knowledge as critical thinking requires a solid foundation of knowledge to depend upon when thinking critically.

Teacher 03 stressed the point that students may be accustomed to their own beliefs and perspectives, and may have limited exposure to diverse viewpoints. This can make it challenging for them to think critically and consider alternative perspectives when analyzing complex issues.

These results indicate that there is a gap between the required and expected level of critical thinking and the actual level that students possess. They also emphasize the importance of addressing



foundational knowledge gaps and promoting exposure to diverse perspectives in order to enhance students' critical thinking skills.

**question 02: How do you see social media addiction impacting university students' ability to think critically, and what strategies do you use to help students manage their social media usage?**

When asked, the teacher heavily emphasized the role SMA plays in hindering the students' critical thinking abilities.

teacher 01 indicated that the problem is attributed to their addiction to social media platforms especially TikTok as it makes it difficult to develop CT abilities and stagnates their existing abilities. teacher 01 reported

“it makes it impossible for them to evaluate and analyze literary texts and ideas making them block minded”

Teacher 01 suggested that they not waste their time at all on social media and to concentrate more on their studies.

Teacher 02 reported

“Students get dependent on SM more than it should and take into consideration most of the info they read. Thus, they develop a kind of automation in believing all or most of the sources without even bothering to check their reliability.”

The overreliance on social media as a primary source of information can create a false sense of credibility and reliability. Students may become accustomed to accepting information at face value without critically evaluating its accuracy or considering alternative viewpoints. This automation in believing all or most sources without verification can hinder the development of critical thinking skills.

Teacher 03 stressed the point that social media promotes quick judgements and “shallow analysis” making the students limited and unable to delve deeply into a subject. teacher 03 reported

“Social media platforms provide information in bite-sized, easily digestible manner that prioritize speed and instant judgment.”

Teacher 03 also suggested employing strategies such as raising awareness about the dangers of social media addiction.

**Question 03: How do you incorporate critical thinking into your teaching practices, and what specific strategies have you found to be effective in helping students develop these skills?**

Teacher 01 shared their methods of incorporating critical thinking into their teaching practices by trying to encourage them to give their own interpretation of literary texts and read between the lines in order to delve deeply into them.

Teacher 02 talked about incorporating critical thinking via group work saying that The "other" is the key to seeing different angles of the same thing. That is why working in groups will help in this matter and make all Ss speak, listen, analyze then come to a clear conclusion.

Teacher 03 mentioned designing activities that require the students to critically analyze, evaluate and solve problems like debates and research projects.

**question 04: Have you seen any evidence of social media addiction affecting university students' academic performance or critical thinking abilities, and if so, can you give an example?**

Teacher 1 gave detailed examples of this phenomenon by reporting to have seen the students resorting to plagiarism and copy-paste when the teacher gives them an assignment which requires them to analyze and evaluate a literary text which suggests that they are unable to critically think or they are too lazy to do it.

Teacher 2 did not report seeing any evidence while teacher 03 said that there have been incidents where he encountered some students who gave false answers that they got from social media platforms which indicated that social media does in fact affect the students' academic performance by exposing them to false information.

**Conclusion:**

This chapter aimed at investigating the impact of social media on the critical thinking skills of third-year students studying English as a foreign language in the university center of Mila. Depending on the student's answers, we have concluded that despite its negative impact, social

media is a helpful tool for students that acts as a guide providing them with things they need for their studies and developing their critical thinking skills. However, the teacher's answers lead to another perception: social media is more harmful than beneficial to the student's academic performance as it greatly damages their ability to evaluate and analyze information presented to them while also causing addiction and hindering academic engagement.

### **General conclusion:**

Critical thinking nowadays is a major requirement for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is a crucial skill that is highly important in academia, the workplace, and everyday life. The success of a community partly relies on the development of this skill. In recent years, the phenomenon of social media use has skyrocketed. SM is used everywhere by everyone from all age groups. So automatically, a concern that it might affect the critical thinking ability of students arose among the masses due to how much time people (including students) spend on it.

For the aim of investigating what kind of effect SMA can have on CT, we examined the current level of critical thinking among the students of UCM and their habits of using social media in order to see whether its effects are either positive or negative.

To carry out this investigation, two methods were adopted. A questionnaire was answered by 39 students and an interview was done face-to-face with 3 UCM teachers. Based on the analysis of the obtained data, we come to answer our research questions as we identified the negative effects of social media on the student's critical thinking heavily outweigh its positive effects to a great extent in the sense that it renders them ineffective and unable to think critically. Thus, the aims of the research are met as we stated the type of effect SMA has on CT skills and to what extent and in what ways social media use influences the development of these skills among EFL learners

According to the findings, this research's hypothesis that SM has a mostly negative relationship with CT and that students who are heavily addicted to social media will demonstrate lower levels of critical thinking is confirmed and the most likely factor involved is the damage that social media does to the concentration of students which was even mentioned by the learners themselves in the questionnaire findings.

### **Limitations of the study**

During conducting this study, numerous obstacles were faced that hinder our research. First of all, the given time was not sufficient to do an experimental study which this type of research needed. Second, we encountered problems concerning the credibility of the students' answers in the questionnaire as they did not provide us with evident data since the results from their questionnaire totally contradicted the result acquired from the teacher's interview. and finally, the topic of critical thinking was a very broad and complex topic and assessing it using a questionnaire is not be enough.

**Appendices**  
**Students' Questionnaire**

Dear students,

You are kindly asked to complete this questionnaire made as a part of a study conducted by second year master students at the department of foreign languages at Mila University Center. It aims at finding out about your thoughts and attitudes towards social media addiction and its impact on critical thinking. Please, note that your answers will all be anonymous and no personal data will be collected. Your answers will be tremendously helpful to this research.

please answer carefully and clearly.

Thank you very much for your collaboration.

Section One:

1. What is your gender?
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
2. What is your current level of English proficiency?
  - a. Beginner
  - b. intermediate
  - c. advanced
3. How many years have you been studying English?

- a. 1-5 years
- b. 5-10 years
- c. 10+ years

4. Why did you choose to study English at the university?

- a. For personal interests
- b. Academic purposes
- c. To be a member of the English-speaking community
- d. Other ..... (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

#### Section Two: Social Media

1. On average, how many hours per day do you spend on social media?

- a. Less than 1 hour
- b. 1-2 hours
- c. 2-3 hours
- d. 3-4 hours
- e. More than 4 hours

2. Which social media platform do you use the most frequently?

- a. Facebook
- b. Twitter
- c. Instagram

d. TikTok

e. Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_...

3. Do you enjoy using social media?

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4. Do you feel that social media has a positive or negative impact on your way of thinking?

a. Positive

b. Negative

c. No impact

please explain your answer

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5. How do you feel social media has affected your ability to concentrate on your English language studies? Please explain your answer.

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### Section Three: Critical Thinking

1. How often do you question ideas or beliefs presented to you?

a. Always

b. Often

c. Sometimes

d. Rarely

e. Never



2. How often do you try and search for alternative solutions to a problem?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

3. How often do you evaluate the evidence before making a decision?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

4. How often do you seek out different opinions and views on a topic?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

5. How often do you analyze information to identify key points?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

6. What strategies do you use to improve your thinking skills in your English language studies?

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7. Have you ever received instruction on critical thinking skills in your English language classes?

- a. Yes
- b. No

8. In your opinion, what role should critical thinking skills play in English language learning and education?

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#### Section Four:

1. How often do you evaluate information you find on social media?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely

e. Never

2. Which one do you find more enjoyable?

a. Using social media

b. Studying

3. Do you think social media can sometimes hinder your ability to analyze and evaluate information?

a. yes

b. no

If yes, how?

a. by exposing you to dangerous ideas and views

b. By encouraging quick, surface-level reactions and judgments

c. By spreading misinformation and fake news

d. Other (please specify):

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4. Do you feel that social media has a positive or negative impact on your academic performance?

a. Positive

b. Negative

c. No impact

please explain your answer

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**Interview questions:**

In your experience, what are some of the most common challenges that university students face when it comes to developing their critical thinking skills?

How do you see social media addiction impacting university students' ability to think critically, and what strategies do you use to help students manage their social media usage?

How do you incorporate critical thinking into your teaching practices, and what specific strategies have you found to be effective in helping students develop these skills?

Have you seen any evidence of social media addiction affecting university students' academic performance or critical thinking abilities, and if so, can you give an example?

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## **Resumé**

Les médias sociaux sont devenus une partie intégrante de notre vie quotidienne, avec des milliards de personnes dans le monde utilisant des plateformes pour se connecter avec des amis, partager des informations et consommer des médias. Bien que les médias sociaux aient le potentiel de faciliter la communication et l'accès à l'information, on s'inquiète également des effets négatifs potentiels qu'ils peuvent avoir sur les individus, en particulier les apprenants.

Cette étude examine comment les capacités de pensée critique des étudiants de troisième année d'EFL sont affectées par la dépendance aux médias sociaux. L'étude a examiné les modèles d'utilisation des médias sociaux et a utilisé des statistiques descriptives et inférentielles pour examiner quantitativement et qualitativement l'impact des médias sociaux sur la pensée critique.

La documentation connexe a été examinée afin de créer un questionnaire structuré. 39 élèves et 3 enseignants composaient l'échantillon à partir duquel les données ont été extraites. Les résultats de l'étude ont montré que si les médias sociaux ont un impact négatif et positif sur les capacités de pensée critique de l'élève, les effets négatifs l'emportent largement sur les effets positifs.

## ملخص

أصبحت وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي جزءاً أساسياً من حياتنا اليومية، حيث يستخدم مليارات الأشخاص في جميع أنحاء العالم هذه المنصات للتواصل مع الأصدقاء ومشاركة المعلومات واستهلاك الوسائط المتعددة. بينما لدى وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي القدرة على تسهيل التواصل والوصول إلى المعلومات، هناك أيضاً قلق بشأن التأثيرات السلبية المحتملة التي قد تكون لها على الأفراد، ولا سيما المتعلمين. يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة كيفية تأثير إدمان وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على قدرات التفكير النقدي لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في السنة الثالثة. نظر البحث في أنماط استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي واستخدم الإحصاءات الوصفية والاستدلالية لفحص تأثير وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على التفكير النقدي بطريقة كمية ونوعية. تم فحص الأدب ذي الصلة لإعداد استبيان منظم. بلغت عينة الدراسة 39 طالباً و 3 معلمين، منها تم جمع البيانات. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أنه على الرغم من أن وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لها تأثير سلبي وإيجابي على قدرات التفكير النقدي للطلاب، فإن التأثيرات السلبية تفوق بشكل كبير التأثيرات الإيجابية.