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Using George Orwell's *1984* in Teaching Social Media in ELT

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this diploma thesis “Using George Orwell’s *1984* in Teaching Social Media in ELT” has been composed by me and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree, except where stated otherwise by reference.

In Dolní Cerekev on 25th November 2023

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Petr Pádivý

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I dedicate this diploma thesis to my beloved, late mother, without whom I would not be the person I am today.

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ABSTRACT

This diploma thesis aims to explore the possibilities of utilising George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in teaching the topic of social media in ELT. The practical component of the study focuses on determining whether the inclusion of this iconic literary work from the dystopian literature genre will impact students' critical thinking regarding the use of social media, their language proficiency, and potential interest in further exploration of the dystopian fiction's canon. Utilising techniques and methods based on Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking within the framework of the three phase E-R-R model (Evocation, Realisation, Revocation), two classes of graduating students will be exposed to the instruction of social media topics, whose objectives include deepening their knowledge in this area and providing a different perspective through the comparison of social media with the fictional world of George Orwell's novel, followed by a subsequent analysis.

INTRODUCTION

“The moral to be drawn from this dangerous nightmare situation is a simple one: Don’t let it happen. It depends on you.” (George Orwell)

The aim of this diploma thesis is to seek to ascertain whether utilising George Orwell’s novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, in addition to influencing their language proficiency and possibly sparking an interest in dystopian literature, also has the potential to primarily stimulate students’ critical thinking in the context of using social media. Aside from the educational aspect of the teacher’s role, a distinctly diagnostic dimension emerges within this topic, too. As Seymour aptly points out, “So if we get hooked on a machine that purports to tell us, among other things, how other people see us – or a version of ourselves, a delegated online image – that suggests something has already gone wrong with our relationships with others (Seymour, 2019, p. 32).

As educators, we increasingly encounter the cases of students who evince altered perspectives on self-perception and manifest groundless declines in well-being. This reality has recently emerged from a combination of various factors, undoubtedly also thanks to the prolonged social isolation of the students during the Covid 19 lockdown. It is necessary to point out that social media networking sites were essentially sole communication channels for students and teachers during this time, and this disproportionately long period spent on social media during the quarantine now takes its toll. Either way, according to Lanier, Seymour and others, the main culprit to blame for the status quo is the toxic social media environment. The authors claim it is due to unrealistically set beauty standards, pressure related to social status, the formation of online tribe-like communities, tendency towards false self-presentation, and the generally anonymous nature of the online space that creates a breeding ground for unpunishable dehumanization and victimization of users (see Lanier, 2019; Seymour, 2019).

There were two main reasons for the creation of this diploma thesis. Firstly, it was the author’s longstanding interest in dystopian themes, both literary and cinematic. Secondly it was an enduring and growing sense that it was necessary to acquaint students with negative aspects of social media and their threats, based on the author’s deep interest in the issue of social media. It should be noted that it was not the author’s intention to approach the topic in a one-sided and dogmatic manner. Despite knowing it would be a challenging topic, the goal was not to drive students into a pre-prepared stance. The final

students' judgement, therefore, ought to stem from the clash of students' exposition to scientific facts taken from "Ten Arguments for Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now" and "Outnumbered", real examples taken from social networking sites, excerpts from Orwell's novel, and students' personal experiences and attitudes towards this contemporary internet phenomenon.

The theoretical part of this thesis comprises four main chapters. The first one deals with utopia and dystopia. After a brief description of utopia, dystopia will be viewed from a socio-cultural and philosophical level and then from the perspective of literary studies. Chapter 2 is dedicated to George Orwell, his life, and important works. The following chapter is devoted to outlining *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, its critical contemporary reception and to the "second life" of the novel after Orwell's death. The last chapter delves into social media, their significance, and potential risks. The chapter briefly touches on key problematic areas such as the development of addiction, constant surveillance by internet giants, techniques of this monitoring, loss of privacy and more. At the same time, the chapter poses a question of to what extent social media are social.

Based on Dewey's premise that there is an organic connection between education and personal experience (Dewey, 2015, p. 25), the concept of the practical part comprises students' hands-on encounters with passages from a fictional world of a totalitarian society represented by Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and real examples taken from social media and excerpts from authoritative books on this topic written by Jaron Lanier and David Sumpter. The practical part is divided into twelve chapters. Chapter 1 deals with research methodology. Chapters 2, 3, 4 focus on analysing student and teacher questionnaires and the analysis of subsequent interviews with selected teachers. Chapters 5–8 describe four lessons that took place in classes 4.A and 4.C, totalling eight teaching hours. Chapters 9–11 evaluate students works – presentations, essays, and concluding interviews with them. The last chapter is dedicated to conclusion.

THEORETICAL PART

1 UTOPIA / DYSTOPIA

There is no avoiding mentioning the concept of dystopia at the beginning of a treatise on George Orwell and his works. Although a blurry notion of this imagined state of either society or community is current among the educated population, the author feels the necessity to take different perspectives on the topic. Even the term dystopia is not a compact outline depicting just one actuality. It portrays a lot of various, often dissimilar, yet unwelcoming realities. Before examining dystopia itself, delving into the origin and meaning of its hypothetical precursor of thought – *Utopia* – cannot be omitted.

1.1 Utopia

According to Gregory Claeys utopia means “some variation on an ideal present, an ideal past and ideal future, and the relation between the three” (Claeys, 2020, p. 13). As claimed by Rothstein, utopia is not an impossible place. It is a place that should exist and should be pursued. ‘Utopias represent an ideal toward which the mundane world must reach’ (Rothstein et al., 2003, p. 3). Levitas perceives utopia as ‘the expression of desire for a better way of living and of being’ (Levitas, 2013, p. 4). In her ‘Utopia as method’, Levitas explores diverse approaches towards utopia, for example the opinion held by Ernest Bloch that a utopian impulse which is expressed as longing for ‘a life otherwise’ originally stems from a sense of hunger, loss and lack (cited in Levitas, 2013, p. 5). Bloch claims that utopia is an embedded element in various aspects of human activity, including music, art, and literature (cited in Levitas, 2013, p. 5).

The idea of utopia itself roots from three different breeding grounds – it is watered from three wellheads: a myth, a religion, and an institution (Claeys, 2020, p. 14). The author also distinguishes three types of utopias according to the variations on the utopian impulse: static versus dynamic utopia, ascetic versus want-satisfying utopia and hierarchical versus egalitarian utopia (Claeys, 2020, p. 17-18). It is necessary to understand that not all utopias are meant to be a playbook for a better world. Some of them are partly satirical (e.g., *Gulliver’s Travels*), ironic (the reader cannot be certain how much of Thomas More’s visions were meant as such) or critical (Rothstein, Muschamp, Marty, 2003, p. 3).

Plunging into the world of myths, Greek authors Homer and Hesiod as well as Roman poets Catullus, Horace or Ovid, and a plethora of others, provide us with a very resembling portrayal of a utopia of their times. Both Greek and Roman depictions refer to the golden age of human existence, an original state of the cosmos. All men, made of gold and governed by the god Kronos, were endowed with a facile and painless life. The world abounded in unstinting amounts of food and the individual's death was freed from suffering and rather corresponded to sweet sleep (Claeys, 2020, p. 20). Fear of wild animals didn't exist, neither did the human conflict, as well as nobody worked, no one was engaged in commerce or politics, births were painless and deaths easy (Sargent, 2010, p. 33).

Humanity, gradually corrupting its relationship to Gods, would be forfeited its privileged status, and descend from the golden heights of exceptionality into the iron pits of ordinariness (Claeys, 2020, p. 22). The Romans envisaged a very similar state of harmony and profusion, describing the same twist of events in which humans would be emancipated from the divine thrall, with just an infinitesimal difference – Saturn was claimed to be the ruling deity (Claeys, 2020, p. 22). These mythical places bore diverse names, like Elysium or Elysian Fields or the Islands of the Blessed and were expelled strictly to the afterlife, so the utopian realm was an exclusive part unattainable for the mortals (Claeys, 2020, p. 22).

Some of the writers at that time, however, situated these territories of exclusiveness into the real world. Homer mentioned in the *Odyssey* supernatural places like *Land of Aiaia*, the floating island of *Aiolos*, the *island of the Cyclops*, the *Fortunate Islands*, or the *Land of the Lotus-Eaters*, and placed them somewhere in the Mediterranean (Claeys, 2020, p. 23). Lucian fixed the position of the *Island of the Blessed* and *Dionysus's Island* in the Atlantic Ocean – the former place being populated by incorporeal entities of supernatural grace living in the world of plenty, the latter being a piece of a dry land nourished by the rivers of wine (Claeys, 2020, p. 23-24). *Atlantis*, a utopian archetype of the perfectly functioning society, was placed somewhere beyond the Rock of Gibraltar (Claeys, 2020, p. 24). In their works, naturally, the then authors stressed different facets of harmony. Hesiod emphasized abundance, which is shared equally, a life full of joy and an easy death whereas Ovid highlighted freedom from law courts, a local community, and no war (Sargent, 2010, p. 34).

The ancient Greek and Roman civilization also created various forms of the ideal constitution according to criteria based on social and economic stability, the allocation of land, the distribution of wealth, legislation, manners, and social relations (Claeys, 2020, p. 25). 9th century Sparta might be used as an example of a so-called militarized utopia. The society was based on equality among citizens, a society where slaves and women weren't considered citizens (Sargent, 2010, p. 37). Lycurgus, a mythical lawgiver, a reformer, and probably a member of the Spartan royal family, created a dual monarchy and senate to introduce a balance into the legislation approval system (Claeys, 2020, p. 25). He is said to have divided and reallocated land justly to resolve the problems with social inequalities and coped with poverty in this way as well (Claeys, 2020, p. 25). Every person in Sparta was trained to have neither the wish nor the ability to live for themselves. (Sargent, 2010, p. 37).

Lycurgus also normalized a modest fashion in clothing and simplicity in household decoration, as well as the rule that the affluent had to dine with the poor. Exercises had a communal character, too. Married men were not allowed to share their bed with their spouses and their children were considered a property of the whole commonwealth (Claeys, 2020, p. 26). From present-day perspective, Sparta seems to have been a totalitarian state, where individuality is sacrificed to the good of community, yet Lycurgus only attempted to keep Spartans 'free-minded, self-dependent and temperate' (Claeys, 2020, p. 26). This description would later influence Jean-Jacques Rousseau and some socialists in the 19th century (Claeys, 2020, p. 27).

Plato's *Republic* and *Laws* are other thought-provoking contributions to the ancient models of utopian thinking, albeit purely theoretical ones. Both these works refer to harmony, knowledge and the good life lived by a good person (Sargent, 2010, p. 38). Sargent asserts that the difference between these two utopias is that the polis of *Laws* is based on a law while the polis of the *Republic* is based on human wisdom which is represented by a person of philosopher-king (Sargent, 2010, p. 38). Philosophers combine the ability to examine the truth both ethically and metaphysically, which qualifies them as expert practitioners of statecraft (Mitchell, 2022, p. 16). Plato propounded the thought that rulers ought to embrace the idea of becoming an integral part of the community and renounce the chase for wealth. The author also suggested that the community rear and educate the children in compliance with the ethos of public service (Claeys, 2020, p. 27).

Claeys claims that Western utopianism has its roots in Christianity and ideas of classicism (Claeys, 2020, p. 29). Precisely speaking, as the authors claim, ‘Modern Western utopia has constantly been torn by the polarity of the paradisaical religious fantasy and the rationalist idea of a city of men created by Greeks’ (Manuel, Manuel, 1997, p. 64). In fact, Jesus Christ might be considered a most famous Christian utopian of all times, and Eden, where humanity is said to have been born, regarded as the idyllic image of a prospering garden, might have served as a dominant theme within the utopian idea (Claeys, 2020, p. 29). Hertzler, however, delves even further into the past and includes ancient prophets Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Deutero-Isaiah as original forerunners of the utopian thought in the Christian doctrine (See Hertzler, 1923, p. 7-46). Although the idea of utopia was created during the Renaissance and the Reformation, the visions of Eden and the World to come are present in all later utopian thoughts (Manuel, Manuel, 1997, p. 33). Despite being nothing more but a myth Eden can be, according to Claeys, viewed as ‘the fount of much of the Western utopian tradition’ (Claeys, 2020, p. 32). European culture, however, is not the only one which is significant with inventing, exploring, and seeking the blueprint for a perfect society. Non-European communities too bore noticeable traits of utopian elements in their secular as well as religious concepts (see Claeys, 2020, p. 41-52).

From the 16th century up to the present time, numerous thinkers, philosophers, and writers of belles-lettres have tried to devise and depict the system of a perfect society or attempted to narrate a great story taking place in such a fictitious, immaculate environment. Claeys and Sargent state almost fifty names of authors (and bring an example of their works) of utopian prose in their book called ‘The Utopia Reader’ (see Claeys, Sargent, 1999) The reader can find names like Thomas More, François Rabelais, Michel de Montaigne, Tommaso Campanella, Francis Bacon, James Harrington, Francis Bacon or Thomas Spence and many more on the list (including also George Orwell, Aldous Huxley or Yevgeni Zamyatin, whose classification as utopian writers is disputable at least). In the *A to Z of Utopianism*, Morris and Kross compile a list of ‘major utopian novels’ (1516-1986), from Tomas More to Joan Slonczewski, and ‘major utopian works’ (9th c BC – 1987), from Hesiod to Ursula Le Guin (Morris, 2009, p. 309-314).

The complete list of the utopian literature might still be many times larger, and perhaps never exhaustive. Given the focus and the range of this diploma project, the author feels

a limited space to discuss all the works, albeit truly interesting ones, and intends to expose the outlines of *Utopia* by Tomas More, the writer who coined the term.

Although not depicting a perfect society, rather a radically improved one (Claeys, 2020, p. 53), Tomas More's '*Utopia*' undoubtedly exemplifies the term itself. Nevertheless, Tomas More originally named his imaginary island 'Nusquama', which is the Latin word for 'nowhere', 'in no place' or 'on no occasion' (Claeys, 2010, p. 4). Later he changed the title to *Utopia*, which is a pun on words *eutopia* (good or ideal place) and *utopia* (no place) (Claeys, 2020, p. 53). More's paragon of fictitious community could be considered either a place of greater morals and order, yet of human behaviour, which is believable (Clayes, 2020, p. 53) or perhaps only as a *social critique*, reflecting the author's perception of the farming reform in the then England (Claeys, 2020, p. 54). Be it as it may, despite the obvious social democratic system described in '*Utopia*', and its undeniable air of equality, crime, desire for luxury, idleness, imperialism, and war still entwines the fabric of the society in the land of '*Utopia*' and slavery remains its keystone of prosperity (Claeys, 2020, p. 59).

Unlike Plato, Thomas More suggests that an intelligent, devout, well-educated man of humble origins might be a more suitable ruler than a highborn one (Mitchell, 2022, p. 50). The very base of this utopian moneyless economy wholly dedicated to common ownership is a self-sufficient household unit which produces a surplus of all necessary items (Mitchell, 2022, p. 53). That said, despite its idyllic outline, *Utopia* was meant to be a place of constant surveillance, prohibition on free movement and draconian punishments for various social misdemeanours (Mitchell, 2022, p. 54). The death penalty was to be reserved only for those who attempted to usurp power whereas other crimes were to be punished mainly by slavery (Claeys, 2020, p. 57). It is apparent that a shadow of dystopia lurks even inside this quintessential philosophical treatise.

Sargisson claims that "Utopias will always fail. They need to. They are no places" (Sargisson, 2012, p. 39). Simultaneously, Jameson comes with a daring assertion that our imaginations are hostages to our manner of production, suggesting *Utopia* can be used as a negative viewpoint to make us realize that we are mentally and ideologically imprisoned (Jameson, 2005, xiii).

1.2 Dystopia

The word *Dystopia* originates from two Greek words *δυσ-* (bad) and *τόπος* (place) and is traditionally translated and understood as a place that is diseased or unfavourable (Claeys, 2018, p. 4). According to Norledge, the word was reportedly coined by John Stuart Mill during his speech in Hansard Commons in 1868 (Norledge, 2022, p. 1). In his address, Mill denounced Britain's treatment of Ireland in the times of Great Famine and labelled its exponents as 'cacotopians' or 'dys-topians' (Marks et al., 2022, p. 53). Nonetheless, the term dystopia seems to have firstly appeared in English as *dustopia* in 1747 (in Lewis Henry Young's poem 'Utopia: Apollo's Golden Days') (Rosenfeld, 2021, p. 75), meaning 'unhappy country', and wasn't much used until the late twentieth century (Marks et al., 2022, p. 53).

In a certain respect, people often have a propensity to perceive dystopia as a synonym for Apocalypse. Such a comparison is, however, fundamentally inaccurate. Firstly, the Greek words *ἀπό* and *καλύπτω* rendered as 'take away' and 'cover and hide' (MacKay Demerijan, 2016, p. 6), when merged into one word are apprehended as 'revelation'. Secondly, the concept of dystopia is strictly secular, whereas the conception of the latter is rooted in religious persuasion. The prospective reality that dystopia might result in an apocalypse, and vice versa, does not entitle us to use these two expressions imprecisely and interchangeably.

We likewise tend to comprehend dystopia as the antithesis of utopia, as a materialized living hell depicted in all possible vivid hues, although the better corresponding mental construct ought to be called "failed utopia of twentieth-century totalitarianism" (Claeys, 2018, p. 5) or "utopia that has gone wrong" (Gordon et al., 2010, p. 1) or just "utopia's shadow" (Vieira, 2013, p. 19). As the authors of "Utopia/Dystopia: Conditions of Historical Possibility" put it, 'A true opposite of utopia would be a society that is either completely unplanned or is planned to be deliberately terrifying and awful' (Gordon et al., 2010, p. 1). Marks and collective, citing Stockwell, mention that dystopia is not the opposite to utopia, but a displacement of our reality (cited in Marks et al., 2022, p. 53).

As utopia is meant to be a profane version of Eden, the opposing term dystopia, or cacotopia (used by the philosopher and the founder of utilitarianism, Jeremy Bentham) seems to be the genuine embodiment of evil (Claeys, 2018, p. 4). Claeys adds that dystopia may be an essence of utopia, rather than its negation (Claeys quoted in Vieira,

2013, p. 15). Sargent defines dystopia as “non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as considerably worse than the society in which the reader lived” (Sargent, 1994, p. 9). This description corresponds to Moylan’s and Baccolini’s assertion that the twentieth century catalogue of narratives came up with dystopian accounts depicting places “worse than we live in” (Moylan, Baccolini, 2003, p. 1).

The concept of dystopia can be, according to Claeys, branched off into three subcategories: *the political dystopia*, *the environmental dystopia*, and *the technological dystopia* (Claeys, 2018, p. 5). These three categories are understandably related and permeate one another – having human activity and behaviour and their impact on the environment as a unifying element. Luckily, the last two mentioned types, for the time being, belong to the realm of fiction, represented by a bulk of twenty-first-century climate change catastrophic literature. The titles like *Sharp North*, *Floodland* or *Exodus and Zenith* deal with social, cultural, political, and economic causes of mass flooding, human cloning, genetic engineering, global warning, and drastic changes in weather (Vieira, 2013, p. 41).

These doomsday scenarios yet may become reality shortly. Not only gave the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate our civilization 12 years to change our way we live, or the consequences of our current lifestyle would be unimaginable, but also issued reports on an alarming scale of mass extinction of species and global warming (Isomaa et al., 2020, p. 8). Our societies are changing dramatically too, owing to the rapid development of technologies. In China, a social credit system is being built, in which high technology combined with traditional forms of official records are used to oversee and judge activities of each citizen (Isomaa et al, 2020, p. 8). Nevertheless, this thesis will focus only on the political dystopia since the author is convinced that this type is the most relevant regarding the topic of the project.

Claiming that original natural state of human beings is constant mental anxiety (Claeys, 2018, p. 9), which might be thought of as a hothouse of dystopian contours, the author also mentions militarized societies (as aforementioned Sparta), slavery, despotism, prisons, mental asylums, and leper colonies as possible prototypes of dystopia (Claeys, 2018, p. 10–15). Dystopia, which manifests itself as ‘our collective fears processed in a nightmarish fantasy’, appears to be the price we pay for our technological advancement and convenience (MacKay Demerijan, 2016, p. 5).

The dominant impetus for the emergence of dystopia and dystopian thinking was, according to MacKay Demerijan, modernization, and industrialization of the cities of Europe and the USA, mechanization in food production, manufacturing, communication, and transportation (MacKay Demerijan, 2016, p. 7). The nineteenth century world expected a secular Messiah to come who would redress maladies that had arisen as a byproduct of the Industrial revolution. The Messiah should have appeared in a dual form: as science ending all poverty and as socialism ending all injustice. The twentieth century brought forth the ersatz Messiah instead: state dictatorship (Gottlieb, 2001, p. 5). That said, also corollaries of the two world wars, destruction of life in the countryside and environmental degradation created the milieu for dystopia to materialize (MacKay Demerijan, 2016, p. 8).

Another missing piece to the puzzle seems to be the appearance of ‘mass society’, a product of the mid-nineteenth century, propelled by technological progress and mass communications, later mainly in the form of social media and its sense of equality, loss of self, release of anxiety, rescission of responsibility and a notion of immortality (Claeys, 2016, p. 27). Such a society, if threatened, effortlessly tends to succumb to collective insanity which might pose a mortal danger to the system. The key to contain the masses and maintain the system is to give the hatred the right direction since ‘hatred of the enemy is the most powerful idea because it creates an atmosphere of general fear’ (Claeys, 2016, p. 17). Hatred, if used correctly, has a therapeutic effect, and creates bonds of fellow feeling (Claeys, 2016, p. 17). The crowd, with its extreme emotiveness, a proneness to delusion and a conspicuous tendency to be tricked by leaders with charisma, is one ancestor of the collectivist political dystopia (Claeys, 2016, p. 18).

1.3 Dystopia in literature

Dystopian literature situates itself in direct opposition to utopian thought, drawing our attention to its potential negative consequences and criticizes existing social conditions or political systems (Booker, 1995, p. 3). With that being said, according to Moylan and Baccolini, the concept of dystopia (and eutopia) cannot be confused with anti-utopia for anti-utopia, both in its fictional and expository forms, is directed against utopia and utopian thought (Moylan, Baccolini, 2003, p. 5), whilst eutopia and dystopia have “social dreaming”- a general mission of utopianism - in common, realising it in dissimilar

manifestation and quality: a perfect delusion or a faultless nightmare (Moylan, Baccolini, 2003, p. 5).

Dystopian literature is comprehended as a twentieth-century phenomenon: a response not only to the unrealized utopian visions of the past centuries but also as a response to the apprehension of present generations (Norledge, 2022, p. 3). Dystopia as an artistic genre has achieved symbolic cultural value as a representative of our fears and anxieties about the future (Stock, 2019, p. 14). Booker is confident that the vogue for dystopian fiction consists in perceived deficiencies in existent social and political systems, based either on bourgeois capitalism or communism (Booker, 1994, p. 27). We need to understand that even though dystopian narratives are political and politicised, they are rather cultural and ideological forms sharing fears and issues with political theory (Stock, 2019, p. 16). Dystopias express fears and draft worlds that people are afraid of becoming reality and provide warnings as well (Sargisson, 2012, p. 9). Modern dystopian belles-lettres often portray actions taking place in the future in order to retrospect the status quo of the present day (Stock, 2019, p. 13).

Dystopia as a literary genre is often conventional, easy to identify, and yet strangely enough difficult to define (Stock, 2019, p. 18). According to Moylan's suggestion, the term *dystopia* should be reserved for those narratives that despite depicting the grim scenarios uphold either implicit or explicit type of utopian hope – belief in the possible societal transformation (Moylan cited in Isomaa, 2020, xiii). Isomaa et al. understand dystopian fiction as an umbrella term; gathering thematically close genres that frequently become interwoven in individual artworks, pervading each medium (Isomaa et al., 2020, xi). Every genre, viewed by historical genre theory, is perceived as traditions of works that resemble each other in specific respects (Fowler cited in Isomaa et al., 2020, xii). These works can be recognized using the “generic repertoire” of the genre, forming a broadening pool of optional features which creates a reservoir for each work to select elements for its purposes (Isomaa et al., 2020, xii).

As narrative fictions, dystopias are structured around events (Stock, 2019, p. 19). In other words, as Baccolini notes, the text is built around the construction of a narrative {of the hegemonic order} and a counter-narrative {of resistance} (Baccolini cited in Moylan, 2000, p. 148). Such narratives typically open *in media res* within the disquieting version of a society the reader is familiar with. However, they do not allow the reader to experience the cognitive estrangement immediately since abnormalities are skilfully

camouflaged and revealed gradually (Moylan, 2000, p. 148). As the counter-narrative develops, the “dystopian protagonist” shifts from manifest contentment into growing alienation that leads to an event causing a climax resulting (or not) in a challenge to the society and its change (Moylan, 2000, p. 148).

The latter part of Moylan’s definition complies with the typical part of the English novel as genre – where interior self takes centre stage and a common man becomes a hero (Rosenfeld, 2021, p. 41). The protagonist/narrator experiences his or her society as dystopian and asks himself or herself a question “which world is this, and what place do I occupy within it?”. The protagonist’s desires and hopes bring him or her into the conflict with the dystopian establishment (Moylan, Baccolini, 2003, p. 205). Unlike in other prose, in dystopias, the tension between character and setting is amplified; at the level of plot, a character must rebel and prevail or fail to establish a stable space within his/her own environment (Rosenfeld, 2021, p. 42). This tension, being staged as plot, is significant for dystopian fictions: “the individual possesses interiority that is anomalous and intolerable within the dystopian world, while dystopian setting prevents individuals from moving freely within the world” (Rosenfeld, 2021, p. 42).

The narrator’s perspective is a distinctive sign in the genre since it documents the conflict between the world as the main character experiences it and the world which he or she pines for. The reader identifies him/herself with the narrator’s point of view and is drawn into the dystopian world (Moylan, Baccolini, 2003, p. 205). The main stylistic strategy that is used to express this discrepancy is called “defamiliarization”, a term coined by the Russian formalist Victor Shklovsky (Moylan, Baccolini, 2003, p. 206). Norledge concretizes three fundamental features that create specific estranging factors, typical for dystopia (and science fiction). Each of these three objects or concepts, prompting defamiliarization, is the key element that distinguishes the dystopian narrative from naturalistic or empiricist fiction (Suvin cited in Norledge, 2022, p. 17). These three categories that concern dystopian worlds are *Individual inventions or objects*, *Spatio-temporal locations*, and *Agents or/and relationships*. The first one presents futuristic objects, technological or scientific advancements having an impact upon a presented society. The second novum is characteristic for being temporally dissimilar from the real world of the reader as it is predominantly set in the future. The last category involves a range of unique characters, character types and relationships, particularly between groups (Norledge, 2022, p. 18).

Dystopian fiction emerged on the outskirts of mainstream literature, including titles like Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* (1915), Ayn Rand's *Anthem* (1938) or C. S. Lewis's *That Hideous Strength* (1945). These heterogeneous books often shared idiosyncratic cultural ambience of the dystopian imagery (Moylan, Baccolini, 2003, p. 1). However, the antecedents of dystopia as a literary genre can be traced back to the distant and more recent past, e.g., Aristophanes' *Parliament of Women* (BC 390) or Joseph Hall's *Mundum Alter et Idem* (1605) (Marks et al., 2022, p. 54). Later, after the World War II, more open dystopian tendency developed within the genre of science fiction, in works of Ray Bradbury, Frederik Pohl, C. M. Kornbluth and others (Moylan, Baccolini, 2023, p. 1). Booker mentions two aspects instigating this change: the technology central to Western utopian dreams that caused the advent of nuclear weapons, and Cold War hostilities between the USA and USSR which might have ended up in a nuclear Armageddon (Booker, 1994, p. 91).

With a short interruption of this trend in the 1960's and 1970's, when eutopian works re-emerged and critical utopia created a new form in popular culture, in the 1980's nihilistic imagination re-appeared as the utopian propensity in literature came to a sudden end (Moylan, Baccolini, 2023, p. 2). By 1984, Anglo-American societies and their popular imagination had revealed a discernible trend of re-introducing the dystopian genre. This tendency was launched mainly due to the anniversary of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which sparked a general interest in examining the artistic space within the dystopian narratives. Another impulse for this turn was publishing Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and republication of Katherine Burdekin's 1937 classic *Swastika Night* (Moylan, Baccolini, 2023, p. 3).

It is necessary to understand that apart from being an artistic genre, the importance of dystopian works not only lies in their social critique (Mackay Demerjian, 2016, p. 59) but they also serve as a hermeneutic tool to interpret the 20th century: these artworks mediate between past, present, and future (Stock, 2019, p. 15).

2 GEORGE ORWELL, HIS LIFE AND WORKS

Hardly would we find an educated adult in the contemporary world who falters at mentioning the name of George Orwell or does not know the epithet “Orwellian”, which is ordinarily used to describe an oppressive authoritarian form of a society. On the other hand, going into greater detail there would be probably just a few respondents knowing Orwell inside out so to say, and that is why the author of this diploma project intends to expose succinctly Orwell’s layered personality, his life, and his literary and journalistic career to the reader.

Eric Blair, which was George Orwell’s actual name, was born at Motihari in Bengal on 25 June 1903, five years after his sister Marjorie (Crick, 1981, p. 45). His father, Richard Walmesley Blair worked at the Opium Department of the Government of India, first as Assistant Sub-Deputy Opium Agent and later as Sub-Deputy Opium Agent. (Crick, 1981, p. 45–46). His mother, Ida Blair (née Ida Mabel Limouzin), was half French and half English, 18 years younger than Richard and came from relatively moneyed milieu (Crick, p. 1981, 47).

Sometime in 1904, Ida Blair took both children back to England, to have them brought up here, which was not an exceptional move among the British living in India (Crick, 1981, p. 48). They stayed in Henley-on-Thames, in South Oxfordshire, and lived on Mr Blair’s 600 rupees a month which amounted to approximately 440 pounds a year – well above the lower range middle-class income (Colls, 2013, p. 11). As a child, Eric was largely surrounded by women – his mother, two aunts and two sisters – and save the time when his father was on a home leave in 1908 (and his sister Avril was conceived), they virtually had no contact until Eric reached the age of nine, which negatively influenced their lifelong relationship (Rodden, 2020, p. 27). At the beginning of his essay “Why I Write” dated 1946, Orwell recalls: “I was the middle child of three, but there was a gap of five years on either side, and I barely saw my father before I was eight. For this and other reasons I was somewhat lonely, and I soon developed disagreeable mannerisms [...] the lonely child’s habit of making up stories and holding conversations with imaginary persons” (Orwell, 2000, p. 28).

Eric seems to have been an ailing baby, having suffered from poor health since his early childhood. He must have been approximately two years old when his mother took a note in her diary on 6 February that “Baby not at all well, so I sent for the doctor who said that

he had bronchitis” (Crick, 1981, p. 49). Bronchitis vexed him repeatedly and presaged the lung disease that would trouble him for the rest of his life and kill him in the end (Rodden, 2020, p. 27).

Between years 1908 and 1911 Eric attended a day school run by French Ursuline nuns (Rodden, 2020, p. 28). Attending a Catholic convent, primarily intended for girls, might have formed his constant hostility towards Roman Catholicism, an acute sense of guilt, his complicated attitude towards women and his tendency to self-mortification (Bowker, 2004, p. 22). Having failed in fitting in among his older sister’s friends, Eric struck up a friendship with a plumber’s family and their children, living nearby. His mother, having learned of Eric’s relationship, intervened immediately and explicated impropriety and sinfulness of such contacts to him, teaching him that plumber’s children are common and the lower classes smell (Bowker, 2004, p. 23). As a result of this lesson, Orwell never ceased to fear manual workers and grudged approaching them too close, even though later in his life he would force himself to do it (Colls, 2013, p. 12).

At the age of 8, in 1911, Eric won a scholarship to a boy’s private boarding school in Eastbourne, Sussex (Colls, 2013, p. 12). St. Cyprian’s was a preparatory institution specialized in gaining its pupils’ admissions into the most prestigious public schools in England (Rodden, 2020, p. 28), especially for Eton, Harrow, Wellington, and Winchester (Bowker, 2004, p. 31). Although the school fee of 180 pounds a year was beyond Eric’s family means, his potential and Anglo-Indian origin impressed the head of the school, Mr. Vaughan Wilkes, and convinced him to cut the tuition in half (Bowker, 2004, p. 30). For “lower-upper”, as Orwell called the social class his family belonged to, was the education an investment and a mark of status for without family patronage it was not just the “ladder of advancement” but also a chance to stay in the same place of the social hierarchy (Crick, 1981, p. 58). Despite all the lavishness and snobbery of the place, Eric felt dejected at St. Cyprian’s for a plethora of reasons: sour porridge, tepid baths, punishments for repeated bed-wetting (as reported by Eric himself in the essay “Such such were the joys”) but most of all he was unhappy because of St. Cyprian’s being a totalitarian institution (Colls, 2013, p. 12). He was humiliated and beaten three times in public (Bowker, 2004, p. 33). The school, stuck to rigid lines and daily rituals, chiefly encouraged character, respectively ascetism, self-sacrifice, duty, public service and playing the game, through putting emphasis on sport, military training, reinforcing manfulness by moral sermonising, shaming and beatings (Bowker, 2004, p. 32).

After receiving a general education at St Cyprian's, Eric earned a scholarship to attend Wellington College (Rodden, 2020, p. 28) and spent nine weeks of the first term of 1917 there (Crick, 1981, p. 96). He deemed the militaristic spirit of this famous army school repulsive (Crick, 1981, p. 96). Wellington was a tough school with a highly spartan regime, where beatings were common (Bowker, 2004, p. 52), so when a letter came from Eton, telling his father that there was a room for Eric, he forthwith accepted (Crick, 1981, p. 97). It was a moment when the mask of Eric's inner revolting spirit, so well repressed at St Cyprian's, was taken off (Bowker, 2004, p. 53). Blair, then known as "the young cynic", targeted his rebellion at every possible icon that he used to be surrounded by – Sussex, Kipling, God, and Empire (Bowker, 2004, p. 53). Denys King Farlow, a member of the same Election, also remembered Blair's repeated disparaging of his parents in front of his classmates (Crick, 1981, p. 102).

After Eton, where he spent his four years just getting by, never really applying himself academically (Quinn, 2009, p. 3), unlike other boys who usually went to university or into one of the professions, Eric joined the Imperial Police (Colls, 2013, p. 15). Serving the Empire offered him a faint imitation of war service in uniform abroad, an adventure which was denied to him by history (Bowker, 2004, p. 70). However, before joining he was to spend six months working hard at a "cramming school" in Southwold, where he was preparing for several papers of the India Office's examinations (Crick, 1981, p. 139). In August 1922, Eric learned that he had passed the exams, being best in English and French, and best of all in Greek and moved to London (Bowker, 2004, p. 73). The list of his preferred placement began with Burma, followed by United Provinces, Bombay, Madras and ended with the Punjab (Crick, 1981, p. 141). He put Burma first because of his family ties from the mother's side and United Provinces second, because his father spent there some years (Bowker, 2004, p. 73). In the end, Probationary Assistant Superintendent Blair spent his five years of service (1922–1927) in Burma, where he was one of only 90 officers overseeing a nation of Burmese across 260,000 square miles (Rodden, 2020, p. 29).

Eric was responsible for the discipline and inspection of a police force (Colls, 2013, p. 21) and was not ready for the hostility that greeted him as a member of the Imperial Police (Quinn, 2009, p. 8). Despite his excellent pay, Blair soon realized that he abhorred being a servant of Empire (Rodden, 2020, p. 31). His later writings, e.g., his short prose works "A Hanging" (1931) and "Shooting an Elephant" (1936) reveal day-to-day depravities of

the British officer class under imperialism (Rodden, 2020, p. 31). Eric's sojourn in Burma brought about a dramatic change in his worldview and changed him for good: he had become a realist, having discovered his dark side and his capability to commit violence (Bowker, 2004, p. 95). Haunted by the faces of men he had beaten or watched hang (Bowker, 2004, p. 95), at the end of his Burmese days his hatred of imperialism changed into general critique of autocracy of any kind and his strong psychological distrust of authority of any kind had fully developed (Crick, 1981, p. 174).

In July 1927, Blair contracted dengue fever, and returned to England, never to set foot on Burmese soil again. (Rodden, 2020, p. 32). To his parents' complete astonishment, he had decided to resign from the Service and had embarked on a new career as a writer (Crick, 1981, p. 176). Yet, there was a much worse announcement to come for the Blairs – a respectable lower-upper-middle class family (in Eric's own words): he had been determined to explore “tramping” to experience the lives of people on the bottom rung of society (Quinn, 2009, p. 10). In the spring of 1928, he moved to Paris to join the company of other men and women who hurtled there in search of literary fame (Rodden, 2020, p. 33). Eric stayed in Paris for about a year and a half and wrote novels and short stories which nobody would publish (Crick, 1981, p. 176). Despite his initial failure as a professional writer, his first articles began to appear in left wing weeklies *Monde* (one article on censorship and one on John Galsworthy) and *Le Progrès Civique* (on unemployment in England, a day in the life of a tramp London Beggars and British Burma), between October 1928 and May 1929 (Bowker, 2004, p. 109). Blair wrote a lot in Paris but earned a little (Crick, 181, p. 186). Having run out of his money, he fell into severe poverty, so he had to work as a dishwasher, a private tutor, and a teacher in cheap private schools (Crick, 1981, p. 176). Staying in a cheap unheated hotel room affected his health, so that he ended up in Hôpital Cochin suffering from a bad case of bronchitis (Bowker, 2004, p. 110). These two fearful weeks were later to be remembered through his essay “*How the Poor Die*” (1946) (Rodden, 2020, p. 33).

Blair returned to his parents' home before Christmas 1930 to stay there intermittently for next four years and went on writing (Rodden, 2020, p. 33). In England, it was difficult for a writer to live by his craft, so as well as a plethora of other authors like Aldous Huxley, Christopher Hollis or Graham Greene, Blair took to teaching (Bowker, 2004, p. 134-135). First, in April 1932, he taught at a boys' school in Hayes, Middlesex, called The Hawthorns and then, in the autumn of 1933, he conducted French classes at Frays, a

small college in Middlesex (Rodden, 2020, p. 33-34). Most of the time, he was working on a semifictional account of his Paris and London adventures, later known as *Down and Out in Paris and London*, published in 1933 (after certain modifications regarding the content and the title of the work – see Bowker, 137, p. 142) by the left-wing publisher Victor Gollancz, under the pseudonym of George Orwell (Rodden, 2020, p. 34). He picked his nom de plume out of four other pen names: P.S. Burton, Kenneth Miles, George Orwell, and H. Lewis Allways (Bowker, 2004, p. 142). Rodden claims that Blair adopted this alias since he disliked his first name and because he wanted to spare his family embarrassment. (Rodden, 2020, p. 34). However, Bowker casts doubt on Rodden’s assertion and states that Orwell always tended to conceal his true identity behind a pseudonym – Blair used a false name as a boy to write joke letters to an advertiser, and when he wrote ephemerals at Eton or slummed among the down-and-outs. Moreover, in all his novels the theme of *double life* is central (Bowker, 2004, p. 142). There is also no consensus as to why Blair chose George Orwell as his incognito. It is said that he hand-picked this pseudonym because George was the name of the patron saint of England and Orwell was both a river in East Anglia and a small rural parish in Cambridgeshire (Quinn, 2009, p. 11). On the other hand, according to Bowker, the origin of “George Orwell” is uncertain – contending that Orwell might have adopted the name George because of his father’s habit of applying it to casual acquaintances (Bowker, 2004, p. 142).

Even though *Down and Out* was a lacklustre success, it convinced Orwell to become a full-time writer (Rodden, 2020, p. 34). In October 1934, Orwell moved to London to take up a position of a part-time clerk in Booklover’s Corner (Quinn, 2009, p. 12). The same month also marked the publication of Orwell’s novel *Burmese Days* – an attack on the moral decadence and injustice of the British raj (Bowker, 2004, p. 156). His sixteen months at Booklover’s Corner, a second hand shop owned by a couple active in the Independent Labour Party, witnessed several significant developments in Orwell’s life: he met his future wife, Eileen O’Shaughnessy, wrote his novel *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* and received an assignment from Gollancz to write a book about poverty in northern England; a novel that would gain him more credit than any of his previous literary efforts (Rodden, 2020, p. 35).

Eileen Maud O’Shaughnessy completed her course in psychology at University College in London and became George Orwell’s wife on June 9, 1936 (Quinn, 2009, p. 13). Moving in a modest two-storey house in Wallington, Hertfordshire, was more satisfying

for Orwell's perverse penchant for ascetic living, as Quinn calls it. His wife showed their disagreement over the condition of their new home (the roof leaking in many places, the privy located too far from the house) in one of her letters, explaining cynically: "I lost my habit of punctual correspondence during the first weeks of marriage because we quarrelled so continuously and really bitterly that I thought I'd save and just write one letter to everyone when the murder or separation had been accomplished." (Quinn, 2009, p. 14). Nonetheless, George Gorer, one of Orwell's friends claimed that he had never known him so happy as he was during the first year of marriage to Eileen (Bowker, 2004, p. 190). Yet despite hating to leave Eileen alone for any length of time (Bowker, 2004, p. 181), Orwell was to spend February through March 1936 travelling through the north of England, mapping labour conditions and interviewing the unemployed, mainly around the town of Wigan (Rodden, 2020, p. 36). On returning home, Orwell wrote a prose documentary, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, revealing his talent for sociological analysis and vivid descriptions (Rodden, 2020, p. 36). In *The Road*, Orwell avoids Dickensian relish in characterisation; he seeks neither literature nor amusement but to illuminate certain hidden areas of life and provide teach-yourself poverty course (Reilly, 1986, p. 133). Despite the first part of the book being a documentary account, Orwell sets out on the path of the critique of the English class system and English socialism in the latter (Bowker, 2004, p. 191). In any case, the book became a milestone in his career and life for two reasons: For the very first time Orwell received wide recognition and clearly realized that he was becoming a socialist (Rodden, 2020, p. 36).

The outbreak of the Spanish Civil War on July 19, 1936, was to prove the fundamental political experience of George Orwell's life (Colls, 2013, p. 72). Orwell's political epiphany occurred when he went to Spain through the Independent Labour Party, and not through the Communist party, which was the usual route (Williams, 2017, p. 26). In fact, Orwell was not allowed to join the International Brigade by the leader of the Communist Party of Great Britain, Harry Pollitt, due to his alleged political unreliability (Rodden, 2020, p. 37). From the outset, Orwell and his wife felt they ought to go to Spain to help the Republican case (Bowker, 2004, p. 192). Arriving in Barcelona, in December 1936, Orwell was struck with euphoria as he finally set foot in a town where the working class was in the saddle (Quinn, 2009, p. 15). He shortly joined *PARTIDO OBRERO DE UNIFICACION MARXISTA* (POUM), a unique Spanish blend of anarchism and Trotskyism (Rodden, 2020, p. 37) and spent six months (Rodden claims that it was nearly

seven, see p. 37) mainly on the Aragon front with eighty men and assorted dogs (Colls, 2013, p. 73). As POUM leaders learned of his experience as a policeman, Orwell got promoted to corporal (or ‘cabo’), to spend 80 days with the 29th Division at the front, afflicted with cold, the smell of latrines and equipped with pre-World War I era weaponry (Rodden, 2020, p. 37). Eileen arrived in Spain in mid-February to be close to her husband and to take up a position at ILP office in Barcelona to find him, among other things, “looking really very well” (Rodden, 2020, p. 38). On returning to Barcelona to visit his wife and to fight on the front in Madrid, Orwell ascertained to his surprise that the POUM was branded “Franco’s Fifth Column” and declared an agent of fascists (Rodden, 2020, p. 38-39). The Communist Press was attacking the members of POUM as “Fascist plotters” and even some of them were being arrested (Bowker, 2004, p. 223). It is obvious that Orwell entered the war with naivety and little idea of how complex the political situation in Spain was and became dumbfounded when he had found out that the government did not share the POUM’s goal of the emergence of a socialist state – resulting in his fleeing from Spain to escape imprisonment or even possible death (Becnel, 2011, p. 116).

On June 23, Orwell and his wife left Barcelona by train to travel to the French Mediterranean coast, where Orwell began preparing his account of the Stalinist treachery in Catalonia (Rodden, 2020, p. 39). Orwell believed that the antifascist revolution was betrayed by the Communists to divert the attention from the purges in Stalin’s Russia and to weaken the West (Rodden, 2020, p. 40). Once he was back in England, his anger at the English press that kept misrepresenting facts from the Spanish Civil War had intensified even more, especially when his article “Eyewitness in Barcelona” was rejected by Kingsley Martin, editor of the respectable left-wing periodical *New Statesman and Nation* (Quinn, 2009, p. 17). The reason given for rejection was political unacceptability of Orwell’s message (Rodden, 2020, p. 40). At this point, however, it is necessary to point out that the first disillusionment with the British press still happened in Spain, where he saw newspaper reports, which did not bear any relation to the facts (Bowker, 2004, p. 227). Yet another blow came when Gollancz rejected publishing of his account of the Spanish Civil War entitled *Homage to Catalonia*, to be later published by Secker & Warburg in April 1938 (Quinn, 2009, p. 17). Thematically, the book is concerned with the private experience of war, the role of the press in war and the move from innocence to experience (Becnel, 2011, p. 120), and even though it was a commercial failure, selling

only 867 copies, it remains a moving document of Orwell's transformation into an outspoken anti-Communist (Rodden, 2020, p. 41).

Orwell was diagnosed with TB in 1938 (Colls, 2013, p. 109) and in late September he and his wife sailed to Marrakech, Morocco, hoping the mild climate would have a positive effect on his weakened health (Rodden, 2020, p. 42). There he began work on his new novel *Coming up for Air* and finished it in April 1938 when they returned to England (Quinn, 2019, p. 18). Unfortunately, the novel failed to attract much attention since it appeared in mid-June 1939 when Europe stood on the threshold of a new war (Rodden, 2020, p. 43). Despite this claim, Quinn states that it had a brief flurry of popular as well as critical success (Quinn, 2019, p. 18). On the other hand, according to Crick, some find *Coming up for Air* to be Orwell's best novel, filled with subtle and implicit hope to lie in common people and explicit and deliberately overdrawn pessimism. However, it was a novel of warning, not of absolute pessimism (Crick, 1981, p. 372). Despite this negativity reflecting Orwell's conviction that a major war was inevitable, and although he certainly took an anti-war stance for several months in 1938-1939, when World War II was about to break out, he became an English patriot fascinated by the possibility that this war would overthrow the Empire and British imperialism to be replaced by democratic socialism (Rodden, 2020, p. 43).

Orwell endeavoured to enlist in the army but was turned away due to his poor health, so the Blairs decided to move to London, where Eileen would put out the lights, open the windows and watch the happenings in the street during the air raids (Quinn, 2019, p. 19). Eileen took a job at the Censorship Department of The War Office in Whitehall while Orwell was trying again and again to be recruited but to no avail (Rodden, 2020, p. 44). Eileen commuted to and from Greenwich every day, and to Wallington at weekends, whereas Orwell remained in Wallington, tending his garden, and completing his essay collection (Bowker, 2004, p. 256). The said collection *Inside the Whale*, published on March 11, 1940, was well received, and revealed his critical powers (Crick, 1981, p. 384). The spring and summer of 1940 marked a significant change for Orwell. Closing up his house in Wallington and moving to a new home in Dorset Gardens, he began reviewing plays and films for the middle-class magazine *Time and Tide* (Rodden, 2020, p. 45).

On June 25, 1941, Orwell was offered a job as a broadcaster to India by the BBC (Rodden, 2020, p. 46). It was his first proper job since the Imperial police, and as well paid (Colls, 2013, p. 145). He spent over two years writing, producing, and often reading reports and

commentaries on the war for listeners in India and Southeast Asia (Quinn, 2019, p. 20). Orwell later described this experience as “two wasted years”. However, this daily job introduced him to the mechanics of propaganda, bureaucracy, censorship, and mass media as well as spending hours ruminating on the war, politics, totalitarianism, and literature geared him up for his two great works of fiction and his best essays (Lynskey, 2019, p. 82). On November 24, 1943, Orwell resigned from the BBC to become literary editor of *Tribune* (Rodden, 2020, p. 47). His weekly column there was titled “As I Please”, included short, informal essays on any subject that interested him (Quinn, 2019, p. 21). In any case, the year 1943 was to bring several changes in Orwell’s life: Orwell’s mother Ida died of heart attack (Quinn, 2019, p. 21) and Orwell and Eileen adopted a three-week-old boy whom they named Richard Horatio Blair (Rodden, 2020, p. 48).

Early in 1945, when the war was coming to an end, Orwell became a correspondent for the *Manchester Evening News* and *Observer* (Quinn, 2019, p. 21). While reporting on wartime events in France and Allied-occupied Germany, Orwell learned about Eileen’s unexpected death which occurred during a routine surgery (Rodden, 2020, p. 49). With her death a deep sense of loneliness seized Orwell (Bowker, 2004, p. 329). As usual, he buried himself in work, travelling back to Europe, visiting Paris again, Stuttgart, Nuremberg, and Austria, witnessing the devastation caused by war that moved him to horror and pity (Lynskey, 2019, p. 132). On August 17, 1945, Secker & Warburg published *Animal Farm*, which met with an incredible success, selling 140,000 copies in Britain until the end of the year (Rodden, 2020, p. 49). However, it took him almost seven years to complete the book, having carried the idea of an animal revolution since his return from Spain in 1937 (Bowker, 2004, p. 308). Orwell acknowledged Eileen’s influence on *Animal Farm*, “her fondness for it and her help with the planning of it” (Bowker, 2004, p. 308). A year after publication in Britain, it became a bestseller in the United States, chosen as the Book-of-the-Month selection for September 1946 (Rodden, 2020, p. 49). *Animal Farm* sold a half-million copies in the USA alone, which secured him financially for the rest of his life (Rodden, 2020, p. 50). This must have been a joyous satisfaction to Orwell because the book had been initially rejected by five English publishers (including a T.S. Eliot’s firm, Faber & Faber) and fifteen publishers in the United States (Quinn, 2019, p. 22).

Unhappily, Orwell’s tuberculosis flared up again, in a much more serious form this time (Rodden, 2020, p. 50). His addiction to foul tobacco and his affection for damp, cold,

leaky places had significantly affected his health (Quinn, 2019, p. 24). In 1946, Orwell, his son Richard and Susan Watson the nanny, moved house to Barnhill, on the Scottish island of Jura in the Inner Hebrides (Colls, 2013, p. 203). Nonetheless, Orwell's health continued to deteriorate, spending seven months in Hairmyres Hospital near Glasgow with a bout of tuberculosis and eight months in the Cotswold Sanatorium with a bout even worse than the previous one, to recuperate (Rodden, 2020, p. 50). From April to December 1947, Orwell was working on his first draft of a book which he called "The Last Man in Europe" to become an immediate best-seller and critical success when published in June 1949 under a new title *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (Colls, 2013, p. 203). In the USA, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was the Book-of-the-Month Club choice for July and received enthusiastic reviews, comparing Orwell to literary giants as Swift, Dostoyevsky, Shaw, or Wells (Rodden, 2020, p. 50). Since Eileen's death he had been searching for a wife – someone who would rejuvenate him (Rodden, 2020, p. 50). Orwell felt that marriage to a young vigorous woman would help to keep him alive (Quinn, 2019, p. 27). After proposing to other four young women, he got married to Sonia Brownell on October 13, 1949 (Rodden, 2020, p. 51). However, Sonia probably came too late to have any influence on his intellectual life (Colls, 2013, p. 204). In any case, Orwell did not pass on as he once feared he might – stricken by poverty in a public place. He died a moneyed man in a private ward of University College Hospital (Bowker, 2004, p. 413). Orwell got lungs' haemorrhage and died at once and alone before Sonia had been informed (Crick, 1981, p. 579). Even though Orwell passed away at the age of 46 not being able to augment the number of his literary works, his legacy has outlived him for incomparably longer time than expected and has lost none of his original brilliance and timeless, prophetic warning. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* remains the book we turn to when truth is mutilated, language is distorted, and power is abused (Lynskey, 2019, xiii).

3 NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

It took Orwell more than two years to finish his last novel and he must have written it with the knowledge he might not produce another one (Hynes, 1971, p. 14). The publishers were preparing the book with extreme urgency since Orwell's health was deteriorating rapidly and he was to be alive to read and correct the proofs (Warburg, 1973, p. 106). At the end of the creative process, he thought that his malady had permeated his book and had spoiled it (Hynes, 1971, p. 14). Orwell is claimed to have said that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* wouldn't have been so gloomy if he had not been so ill (Lynskey, 2019, p. 145). This assertion, however, can only be a matter of speculation and as Lynskey goes on to disprove Orwell's words, his own statement is getting cracks. At the end of 1945, *Tribune* published Orwell's article called "Old George Almanac", which was full of dark prophecies for the next year: economic disaster, resurgent fascism, civil wars, bomb outrages, public executions, famines, epidemics, and religious revivals (Lynskey, 2019, p. 145). Other authors have advanced an argument about the darkness of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* based on Orwell's excellent essay "Such, such were the joys" that covers the horrors of his early school years (Rodden, Rossi, 2012, p. 81). According to Bowker, the young Eric Blair waiting outside Sambo's study is only the juvenile version of Winston Smith waiting to be cited to Room 101 (Bowker, 2004, p. 371). Herbert Read, the art historian, poet, critic, and philosopher called Orwell "A gloomy bird" after having had lunch with him sometime in 1946 (Lynskey, 2019, p. 145). It was the same Hebert Read who would later – at the end of the 1950's – predict that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* would rank as Orwell's greatest work (Taylor, 2019, p. 141). Orwell's gloominess seems to have been more of a permanent feature of his, although worsening bouts of tuberculosis and prolonged hospitalizations in the final part of his life could only have exacerbated the trait. In any case, Orwell was not the only author who could be labelled as "gloomy" having had his work published in the year of 1949. There were seven dystopias among the 22 utopian texts coming out that year, reflecting the dreary spirit of the time (Marks et al., 2022, p. 12).

Orwell's last novel has probably become a truly significant part of the vocabulary and imagination of the Western culture, with phrases like "Thought Police", "doublethink" or "The Big Brother is watching you" that remained etched on memory even of those who have never read the book (Booker, 1994, p. 69). Besides its unquestionable popularity

among readers, it has also become a box-office hit, probably outselling – with its precursor *Animal Farm* – all the rest of utopian and dystopian titles ever written put together (Claeys, 2017, p. 391). On the other hand, even though Orwell certainly was an original thinker, he also drew on from certain areas of literature (mainly being intrigued by its utopian branch). Among the sources he drew inspiration from we can find, e.g., Jack London's *The Iron Heel*, H.G. Wells's novels, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* or Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* (Rodden, Rossi, 2012, p. 80). According to Patai, also many features that can be found in *Swastika Night* by Katharine Burdekin are oddly transformed in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (Patai, 1984, p. 256). Isaac Deutscher, the Marxist biographer, in connection to the Zamyatin's novel even accused Orwell of plagiarism (Quinn, 2009, p. 233). Either way, to make the list of the sources of inspiration complete, we must not forget to mention the work of James Burnham, an American philosopher and political theorist, namely his publication of *The Managerial Revolution*, depicting the future where a new ruling class, "the managers", prone to become totalitarian, was coming into existence (Quinn, 2009, p. 233).

The novel *Nineteen EightyFour* is divided into three similarly long parts. The first part describes the central character, Winston Smith, and defines his place in the regimented, oppressive world; the second part describes his friendship and love affair with Julia and transformation of Winston's life; the final part reveals his imprisonment, torture at the hands of the Thought Police and the breakdown of his intellectual integrity (Hammond, 1982, p. 170). Although the plot of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* seems to be disarmingly simple: a personal rebellion intertwined with a love story to be crushed by state persecution (Stock, 2019, p. 198), it offers an abundance of interpretations and upon closer, attentive reading, it reveals unexpected connections and overlaps.

Part One, in addition to introducing Winston (and his femme fatale, Julia), outlines a terrifying picture of the community kept under incessant surveillance through *the telescreen* installed in every living room, a spy tool of the *Thought Police* that is employed to supervise words, gestures, expressions and thoughts of each member of the Party (Warburg, 1973, p. 104). The reader is introduced to *Newspeak* – the language devised to forestall the members from thinking, *Big Brother* (whose gigantic face is to be seen on every placard), *doublethink* which is the formula for absolute political hypocrisy, *Victory Gin* – a synthetic alcohol to lubricate the misery of the citizens and the *Ministry of Truth* with its mind-twisting slogan: *War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, Ignorance is Strength*

(Warburg, 1973, p. 104), which is in charge of news, entertainment and education; the *Ministry of Peace*, which conducts war; the *Ministry of Love*, in charge of law and order; and finally the *Ministry of Plenty*, dealing with the economy (Quinn, 2009, p. 235). The *Two Minutes Hate* – an everyday brainwashing assembly of the Party members – is impossible to avoid joining, although the participation is not obliged (Orwell, 2011, p. 30). The reader also becomes familiar with the fact that even owning a diary, let alone writing one is a *Thoughtcrime* punishable by death or a long prison term (Orwell, 2011, p. 19).

Part Two reveals the plot itself – Winston falls in love with Julia, which itself is considered heretical and illegal. Plotting a rebellion together, they contact O’Brien, a presumed co-insurgent, to be given *the book* of Emmanuel Goldstein – “The Principles of Oligarchical Collectivism (Warburg, 1973, p. 105). According to Hynes, Goldstein is a Trotsky-like dissenting intellectual (Big Brother looks like Stalin and the purges, trials and terror in the book resembles those that engulfed Russia in the 1930’s) (Hynes, 1970, p. 17).

In Part Three, Orwell unleashes his sadism and its attendant masochism, culminating in the scene, when Winston threatened by hungry rats implores his torturer to throw Julie to the rats instead of him – this betrayal of all that is noble in man leaves Winston broken (Warburg, 1973, p. 105).

Winston Smith – the main character, a civil servant at Ministry of Truth, and Party member in the English totalitarian state called Airstrip Nr. 1, an important province of Oceania, gnawed away at political doubts, taking part in tacit rebellion, discovered after a short and touching period of happiness with a girl member of the Party is eventually horribly “rehabilitated” - Winston (and basically everyone who rebels against the system) is “saved” for the life not worth living; sentenced to a lifeless life instead of death (Pritchett cited in Hynes, 1970, p. 30), which seems to be a standard capital punishment in most real or fictitious totalitarian regimes. Winston Smith, Orwell’s anti-hero, is weak, whimsical, forgetful and unappealing, and like most of Orwell’s male characters, is despondent and embodies failure (Claeys, 2017, p. 391).

The party which rules the dystopian Oceania in Orwell’s book makes no claims to strive to save humanity or to enhance the quality of human life (Booker, 1995, p. 208). Unlike the major 20th-century dystopian novels, depicting societies dominated by reason,

eugenics, and the production process, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* presents a vision of the immediate future in which no moral justification is offered for the control exercised by the Party (Saunders, 2008, p. 220). Similarly, to Zamyatin's *One State* and Huxley's *World State*, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* operates with a twofold dream about the new Messiah, being the incarnation of science and socialism, except that this dream was betrayed by those who had usurped the power in its name (Gottlieb, 2001, p. 78).

Nineteen Eighty-Four represents the culmination of the author's development as a socialist with certain sympathies for anarchism, after having taken an active part in the Spanish Civil War and becoming a convinced anti-Stalinist (Marks et al., 2022, p. 58). The book takes its energy from being able to look back on the worst horrors of the Stalin's years, side glancing at Hitler too (Booker, 1994, p. 69). According to Burgess, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is one of the few dystopian visions to have changed men's habit of thought (Burgess, 1970, p. 43). It is a symphony of a political message and artistic dynamism (Saunders, 2008, p. 37); a novel about the future, in a sense a fantasy but in the naturalistic form – a book crowded with disgust and fear (Reilly, 1986, p. 269). In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell tries to picture a full-scale assault on truth by a government concentrated on controlling thought and language up to that point where a dissident thought would become virtually inconceivable (Quinn, 2009, p. 231). His book is a novel draped in the blackest black, with its power lying mainly in its ability to lure the reader into the world defined by paranoia, oppression, fear, and pain (Claeys, 2017, p. 390–391). *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is also the death certificate of Renaissance man; the past is unchangeable, truth is objective, words have fixed meanings – all these propositions are absolutely denied here (Reilly, 1986, p. 270). The weight of constant surveillance (and overall gloomy atmosphere) is best captured by Winston's own words: "Always the eyes watching you and the voice enveloping you. Asleep or awake, working or eating indoors or out of doors, in the bath or in bed – no escape. *Nothing was your own except the few cubic centimetres inside your skull*" (Orwell, 2011, p. 50). In contrast, Claeys somewhat relativizes the predominantly negative tone of Orwell's last work, stating that if someone were to read the book in the USSR in 1949, then they would probably get the impression that the characters in the novel inhabit a better world than the reader, and therefore the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* could not be – viewed from this perspective – considered a dystopia (Claeys, 2017, p. 271).

On the other hand, Claeys, examining the interpretation of Orwell's cardinal work through the lens of its reception history, states that despite the plot's straightforwardness, the narrative leaves us with various problems (Claeys, 2017, p. 421). Claeys claims that the central theme of the book is the fragility of memory (Claeys, 2017, p. 413). According to Pritchett, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a satirical pamphlet (cited in Hynes, 1970, p. 22); it might be viewed as "an account of present hysteria, a satire on propaganda, a world that sees itself entirely in inhuman terms" (cited in Hynes, 1970, p. 23-24). Trilling considers *Nineteen Eighty-Fours* "a profound, terrifying, and wholly fascinating book (cited in Hynes, 1970, p. 25), whose essence is the exposition of the mystique of power (cited in Hynes, 1970, p. 26). Deutscher claims that the novel served as an ideological superweapon during the Cold war, adding that no other book has ever reflected and focused on "the convulsive fear of communism" as *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (cited in Hynes, 1970, p. 29). Deutscher also zeroes in a literary value of the novel, criticising its fear-ridden and restricted imagination (cited in Hynes, 1970, p. 30). Warburg, Orwell's publisher, categorizes the novel among the most terrifying books that he has ever read, describing Orwell as a successor to Swift, "who looks upon life and finds it becoming ever more intolerable" (Warburg, 1973, p. 103). Surprisingly, Warburg initially considered Orwell's description of Ingsoc as "a deliberate and sadistic attack on socialism and social parties generally", later to claim that it was not Orwell's intention (Warburg, 1973, p. 106). Strachey claims that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is not as good a political work as *Animal Farm* because it is too much overt; describing a nightmare which Orwell wished to avert, his efforts having resulted in the most intolerable of all pessimistic, inverted Utopias (cited in Hynes, 1970, p. 56). Both the left-wing, more accurately Stalinists and the right-wing commentators of the novel have agreed that Orwell was not a socialist (whom he used to claim to be) (Claeys, 2017, p. 423). A complete overview of all opinions, commentaries, critiques, and interpretations on *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is not possible for obvious reasons.

Naturally, due to the time of the publication of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* – at the very beginning of the Cold War, the interpretations have always been (and perhaps will always be) highly politicized (Claeys, 2017, p. 421). And not only politicized – even the highest political circles of the world have showed their affection for this unusual vogue, a literary comet called *Nineteen Eighty-Four* – In 1953, for example, Doctor Lord Moran found P.M. Winston Churchill absorbed in the book, reading it for the second time back then

(Taylor, 2019, p. 124). However, in defiance of the contradictory literary critique and various interpretations of the story line, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* remains a raised finger in the form of a timeless novel in the first place, a politicized novel if you wish, and/or a classic dystopia which asserts “militant pessimism” (Moylan, 2000, p.162).

Nonetheless, as with any exceptional work of art, Orwell’s last novel has not escaped attempts at adaptation in other artistic forms. On December 12, 1954, more than seven million British citizens watched the BBC’s two-hour adaptation of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the largest television audience since the coronation of Queen Elisabeth II (Lynskey, 2019, p. 189). Hundreds of viewers complained the BBC about the enormous amount of violence, and The Daily Express’s coverage was headlined “Million NIGHTMARES” (Lynskey, 2019, p. 190). In 1956, Michael Anderson adapted the book into a film, with Edmond O’ Brien as Winston, and Jan Sterling as Julia. Anderson changed the ending, when Winston and Julia are both gunned down crying “Down with Big Brother”. Sonia, Orwell’s second wife was so infuriated with the change, so she had refused to attend the premiere (Lynskey, 2019, p. 202). David Bowie’s tour in 1973, including concerts in USSR, rendered Bowie’s paranoia and panic, which ended up in writing a rock musical based on *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (Lynskey, 2019, p. 213). Taylor states that Bowie’s obsession by Orwell can be tracked at least to his highly dystopian opus “Cygnet Committee” (Taylor, 2019, p. 154). Unfortunately, Bowie never finished the rock musical since he was not given a permission by The Orwell Estate (Taylor, 2019, p.155). *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has naturally resonated far beyond pop music. Rock bands identified the novel as the rallying cry for the counterculture, with John Lennon crying “We don’t want no Big Brother scene” on “Only People” (Lynskey, 2019, p. 215). New brands of punk and New Wave music from London to Los Angeles considered Orwell a natural ally (Taylor, 2019, p. 155).

Adaptations of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, whether in film, radio, theatre, music or those that in some way connect to the literary or comic form of work, have emerged in countless numbers, and it is not possible to delve into them in detail within the scope of this thesis. Not only does the popularity of Orwell’s original work not wane, but, on the contrary, due to the political instability in the Western world and democracy undermining features of hybrid and memetic war including mainly the uncontrollable spread of disinformation and conspiracy theories in the past decades, the interest in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has even skyrocketed. According to Taylor, the last significant surge in interest occurred, with

sales of this work in the USA in the weeks following Donald Trump's inauguration increasing by 950 % (Taylor, 2019, p. 163).

4 SOCIAL MEDIA, THEIR IMPORTANCE, AND HIDDEN THREATS

“Something entirely new is happening in the world. Just in the last five or ten years, nearly everyone started to carry a little device called a smartphone on their person all the time that’s suitable for algorithmic behavior modification.”, writes Jaron Lanier in his best-selling book *“Ten Arguments for Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now”* (Lanier, 2018, p. 5). Most of the readers will snub this information with just a sneer or disregard it completely. A few will have a think about it shortly and will continue to scroll down their screens, unaffected by the message. Sadly, only few will stop to contemplate Lanier’s stance and consider his statement as one that should render them curtail the use of social media or even stop using them. Majority will not wonder about what is wrong with using smartphones and will show no interest in acquainting themselves with the concept of algorithmic behaviour modification, which is a sufficiently perplexing term, let alone trying to understand its gist. Principally, to speak clearly, the smartphone as a vehicle for communication might not be a reason for any concerns, whereas its content undoubtedly should.

In the 1960’s, long before social media were to be created, cultural theorist Marshall McLuhan predicted that the coming of electronic communications would lead to the breakdown of established structures and identities, calling the hypothetic newly emerged society “the global village” (Bartlett, 2018, p. 41). Twenty-five years later, Neil Postman implied that there were two ways how culture could be depreciated; the Orwellian way, when culture becomes a prison and the Huxleyan way, when culture becomes a burlesque (Postman, 2006, p. 155). The culture of social media seems to be a combination of both. On the one hand, social media platforms sophisticatedly lock their users up in the habit of excessive engagement in the dopamine feedback loop, on the other hand, they commonly proffer content of arguable quality. The peril of the use of social media, however, pervades far beyond the boundaries of culture, altering and redesigning the concept of privacy, as well as infiltrating the foundations of the human psyche, and consequently human behavioural patterns and perception, which has had the effect of shrinking the space for the use of rationality. The users of social media face a loss of autonomy in a world of constant digital surveillance, prodded by algorithms run by some of the most prosperous corporations in history (Lanier, 2018, p. 2). Eubanks further

delineates the issue of surveillance by narrowing it down to the extent that *big brother* does not monitor individual users, but rather specific groups perceived as undeserving, such as people of colour, migrants, unpopular religious groups or the poor subjects them to digital scrutiny (Eubanks, 2019, p. 6). In a nutshell, smartphones, and social media they support are turning us into *bona fide* addicts (Palihapitiya cited in Haynes, 2018)

The reason why users of social media lovingly cleave to their devices is simple. Their creators have engineered a set of design hooks to keep an individual engaged and connected to the virtual world and disconnected from social reality at one time. The sound of a social media notification induces your brain to release a chemical substance called dopamine, which is mainly associated with food, love, gambling, or drugs, along a reward path. (Haynes cited in McSweeney, 2019) If rewards are delivered at random and checking for the reward is easy, the dopamine-triggering behaviour becomes habitual (McSweeney, 2019). Surprisingly, even viewing memes – especially the powerful ones – taps the dopamine button in the human brain that longs for feedback and acceptance (Donovan et al., 2022, p. 333). The infinite scroll is another element that is instrumental in keeping the user engaged. Without necessity to click around, the user never reaches the bottom of his or her feed, so the brain can passively ingest information without realising how much time has passed since the activity began (Mattson, 2021, p. 120).

Not so many users pose a crucial question how it is possible that access to social media is free. Regrettably, the seeming absence of charges comes with a price. Social media generate profit like any other business in the world, using sophisticated tools of individualized advertising in profusion. This new way of advertising, which Lanier calls continuous *behaviour modification* on a titanic scale, seems to harbour a dangerous fact – the user has no idea that is subject to behaviourist techniques, being pervasively monitored and manipulated (Lanier, 2018, p. 6–7). O’Neill defines Facebook, one of the pioneers of relentless algorithm exploitation for profit, as a company that determines, according to its own interests what the users see and what they learn on its social network (O’Neill, 2017, p. 180). Google, on the other hand, amasses data, getting information from our emails, monitoring our searches, collecting images of our homes from Street View, and recording our locations from Google Maps, and thanks to agreement with Twitter, Google also gathers data from our tweets (Seymour, 2019, p. 24). “On social media, you scratch out a few words, a few symbols, and press ‘send’, rolling the dice. The Internet will tell you who you are [...] through arithmetic ‘likes’, ‘shares’, and

‘comments’ (Seymour, 2019, p. 30). It means that everyone using online social networks is being spied on and delivered stimuli for individualized behaviour modification through a component that might be called *a feed, a recommendation engine or personalisation* (Lanier, 2018, p. 31). Google’s filtering systems lean on the so-called web history, essentially a dataset of the user’s clicks. According to this schema, deductions are made about what the user likes or dislikes. Facebook also collects clicks, but primarily constructs the user’s image based on what they share and with whom they interact (Pariser, 2011, p. 113–114).

Paradoxically, personalisation has caused something totally different: it has rendered the public sphere to become sorted and manipulated by algorithms, fragmented by design and hostile to dialogue (Pariser, 2011, p. 91). The user might get the impression that algorithms are objective, offering in the feed only content that is subjectively relevant and appropriate (Rosen, 2022, p. 46). Algorithms, however, are trying to capture perfect parameters for manipulating the user’s brain. The brain, trying to seek out deeper meaning, is changing because of the algorithmic experiments (Lanier, 2018, p.15). Such transformation from advertising to direct behaviour modification, exploiting the stealthy power of algorithms, is responsible for an explosive amplification of negativity in human affairs (Lanier, 2018, p. 20).

Social networks, apart from bringing in social pressure (Lanier, 2018, p. 16), exposing users much more often to the negative feedback (or so-called bargain feedback), which is the best choice for business (Lanier, 2018, p. 18), has also originated a new generation of prediction engines to create and refine the theory of the user’s identity, their future acts and desires – *filter bubbles* (Pariser, 2011, p. 10). Filter bubbles fundamentally make alterations to the way the user encounters ideas and information. The user is the only inhabitant of his or her own personalized filter bubble, often unaware of its existence. (Pariser, 2011, p. 10) When entering the filter bubble, the user relinquishes his or her free choice at the expense of companies that created it to choose a relevant content to appear on the smartphone screen (Pariser, 2011, p. 14). In simple terms, filter bubbles distort human perception of what is important, true, and real (Pariser, 2011, p. 16).

There are two other significant phenomena closely related to information filtering conducted by social networking sites – *epistemic bubble* and *echo chamber*. Both are structures of exclusion, different in their origins, mechanisms for operation, and avenues of treatment (Nguyen, 2020). *Epistemic bubble* excludes through omission, whereas *echo*

chambers exclude by manipulating trust and credence (Nguyen, 2020). While *filter bubbles* refer to the phenomenon of intellectual isolation that occurs when websites employ algorithms to restrictively provide information to their users, according to their preceding click behaviour, browsing history, location and other factors, an *epistemic bubble* is a phenomenon where the user fails to access relevant information either intentionally or unintentionally (Gurteen, 2020). As the user spends time online in communities with like-minded individuals, he or she becomes exposed to pro-attitudinal messages, and at the same time the exposure to counter-attitudinal messages is on the decrease. This leads to the emergence of *echo chambers*, where a variety of topics or ideas is limited (Barberá cited in Persily, Tucker, 2020, p. 38). Bearing some features of cult indoctrination, an *echo chamber* systematically isolates their members from all outside epistemic sources (Nguyen, 2020).

Although social media disassociate themselves from being political, they have always been exactly that, using shared information to drive people to mass protests, influencing the outcome of elections or subjecting a company to legal scrutiny (West cited in Rosen, 2022, p. 6). Sadly, owing to the uncontrolled spread of misinformation, disinformation and propaganda, social media contribute to the polarization of society, the radicalization of political opinions, and the undermining of the foundations of democracy. Since these terms are oftentimes used incorrectly, it is appropriate to define exactly what they mean. All three terms refer to false or misleading spread of messages under the pretence of informative content (Guess et Lyons cited in Persily, Tucker, 2020, p. 10). *Misinformation* is understood as an inadvertent claim that contradicts or distorts common understandings of verifiable facts, whereas *disinformation* is defined as the subset of misinformation that is deliberately propagated with evil intention (Guess et Lyons cited in Persily, Tucker, 2020, p. 11). Finally, *propaganda* is potentially factually correct information, but packaged in a way to disparage opposing viewpoints (Tucker et al., 2018).

The Internet was meant to enable communication between individuals and to assist the electronic data transmission between organizations. The emergence of a digital environment in which social interactions take place eventually led to the evolution of information-dense platforms now known as “social media” (Rosen, 2022, p. 1). In its early, utopian stages, the Internet was considered a “liberation technology” to come – an unconstrained mode of transnational communication that would disrupt authoritarian

regimes and encourage freedom around the world (Persily, Tucker, 2020, p. 1). Unfortunately, concurrently with proliferation of the social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or TikTok, an array of concerns and prospective threats has emerged: negative effects on our socialisation patterns, social influence, spread of misinformation, governing, long-term impacts on our well-being, comprising social media addiction, privacy concerns, and a myriad of negative effects on our mental health (Rosen, 2022, p. 1). In order not to emphasize only the negative aspects of the use of social media, it is necessary to point out that social media constitute presently the most far-reaching and comprehensive navigable social network that has ever been created, facilitating the global communication at a scale and speed previously unimaginable (Rosen, 2022, p. 1).

In 2016, Facebook's North American marketing director, Michelle Klein, during her speech to an audience, had termed Facebook's engineering feat: "a sensory experience of communication that helps us to connect to others, *without having to look away*" (Klein cited in Zuboff, 2019, p. 448). This seemingly innocent statement conceals two extremely important facts. Firstly, being incessantly connected to the online world alienates us from the real world, real people, real communication. Secondly, such a sensory experience of communication seems to be highly addictive and mostly appeals to the young. The average adult checks his or her phone 30 times a day. By contrast, the average millennial¹ checks it more than 157 times a day and Zoomers² exceed this pace even more (Klein cited in Zuboff, 2019, p. 448). Zuboff states that social media has had a significant impact on young people – driving them towards less voluntary and more automatic behaviour; in some shading into genuine compulsion (Zuboff, 2019, p. 449).

According to the survey conducted by Common Sense Media, dedicated to US youngsters' media use, teenagers aged between 13 and 18 spent an average of 7 hours a day using screen media of some type (Osgerby, 2021, p. 4). In April 2021, Pew Research Center published a survey revealing correlations between age and the chosen platform. Adult users seem to prefer Youtube (81%) and Facebook (69%), whereas among 18-to-29-olds have dominated Instagram (71%), Snapchat (65%) and TikTok (21%) (Brooke,

¹ Millennials include the population born between years 1981 and 1996, now aged between 27 and 42 years (Dimock, 2019).

² Zoomers or Generation Z is a group of people born between years 1997 and 2012, now aged between 11 to 26 years (for more info see <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/>)

Auxier, 2021, p. 9). The research published on the European Commission website shows that 96% of young people aged 16-29 in the EU use the internet daily, compared with 84% of adults (Eurostat, 2023). The Czech Republic has ranked among the users with a high, 100% daily usage score, along with Malta, Luxembourg, Portugal, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Latvia (Eurostat, 2023). According to the data in 2022, most of the young people (84%) used the internet to partake in social media networks, 68% of the young users claimed to use the internet for reading news online and 64% of them used it because of internet banking (Eurostat, 2023). Also interest in online courses increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic, jumping from 13% in 2019 to 35% in 2021, to decrease by 7% in 2022 (Eurostat, 2023).

Although social media is designed to engage and hold all age categories' users, it targets the psychological structure of adolescence and emerging adulthood, when the individual is oriented toward "the others" (Zuboff, 2019, p. 449). Exploiting our narcissism, and our desire to establish communication with other human beings, Facebook captured our attention and our behaviour data in order to bend media's economic model to match its own practices (Tolentino, 2020, p. 173). Such a made-to-measure bait, combining behavioural science, high-stakes design, and the practical dependencies of social participation, turns social media into toxic milieu (Zuboff, 2019, p. 449). Boxer Wachler states that rates of depression and suicides among teenagers have skyrocketed mainly due to paradoxical isolation effect of social media, along with a host of other serious health impacts caused by immoderate time spent on mobile devices – high blood pressure, obesity, low HDL cholesterol or vision problems (Boxer Wachler, 2022, p. 25).

It is necessary, after all that has been revealed about social media, to think about whether they are truly social. Fuchs states four types of sociality: *information* (and *cognition*), *communication*, *communities*, and *collaboration* (Fuchs, 2014, p. 4–5). As for the *information*, some hold the opinion that all media are social since they are part of society and aspects of society are present in the technological artefacts we use (Fuchs, 2014, p. 4). Other people claim that not all media are social, only those that underpin the interhuman *communication* – a reciprocated process between at least two people, in which symbols are exchanged and their meanings subsequently decoded by the participants (Fuchs, 2014, p. 4). Some communications are more than social relationships, involving feelings of belonging together. A certain share of communications taking place on social media is part of *communities* of personal friends, political activists, etc – for instance

Facebook or Twitter (Fuchs, 2014, p. 4). By *collaboration* or *co-operative work* Fuchs means, for example, the joint writing of a document on Google Docs (Fuchs, 2014, p. 4). Media are techno-social systems, having a technological level of artifacts that enable and constrain a social level of human activities that create knowledge; The internet consists of a technological system and a social subsystem, both having a networked character (Fuchs, 2014, p. 37). Social media are online platforms that enable users to create a profile, connect with other users, share and exchange content (boyd, Ellison, 2017) – divided into several types, such as *social networking sites* (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Tiktok), *instant messaging services* (WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger), *macro-and-micro blogging sites* (Twitter, WordPress, Reddit, Tumblr), *massively multiplayer online games* (World of Warcraft, League of Legends) and *virtual worlds* (Second Life) (Ryan et al., 2017). To answer the question, whether social media are social, it is unavoidable to consider the human factor, which on entering the system, can be analysed through the three most important classical positions in social theory, defined by Durkheim, Weber, and Marx (and Tönnies) – through *social facts*, *social acts/relations*, and *co-operation* (and *community*) (Fuchs, 2014, p. 37 – 38).

Fuchs examines the potential sociality of social media via the premise that knowledge is a threefold dynamic process of *cognition*, *communication*, and *co-operation*, stating that in order to co-operate and communicate individuals need to cognize (Fuchs, 2014, 42). Certain communications, continuous over time and space, potentially result in co-operation, new social systems, or new communities with a sense of togetherness (Fuchs, 2014, p. 42). Every medium can be social in one or more of these senses, which means that even computer networks, being media of information and communication, as well as of co-operative production of information, can be considered social (Fuchs, 2014, p. 42). Ryan et al. add that social media can increase social capital, lead to the formation of friendships and communities, and reduce loneliness, adding that this may not be the outcome of all social interactions that take place online (Ryan et al., 2017). On the other hand, Hall disagrees with the premise that social media are essentially social, claiming that social interaction requires *mutual acknowledgement* of a shared relationship, *conversational exchange*, and *focused attention* on the exchange, which are assumptions not to be regularly fulfilled (Hall, 2018). Added to this, Rhee states that even though technological features of social media platforms may be planned for social purposes, the users may not perceive their function as fundamentally social (Rhee, 2019, p. 3).

In any event, misinformation, disinformation, propaganda, fake news, hate speech, surveillance and loss of privacy are the main mutual contact points of both, the world of present-day social media networking sites and the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell. These common aspects will be used practically in the teaching of two senior year students' classes as a part of the Maturita topic *Culture*.

PRACTICAL PART

5 METHODOLOGY

The practical part of the presented diploma thesis employs the means of mixed research: a combination of quantitative and qualitative research. More precisely, the exact method used to collect and analyse the data used in the diploma thesis is known as *convergent parallel mixed method*, in which the researcher converges or merges quantitative or qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem (Creswell, 2014, p. 15). This design is typical for collecting both forms of data at approximately the same time and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results (Creswell, 2014, p. 15). Mixing multiple methods affords opportunities to use the strengths of some methods to counterbalance the weaknesses of the other as well as it is a valuable strategy for producing a comprehensive empirical record about a topic (Axinn, Pearce, 2006, p. 20).

The basic prism of quantitative research is the conviction that there is a single objective reality, independent of our feelings, attitudes, or beliefs (Chráska, 2007, p. 32). In this scenario, the researcher tests a theory by specifying narrow hypotheses and the collection of data to support or rebut them (Croswell, 2014, p.19). Based on a quantitative survey research, this diploma thesis employs two questionnaires in order to collect the desired data. The first questionnaire is designed to ascertain students' attitudes towards the use of social media platforms before the actual teaching block starts. The second questionnaire examines teachers' attitudes towards the topic of social media in ELT, as well as their opinions and observations. The field of hypotheses:

- 1 Using George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a teaching tool enhances students' English language proficiency when studying the topic of social media.
- 2 Incorporating George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* increases students' critical thinking abilities, enabling them to express their opinions effectively on dystopian themes related to social media in ELT.
- 3 The inclusion of George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a literary source in ELT positively impacts students' attitudes toward dystopian literature, fostering a greater appreciation for this genre.

is realised by three research questions:

- 1 How does using George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* enhance students' English language proficiency in the context of teaching the topic of social media?
- 2 To what extent does incorporating George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* enhance students' critical thinking to express their opinions on dystopian context related to social media in ELT?
- 3 How does the inclusion of George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a literary source in ELT affect student's attitudes towards dystopian literature?

Qualitative research, on the other hand, is a form of inquiry that explores phenomena in their natural settings and uses multi-methods to interpret, understand, explain, and bring meaning to them (Anderson, Arsenault, 2005, p. 126). It is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible, transform it and turn it into series of representations including field notes, interviews, photographs, etc. (Denzin, Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). In this situation, the researcher attempts to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the participants' views, collecting data by observing participants' behaviour during their engagement in activities (Croswell, 2014, p. 19). Qualitative data grow out of three kinds of data collection: (1) in-depth, opened interviews, (2) direct observation, and (3) written documents (Patton, 2001, p. 4). The qualitative data collection of this diploma thesis is based on interviews with selected teachers on the topic of using the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in teaching the topic of social media in ELT, observations of students' performance and responses during the four planned lessons for each selected class and evaluation of assigned projects. The students are to create a presentation on the topic "Safe social networking site" and write an essay whose assignment reads "Are social media Orwellian?".

The practical part of this diploma thesis has been designed for senior year students and has been divided into four 45 minutes long teaching units. The project has been implemented in two classes of graduating students. The selection of graduating students

for the implementation of this project has been based on the fact that George Orwell and his work is a part of the school curriculum according to the National Framework of Education and the topic of social media is also a part of several Maturita school leaving examination areas as Culture, Modern Society or Multicultural World.

The first lesson has been drafted to engage the students in exploring the basic outlines of the topic of social media. The second lesson has been planned to introduce the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to the students shortly, acquaint students with the extent of surveillance they are exposed to on social media, using an excerpt from the technical literature, and engage them in uncovering the surveillance methods in short excerpts from *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and then have them compare their observation to the reality of social media. The third lesson has been designed similarly to the previous one. After a brief introduction to the topic of misinformation, disinformation, fake news, propaganda and hate speech, the students are exposed to several examples of real disinformation. Using examples from *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the students are asked to demonstrate an understanding of the topic discussed and to reflect on similarities between falsification of information in the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and social media networking sites. The last lesson is meant to be a review lesson. The students are tasked with creating a presentation on “an original social media platform that lacks surveillance and disinformation”. They are asked to do the presentation in class and complete a short quiz based on the information they have acquired during the project and their stances. Apart from the mentioned activities in the classroom, the students must write an argumentative essay on “Are social media Orwellian?” to prove their more profound understanding of the topic and engagement in critical thinking.

Regarding teaching methods and organisational forms of teaching, diverse ways have been implemented to arouse students’ interest in the topic and their engagement. Not only have the frontal/individual form been implemented, but also several group activities have been incorporated into the teaching scheme to support students’ cooperation that enables viewing the problem from different perspectives and allows students to synthesise their opinions and findings and arrive at original solutions. Individual teaching methods and organizational forms of teaching will be explained in the description of each lesson. The whole concept of the four lessons is to be implemented within the ERR framework system.

6 THE QUESTIONNAIRE – STUDENTS

“The Use of Social Media” questionnaire aimed to investigate how students enrolled in the instructional block dedicated to the use of Orwell’s novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* approach the utilization of social media networking sites and whether they are aware of the associated risks. The questionnaire was composed of twenty-two questions and was completed by all 30 students – 18 girls and 12 boys, aged 18 (20x) and 19 (10x). The responses were collected between 2nd October and 13th October 2023, preceding the actual teaching unit. 100 % of students reported using social media daily, aligning with findings from research conducted within the European Union (see above). 37% of students mentioned spending more than 3 hours on social media each day, 30% of them spend 1 to 2 hours on them every day. Additionally, 27% claimed to allocate 2 to 3 hours of their time to social media. Only 7% of students stated that they spend from half an hour to 1 hour on social media on a daily basis. As their favourite social networks, students listed Instagram (80%) and YouTube (57%). Snapchat, with 27% and TikTok, with 23%, secured the third and fourth position in popularity. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Reddit each obtained 10%. 3% of students voted for “the other social media platform” option.

Students cited “staying in touch with friends” as the most common reason for using social media, followed by entertainment, obtaining information, relaxation, and education. Most students have been using social media for more than 5 years (80%), 13% mentioned using it for 3 to 5 years, and only 7% reported using it for 1 to 3 years. When asked whether their parents monitor the content, they follow on social media, 100% of students stated that they do not. 90% of parents do not set a daily limit on the amount of time students can spend online. Concerning questions about the impact of social media on mental and physical health, 57% of students believe it has a significant impact on mental health, with only 3% of respondents stating that it has no effect. 77% of students are convinced that using social media has a minor impact on physical health, whereas 20% think it has a significant influence. In response to the question of whether students feel pressured to present a distorted image of themselves on social media, 57% answered no, 17% yes, and 27% are unsure. 50% stated that they had to take a break from social media due to privacy concerns. 67% of surveyed students temporarily stopped using social media due to feelings of mental distress. 80% of students polled are aware of constant surveillance and

the potential misuse of data on social media platforms. 50% of students are somewhat concerned about this situation. Only 27% of respondents appear to be significantly troubled. 60% of learners are unsure whether social media platforms are doing enough to ensure the privacy of users and their data in the context of constant monitoring. Only 10% of learners stated that they believe they are.

Answering the query about how students approach data protection and privacy on social media, the most common answer was that they do not share any personal or sensitive content, avoid disclosing their location, regularly change their password, create complex, long, hard-to-crack passwords, or reject cookies whenever possible. 47% of students stated that they have sometimes experienced situations where they felt that they were being monitored on social media or that their data were misused. 53% of learners expressed a negative sentiment regarding this question. In response how students react when they feel their privacy or data are at risk, the most common replies were that they change their password, block, or report the suspicious account, delete their data, or contact support. 40% of respondents would consider leaving social media platforms in case their mental health is at risk, 27% due to cyberbullying and harassment, 23% if their privacy is compromised, and only 10% of excessive time spent on social networking sites. Responding to the concluding question of whether students have ever temporarily or permanently deactivated their account, 37% answered affirmatively, and 63% responded negatively. The complete survey results can be examined through the following link: <https://www.surveio.com/survey/d/Y9M6J7J6O5O4W2A4J>

7 THE QUESTIONNAIRE – TEACHERS

Regarding my thesis, teachers' perspectives on instructing the topic of social media within ELT also garnered my research interest. Secondary schools and vocational schools in all fourteen regions of the Czech Republic were surveyed. The questionnaire survey took place from 12th September to 8th November 2023, and managed to collect responses from 309 teachers. "The Integration of Social Media Education in ELT" questionnaire was created using Google Forms. Regrettably, this platform does not facilitate generating of mixed-response types, so the optional type of responses will not be appended. The questionnaire consisted of 12 mandatory questions and 10 optional/supplementary inquiries. 46% of all responses came from grammar schools (143), followed by the general category of secondary schools (22). Business schools are represented thirteen times, technical schools eleven times, the general term "high school" occurs ten times, and secondary nursing schools are represented four times. The rest of the responses comprise vocational schools, vocational training centres, conservatories, and art secondary schools.

39% of surveyed teachers have been teaching for 20 years and more. 32% of teachers have dedicated 10 years or more to their profession. Among the respondents were teachers with less than 5 years of teaching experience (17%). 13% of the polled educators indicated that they have been teaching for 5 years and more. 48% of the surveyed teachers stated that they incorporate conversations about social media in their English classes only occasionally. In contrast, 44% of them claimed to include these talks frequently. 7% mentioned that they rarely include such dialogues, 1,3% do not include them at all, and only 0,6% responded that they always use these interactions. For more than half of the respondents, the primary reason for incorporating these discussions is an attempt to engage students in contemporary issues. Roughly one-fifth of the respondents indicated that it is crucial for them that students explore the impact of technology on society. 10% of teachers aim to increase the awareness of digital literacy, while another 10% perceive these discussions as an opportunity to address privacy and online safety. 95% of the teachers responded positively to the question of whether they consider it important to address social media in English classes.

When asked about how teachers integrate interdisciplinary perspectives into lessons dedicated to social media, 64% mentioned using real-life examples, 27% of teachers try

to explore ethical and societal aspects with their students. Just under 7% of teachers stated that they collaborate with other subjects, and 2% of them incorporate media studies concepts. 63% of the teachers see discussions about social media as beneficial. However, only 30% of them encourage English class students to reflect on how they use social media. Unfortunately, a significant 73% of the teachers stated that they do not perceive any change in students' behaviour or approach to networks because of their lessons. Nearly 62% of educators seek to stimulate critical thinking in students by engaging in discussions about online etiquette, 19% use assignments related to evaluating online sources, just under 16% utilize case studies, and only 4% of respondents attempt to motivate students to understand the complexities of social media issues through digital citizenship projects. Addressing the inquiry of whether teachers provide guidance or sources regarding online security and privacy, only one-fifth of the respondents answered affirmatively. However, 35% explicitly responded in the negative. The option "occasionally" was chosen by 140 respondents. According to the surveyed teachers, increased awareness of the impact of social media on society leads to a change in students' behaviour on social networking sites. 32% of teachers, however, stated they are not certain about this.

8 THE INTERVIEW – TEACHERS

Out of a total of 309 questionnaire respondents, only 15 teachers expressed interest in participating in the additional interview. The remaining educators rejected further participation for various reasons. The interview was responded to in written form and consisted of 3 questions. The first question inquired whether teachers believe that literary works such as *Nineteen Eighty-Four* contribute to students' enhanced comprehension of potential advantages and disadvantages to the use of social media. The next two inquiries specifically focused on the aforesaid novel. The first of them aimed to ask whether teachers have ever employed George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as an educational resource for exploring topics related to social media in ELT. In the case of affirmative response, teachers were then asked to elaborate on methods and strategies they employed to integrate the novel into their lessons.

The responses to the first question brought a diverse range of opinions, from those strongly in agreement to those expressing doubts about whether the use of such material is suitable for the examined area or the age profile of the students. Among the affirmative responses to the posed question there were perspectives suggesting that students could reflect on contemporary society by gaining insights into a different society, or that it represents a valuable source for the development of critical thinking or that it teaches them the dangers of disinformation. Two surveyed teachers mentioned that, under proper guidance and in the right environment, it could definitely contribute to the awareness of such issues. One teacher commented on the question, stating that it is an interesting idea to use Orwell's novel in the context of social media, because he had never considered social media and totalitarian regimes "being put side by side". Another teacher mentioned that Aldous Huxley's work would be more suitable because „it describes a dystopian society based on excess and irrelevance of values rather than tyranny and direct control“. There were only two negative responses to the posed question. One simply stated „no“ while the other response included the opinion that literary works are too long for this specific purpose.

Out of the fifteen surveyed teachers, only 5 expressed a positive view regarding the occasional use of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. However, from their responses, it is evident that these teachers did not utilise the novel as a part of longer project, within the context of any socio-cultural domain, or in a specific conceptual manner. One teacher mentioned

using the novel to discuss totalitarianism, but also love, as he perceives the work primarily as a love story and also as a reflection how media force people to behave against their nature. Another educator stated resorting to the use of the book in classes where students encountered concepts such as dictatorship or fascism. A third educationalist mentioned quoting the novel in teaching but did not specify the exact context. The fourth teacher stated that he used the novel as a „bonus“ for talented students. The last teacher responded that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was referenced in relation to propaganda, fake news and censorship.

Methods and strategies used by the teachers varied from a comprehensive conversational approach covering (i) vocabulary, (ii) meaning, (iii) literary devices used, and (iv) cultural implications or reading with comprehension (facts about the author, the book, the short extract) and language exercises. One of the teachers described the procedure in detail – from preparing worksheets in Google Classroom, Nearpod, Padlet or Slido, through a warm-up focused on general introduction to the topic in order to create a „mood“, moving on to grammar and vocabulary, ensuring that students fully grasp the essence of the subject. Everything concluded with a project assignment or a debate. One of the teachers could not recall the details properly but mentioned that „it involved reading with comprehension and language exercises“. The last of those interviewed, a native speaker, stated that those methods and strategies included discussions on the differences and similarities between the events in the book and propaganda shared on social media.

9 LESSON 1

The ERR Framework Stage	Time	Teaching Method	Organisational Form	Teaching Aids
Evocation	5min	Mind Mapping	Individual, frontal	A worksheet (task 1)
Realisation	5min	Criteria-based classification	Individual, frontal	A worksheet (task 2)
	15min	Presentation "Ten Arguments"	Individual, frontal	a PowerPoint presentation
	5min	PMI CHART	Individual, frontal	A worksheet (task 3)
Revocation	15min	Discussion Web	Group learning	A worksheet

The initial lesson has been designed to chart students' range of knowledges of the topic of social media, to acquaint them with negative aspects of the use of social media with the respect to their preconceptions about the topic and arouse their interest in deeper exploration of the theme. The lesson has been planned according to the ERR model of teaching that comprises five stages expressed by verbs: *Engage*, *Explore*, *Explain*, *Elaborate* and *Evaluate* (Bybee, 2015). The engagement phase is represented by an introductory activity in which students are tasked with creating a mind map, preferably involving associative thinking. The explanation phase is represented by a short presentation based on the book by Jaron Lanier called "Ten Arguments for Deleting your Social Media Accounts Right now". During the presentation, students are to fill in the PMI Chart, in which they choose whether they agree (P = Plus) or disagree (M=Minus) and which part of the argument they have found interesting (I). Students are to refine their knowledge about social media through their criteria-based classification. The reflection part including evaluation is based on the technique of Discussion web, enabling a rational discussion based on prearranged arguments (Sieglová, 2019, p. 225).

After a short introduction, each student was given a worksheet with three main tasks. The first task related to creating a mind map on the topic of social media, ideally employing the technique of associative thinking, was designed to find out students' stances on the topic and their relation to social media.

9.1 Mind Map

Class 4.A

Class 4.A, which is normally much more active and passionate about completing tasks, produced only 150 words, with a surprisingly much higher incidence of words with negative connotations. The overview of the words with the highest occurrence (≥ 2) can be seen in the attached table.

Word	Frequency
Entertainment	6x
Information	4x
Depression	4x
Bullying	4x
Time consumer	3x
News	3x
Instagram	3x
Hate/Hatred	3x
Facebook	3x
Communication	3x
Influencers	2x
Friends	2x
Fake News	2x
Commercials	2x
Beauty Standards	2x

Although the most frequent words “entertainment” and “information” in the table are perceived positively by society, we can identify at least four expressions with a rather negative undertone: “depression”, “bullying”, “hate/hatred”, “fake news”; and one phrase with possibly ambiguous meaning: “beauty standards”. When students were asked whether these negatively charged words came from their own experience, the majority responded that they did not – that only these expressions occurred to them by chance as part of associative thinking. Words (<2) made a list of diverse terms of either a positive meaning – “body positivity” (1x), “connection” (1x), “gaming” (1x), “creativity” (1x), “discussion” (1x), “good helper” (1x), “illness awareness” (1x), “inspiration” (1x), “jokes” (1x), “sharing photos” (1x) or “work (1x). Words like “Body standards” (1x), “fame/infamy” (1x), “perfect life” (1x), “society standards” or “memes” can be viewed rather ambiguously. Negatively attuned words (<2) were represented by these terms:

“anonymous profiles”, “danger”, “degeneration”, “disinformation”, “hoaxes”, and “gambling”, each mentioned once.

Class 4.C

Most of the students understood the essence of the task and produced an interesting word mosaic (170 words) that might indicate their relation to the phenomenon of social media. The overview of the words with the highest occurrence (≥ 2) can be seen in the attached table.

Word	Frequency
Communication	5x
Fun	4x
Stalking	3x
Snapchat	3x
Money / Make money	3x
Instagram	3x
New friends	2x
Memories	2x
Entertainment	2x
News	2x
Pay	2x
Influencers	2x
Learning	2x
Price	2x
Relax	2x

As can be seen from the table, the most frequently used words, except the term “stalking”, have rather positive connotations. Words (<2) carrying positive meaning appearing in the students’ mind maps were mostly related to their leisure time activities – “chatting with people” (1x), “computers” (1x), “edit photos” (1x), “education” (1x), “free time” (1x), “followers” (1x), “meeting new people” (1x), “new skills” (1x), “new things/tips” (1x), “popularity” (1x), and so on. Despite the students’ seemingly positive approach to the use of social media, given the choice of words, the students also seem to be aware of possible threats. This statement is supported by the occurrence of expressions like “addiction” (1x), “bad feelings” (1x), “bullying” (1x), “cyberbullying” (1x), “danger” (1x), “dangerous” (1x), “dangerous space” (1x), “jealous” (1x), “jealousy” (1x), “paedophiles hidden behind different photos” (1x), “prejudice” (1x), “problems” (1x), “social anxiety”

(1x), or “stereotypes” (1x). This impression of the students’ realisation of perils associated with using social media was also confirmed at the end of the task when I inquired about possible risks in this area.

9.2 Criteria-Based Classification

We moved smoothly from the first activity to the task which has been designed to test students’ cognizance of the classification according to generally accepted criteria. These categories, however, are in many cases just indicative which means some of the platforms may occur more than once in the worksheet. Students were asked to classify social media according to whether it belongs to the following categories: *Social Networking Sites*, *Instant Messaging Systems*, *Image-Based Sites*, *Video Sharing/Streaming Platforms*, *Discussion Forums* and *Micro-and-Macro Blogging Sites*. I have included even lesser-known social media platforms and therefore I allowed students to use mobile phones in case they encountered an unfamiliar name.

Class 4.A

Awareness of the classification of social media in Class 4. A was much the same as in the case of Class 4. Misclassification occurred mainly for platforms with which students have no practical experience, especially those native to East Asia. Class 4. A has three more students compared to Class 4. C, which apparently caused a greater increase in misclassified social networking sites.

Class 4.C

Students were familiar with the classification, as introduced a category by category, so they filled in the worksheets in less than five minutes. During this part of the lesson, I noticed that some of the social media platforms’ names were seen by the students for the first time. The analysis of the answers in the worksheets later confirmed this assumption of mine. Unfortunately, some students’ performance was not 100%, so the data obtained from this activity may not be completely accurate.

9.3 Presentation “Ten Arguments”/PMI Chart

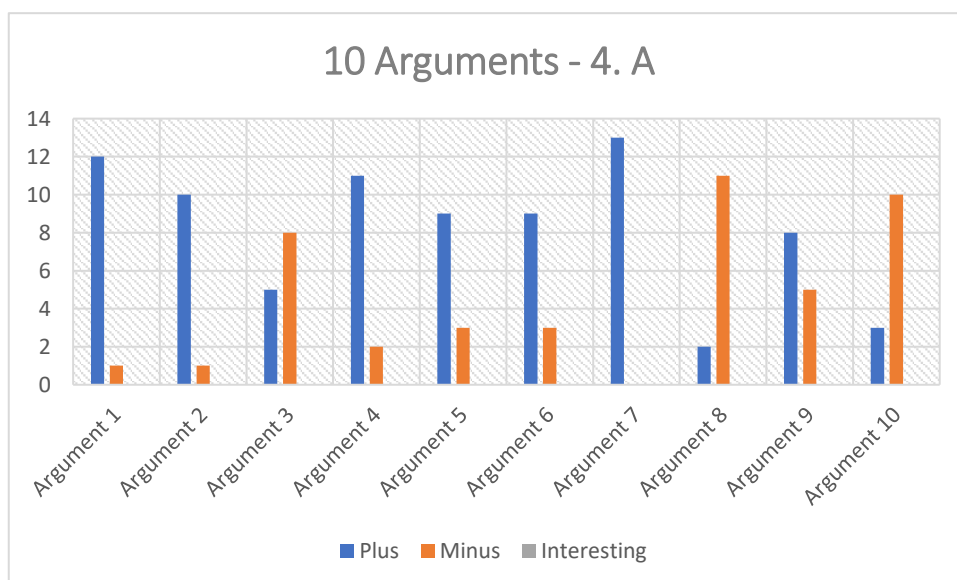
The third part of the lesson comprised a presentation on negative aspects of the use of social media networking sites through the eyes of Jaron Lanier, using arguments from his best-selling book “Ten Arguments for Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now”. Students were asked to fill in the PMI Chart on the worksheet while paying attention to the presentation and taking part in discussion. At the beginning of the presentation, the students were informed that the aim of the presentation was in no way to try to change their habits of how they use social media. The main reason for presenting these ten arguments was to draw students’ attention closer to some hidden threats and introduce them to the concepts related to the topic of social media (surveillance, algorithms, misinformation, filter bubbles, echo chambers, etc.) that would be used in the following lessons. Students were also informed that they might notice an inappropriate or even vulgar expression while paying attention to the presentation. They were told if they noticed such a word then they were to remain calm and concentrate on the argument itself. The students were clearly explained how to fill in the PMI chart and asked to fill it in while the content was being presented. The presentation included the following arguments:

- 1 You Are Losing Your Free Will
- 2 Quitting Social Media Is the Most Finely Targeted Way To Resist The Insanity of Our Times
- 3 Social Media Are Making You into an Asshole
- 4 Social Media Are Undermining Truth
- 5 Social Media Are Making What You Say Meaningless
- 6 Social Media Are Destroying Your Capacity for Empathy
- 7 Social Media Are Making You Unhappy
- 8 Social Media Don’t Want You to Have Economic Dignity
- 9 Social Media Are Making Politics Impossible
- 10 Social Media Hate Your Soul

Each of the arguments were explained using examples from hands-on experience and shortly discussed.

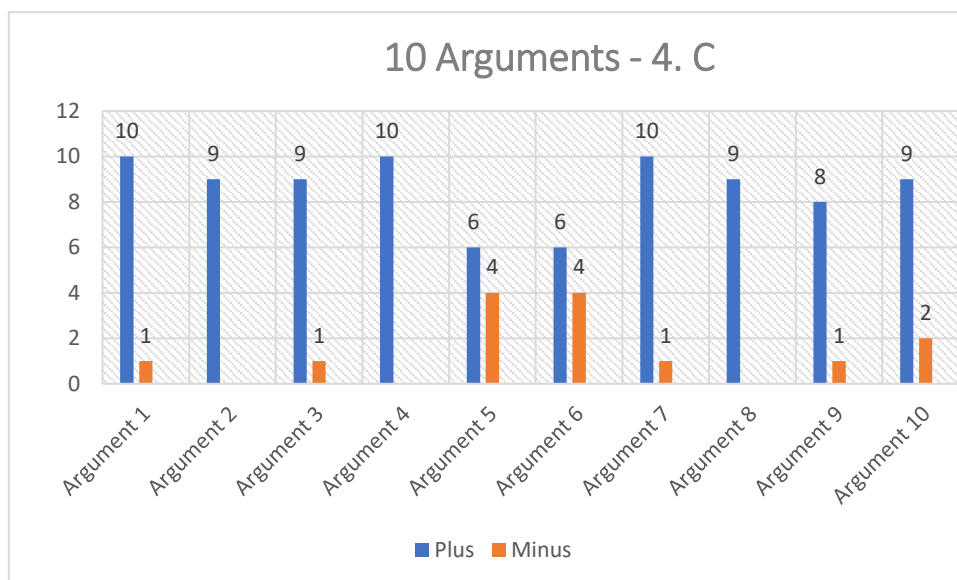
Class 4.A

Class 4.A interacted more during the presentation, unlike class 4. C, students were quick to ask when they had not fathomed a concept or needed help understanding a term. At times, the presentation turned into a dialogue; it should be noted that it was pleasant and fruitful. Students of mine have always been supported in developing communication skills in English classes, and this natural discussion only reflected their language competence and natural curiosity. On the other hand, it caused the presentation to be extended by several minutes. As for how students agreed or disagreed with Lanier’s arguments, the results are as follows. Students mainly agreed with arguments 7 (13x), 1 (12x), 4 (11x), 2 (10x), 5, 6 (each 9x), and 9 (8x). As the data show, both classes agree with arguments 1, 2, 4, 7, 9 concerning free will, “insanity of our times”, the truth, unhappiness, and politics. Unlike class 4.C, students of class 4.A strongly disagreed with arguments 8 (11x), 10 (10x), and 3 (8x) - arguments based on assertion that social media affect the user’s economic dignity and spiritual framework, and significantly change their personality.



Class 4.C

Even though the way to fill in the table was explained very clearly, two students filled it in incorrectly, putting tick marks in the “Interesting” box, where they were supposed to express verbally what had interested them about the given argument. Therefore, the data based on students’ answers are not complete. That said, students listened carefully, paid attention to what was being said and reacted to all my questions. Students seemed to have been mainly shocked by the level of surveillance conducted by companies like Google and Facebook and by the power over the users of social media platforms that comes from a tenacious and continuous collection of personal data. As the data show, students mainly agreed with Arguments 1, 4, 7 (each 10x), 2, 3, 8, 10 (each 9x), and 9 (8x). According to their frequency in the worksheet and students’ verbal reactions during the lesson, these areas significantly affect their personal space and self-concept and cause the most fear when it comes to using social media. Students mainly disagreed with arguments related to a potential erosion of their empathy and the possibility that their voice could be downplayed on social media. What interested students, given the answers on the worksheets, the issue of fake people and AI bots, the way how companies like Facebook earn money through advertising, changes in personality and unrealistic settings of beauty standards on social media.



9.4 Discussion Web

The last part has been designed to have students practice acquired information in a moderated discussion. Two teams were to discuss pros and cons of the use of social media, using arguments and counterarguments to defeat the adverse party.

Class 4.A

Class 4. A is usually more communicative than their colleagues from Class 4. C, and this lesson was similar. The two groups produced 12 arguments defending the use of social media and six arguments to prove otherwise. Sadly, the presentation was four minutes longer than planned due to vivid discussion while presenting the arguments, and thus, the final activity had to be shortened. The arguments that Group 1 came up were: “connection with people”, “finding new friends”, “you can discuss various topics”, “supporting majorities”, “entertainment”, “Illness awareness”, “body positivity”, “sources of information”, “socializing”, “expressing ourselves”, “make money” and finally “promoting our business”. Group 2 produced the following expressions to support their stance against the use of social media: “no privacy”, “unhappy”, “bullying weird people”, “beauty standards/social expectations”, “misinformation”, and “hate”. Regrettably, only three arguments on each part were discussed. The wording of arguments was modified in cooperation with students to: “a great way to connect to the world” and “a great way to promote your business/influence youngsters”. The last argument approving the use of social media remained the same: “finding new friends”. The counterarguments used in the discussions were: “bullying weird people”, “beauty standards/social expectations”, and “misinformation”. Engagement in discussion in this class was significantly better than in the case of class 4. C.

Class 4.C

Unfortunately, the presentation ran several minutes beyond the schedule, so the execution time of the last activity had to be shortened. Some of the students had also left the classroom due to a planned school visit to the theatre; therefore, the number of participants had decreased. The rest of the students split into two groups and were only able to discuss three arguments on each side within the allotted time. The arguments that

were voiced for were: “finding new ideas”, “fun, entertainment”, and “staying in touch”. The arguments that were directed against the use of social media were: “no free will”, “prejudices”, and “judging people by their appearance”. Students mostly participated actively. The main voices of the discussion, however, were the two captains of the teams.

10 LESSON 2

The ERR Framework Stage	Time	Teaching Method	Organisational Form	Teaching Aids
Evocation	10min	Introduction/ Presentation "1984"	Individual, frontal	worksheet
Realisation	10min	Mirror Reading	group learning	worksheet
	15min	Buzz Groups	group learning	worksheet
Revocation	10min	K-L-W Chart + Evaluation	Individual, frontal	worksheet

The second lesson has been designed to familiarise students with the outlines of George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, its basic structure, the main storyline and plot. The concept of this lesson is based on a presentation dedicated to Orwell's novel, as well as on an example from the book *Outnumbered: From Facebook and Google to fake news and filter-bubbles-the algorithms that control our lives*, a sample related to manipulative techniques of social media and internet companies, and selected passages from *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In the lesson, learners should consider manipulation, surveillance, loss of privacy and freedom on social media compared to the examples taken from Orwell's Novel.

The engagement of students in the topic is initiated by the presentation. The next phase involves students' exploration of the concept of manipulation through the provided examples. Not only methods of "Mirror reading" and "Buzz groups" enable students to sufficiently explore the given topic, but also, they help to develop skills important for cooperation. Mirror reading is a method focused on the ability to correctly understand, convey, and clarify the content of a text to others (Sieglová, 2019, p. 138). Buzz groups, on the other hand, are the basic variant of the work team, where roles are not predefined, and which are suitable for activities requiring fantasy or creativity (Sieglová, 2019, p. 55). If necessary, the teacher is available to explain/re-explain certain concepts. The phase of elaboration is represented by K-L-W Chart that focuses on deepening and expanding students' understanding of the topic. The last phase, evaluation, is realised by a short summary and discussion.

10.1 Introduction/Presentation

The lesson began by asking students if they know who George Orwell was. The next step to take was doing a presentation introducing basic facts about the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to the learners. Students were made familiar with the division of the novel, the storyline, and the main plot. The key expressions (Ministry of Truth, thoughtcrime, thought police, newspeak) were briefly explained. When the presentation ended, learners were handed out an excerpt from the first chapter (the first three paragraphs) with two review questions: 1. What emotions does this short excerpt evoke in you? 2. Did this short excerpt captivate you to the point where you want to learn more about the story? After reading the excerpt, students were asked to take down their answers.

Class 4.A

Learners in class 4.A became familiar with the novel *Nineteen Eight-Four* last year as part of a literary dystopian block, also including Aldous Huxley. So, they had an advantage over class 4.C. Students knew the rough outlines of the work as well as some expressions as Ministry of Truth, so the presentation did not take so long. Class 4.A, whose English proficiency is at a better level, with one student holding C2 certificate, one holding a B2 certificate and several students demonstrably at the B2 level without an official certificate, produced an exciting collage of opinions. Sadly, their language skills do not originate from reading books, which proved 5 negative answers related to the interest in the story. Despite the negative responses, some students acknowledged certain amount of interestingness in the excerpt from the novel (see the answers in the table below). Only three learners openly expressed their willingness to continue reading. In terms of students' emotions that were evoked in them by reading the passage, again negative perceptions prevailed. The word fear was mentioned 5 times in 3 various forms ("fright", "fear" and "scared"). Other words with negative connotations to be found in the text are: "paranoia" (2x), "hopelessness" (2x), "anxiety" (2x), "feeling of stalking/stalking" (2x), "feeling of oppression", "insecurity" and "frustration".

Class 4.C

Two students were absent during the second lesson in class 4.C which caused the data to be incomplete. The present learners actively participated in the opening debate. Since they had yet to discuss George Orwell in the Czech language classes, and since they had a different teacher for English last year, they had minimal knowledge of the author and his work. The students only knew Orwell's *Animal Farm*, and only very marginally – they knew it was a “fable”. The novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was a great unknown to them, and therefore the presentation was of great importance.

While reading the sample, it became clear that the students need to get used to reading. Even though the excerpt was only three paragraphs long (316 words), some learners verbally expressed their displeasure at the length, even though the text was provided with a glossary containing unfamiliar terms. That said, students seemed interested in their reading and a little taken aback. Their answers to the first question indicate they were touched by the excerpt somehow. The most frequently represented term that appeared in the students' answers was “dark” (4x), “darkness” (2x), and “dark atmosphere” (1x), even though these words do not understandably belong to feelings. As for the feelings, the word with the most representation appears to be “sad” (5x), “fear” (4x), “anxiety” (3x), and “weird/weird feelings” (2x). In response to the second question, 6 students said they would like to know how the story continued, while 4 said they did not. 2 students did not answer the question. (See the table below)

10.2 Mirror Reading

The next part of the lesson was dedicated to exploring ways of surveillance applied on social media networking sites, using an excerpt from *Outnumbered* by David Sumpter. The teaching method used, Mirror reading, should allow students to form their own opinions and then refine them later with the opinions of their classmates. The class was divided into three groups, each with an identical text (taken from Chapter Two, “Make Some Noise”). Each group member was exposed to only one paragraph of the text to read and extract the main idea. Other paragraphs were whited out. Once all members had read their parts, they were tasked with summarizing the main points of the assigned text. At the same time, each worksheet contained a control question related to the given part of the text.

Control questions for each group read:

Group A1 - “How does Google use the information it collects from your online activities to personalize your experience?”

Group A2 - “How does the text describe the approach of internet services like Google, Yahoo, Facebook, Microsoft and Apple to personalized advertising?”

Group A3 - “What differences in advertisements were observed when they compared the browsing histories of male and female agents?”

Class 4.A

Class 4.A was split into three groups – A1, A2, A3. Group A1 consisted of 4 members one of whom did not participate in the activity due to long-term health problems. They expressed the main idea “that companies like Google show us adverts based on their default settings and things we interact with”. In response to the control question, they stated, “to push adverts that you interact with and those that they want to show you”. Group A2 was made up of 6 individuals. They captured the main idea of the text as “The bigger picture involves personalized ads”. The group responded to the control question by stating, “They store data for every search to bring more personalised ads.” The last group, A3, comprised 5 members. They expressed the core theme of the text as “Our paragraphs are about all kinds of discrimination, including job offers for women or assertion that African Americans are more likely to be dangerous.” In answer to control question, students affirmed, “Men were more likely to be shown specific ads. Women were shown/offered only generic recruitment sites.” The work of all three groups showed a high level of engagement and enthusiasm for completing the task.

Class 4.C

Class 4.C was divided into three groups – C1, C2, and C3. Group C1 consisted of 4 students. To answer the control question, they stated, “They see your history, what you click on, what you watch. They listen to you when you mention something, and they personalize everything.” As the main idea of the text, they stated: “Personalized ads, always being watched without consent, no privacy”. Group C2 consisted also of 4 students. Regarding the control question, they asserted, “The services are transparent to some degree.” As the main idea of the text, they stated: “Danger of stealing your personal

data, and cooperation between big internet services.” Group C3 consisted of 3 students. In reply to the control question, they replied vaguely, “algorithmic discrimination”, and the main idea of the text, according to them, was “discrimination of African Americans in US judicial system”, which was only a part of the mentioned problem. Groups C1 and C2 accurately described the main idea and satisfactorily answered the control question. Group C3 showed disinterest in the task the whole time, and the results of their work were utterly unsatisfactory.

10.3 Buzz Groups

The third part of the class was based on group work. Each class was divided into groups (4 in class 4.A and 3 in class 4.C). Each group was given an excerpt from *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in which the theme of surveillance, loss of freedom and privacy appears. Selected passages from the novel were followed by two questions, which this time were the same for all groups:

- 1 What is the overall atmosphere of excerpts?
- 2 Can you compare the level of surveillance in the excerpts with the surveillance/monitoring conducted on social media?

In class 4.C, Group C1 received two short passages from Chapter 1 (pages 2 and 12), Group C2 received a snippet from Chapter 6 (pages 45, 46 and 47), Group C 3 was given an excerpt from Chapter 8 (pages 56, 71). The following book excerpts were shared with the students from class 4.A: Group A1 received the identical excerpt as Group C1. Group A2 obtained the passage taken from Chapter 8 (pages 56, 71), excerpts from Chapter 2 (pages 16, 17, 18) were given to Group A3, and finally, Group A4 was provided with a passage taken from Chapter 5 (pages, 35, 42, and 43).

Class 4.A

Class 4.A was split into four groups, as mentioned above. Group A1 considered the atmosphere “Deep and scary, fearful.” Their response to question Nr. 2 was as follows, “This time when you post something else, you claim hate or negative feedback, not death or torture. Online surveillance is always present but not as hard as in 1984.” As per Group A2’s perspective, the overall atmosphere was defined as “very depressive, stalking and

scary.” In their response to the second question, it was written, “We think it is the same, because now everyone knows what you do and what you did. And in the past, you were in some stalking system. The worse is that now you do it voluntarily.” Regarding the initial question, members of Group A3 replied laconically, “It’s not bad.” When asked what it was supposed to mean relative to the question asked, learners responded they were not sure how to describe the atmosphere. The answer to the second question provided by them stated, “We think it’s hard, but it’s possible. We think the level of surveillance on social media is much higher than surveillance in the excerpts.” Group A4 came with a host of engaging views, regarding both the atmosphere and the similarities. Learners described the atmosphere as “sad “shady”, “depressed”, “confusing”, “weird”, “hard to understand”, “scary” or “turning people into robots”, pinpointing the common theme as anxiety and lack of privacy. As far as the second question is concerned, students in Group A4 did not arrive at unanimous conclusion; they instead produced a string of individual voices:

- 1 “I think it’s a bit scary because it’s really old but it’s similar to our world. It’s really dangerous that somebody can stalk you and you don’t know about them.”
- 2 “In the first excerpt there are part about inventing new words and destroying the old ones. I think nowadays, with social media it’s pretty similar.”
- 3 “Definitely not, I think people are too much sceptical about this theme. Of course, there are some similarities.”
- 4 “It’s not at all comparable as a whole, some parts might look the same, but they function differently.”

Class 4.C

Due to the absence of two students, the number of test groups was reduced to only three. Without a doubt, Group C1 worked the most focused and produced the most detailed answers to the given questions. For the first question, students responded, “The feelings of knowing you’re being watched and every sound you make is picked up. Uncomfortable, not safe, not knowing what could happen when you say a wrong thing.” Their answer to the second question read, “It happens all the time when you’re talking about your dream vacation etc, you just look on sites and you see exactly what you’ve

been conversing about with people, not on the internet. Every step you take is known about, but we might have no clue.” At this point, it was necessary to make sure that students understood the question and noticed any similarity between the example taken from Orwell and social media. The students agreed in response. Students belonging to Group C2 described the atmosphere of the segments as “dark, deep, sad”. They compared the chosen passage of the novel and the reality of social media: “Atmosphere is in some cases similar with social media because you can share private data with someone else like in reality.” Again, to ensure the second question was understood, a query was posed whether there was any similarity between the selected part from Orwell’s novel and reality. The students assented. Group C 3 described the presented passage as “scary” and “dark”. Unfortunately, even Group C 3 did not answer the second question quite accurately. They produced a response, “We’re still watched by someone.” Therefore, again the same question “Are the modes of surveillance described in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and social media similar?” An ambiguous answer came, “It might seem so.” Group 3 was asked to revise the outputs of their work, and the final result of their group work was as follows: Question 1 – “The main idea of the excerpt is how much social networks know about us and how much information they get from us based on browsing, for example on Google even if you have your list of things you are interested in Google will show you ads for things you are not interested in and what you have never searched for in your life but the search is something related to it. When it shows you an ad, it will ask you if you want to continue to see similar ads.” Their answer to Question 2 read, “The inferences that social media algorithms draw about us can be discriminatory, for example when they studied gender bias, they took 500 male and 500 female agents browsing job-related sites. They then looked at the ads that were shown to the agents. Despite similar viewing histories, men were shown ads offering high-paying jobs, while women were offered regular jobs. This discrimination does not make them illegal.” The revised responses were significantly better thanks to the participation of the strongest student who until then had considered the activity tedious and boring.

10.4 K-L-W Chart/Evaluation

The last part of the lesson was designed to ascertain learners’ engagement and development of attitudes towards the topic. Students were supposed to fill in the table on

the worksheet and appraise what they had learned, what they had already known and what was it they wanted to learn further about the topic.

Class 4.A

Some of the learners approached the answers in the chart from the perspective of George Orwell's novel, and some responded as if they were reacting to the topic of social media. An exciting collage of views reflecting students' current mood and approaches had emerged. The information collected points to the conclusion that students had been familiar with surveillance, lack of privacy, cookies, creators of social media, and algorithm functioning to the certain extent. Some students mentioned the issue of mental health ("Mental state of a person is really fragile") and stalking taking place on the internet. In the "I want to know" column, students cite that they would like to know more about "the book", "more about inventing new words in general", more about the governing system in the book, why Winston was stalked every day, more about what social media networking sites do with our data, more about controversies/manipulation or "the ending of the story". Some of the answers do not make much sense in the context of the topic, like "Why are people so rude to others?". In the "I learned" column students referred to having become aware of making new words (Newspeak), the concept of dystopia, personalized ads, the way social media work or *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. One student stated in the column that "Someone is still watching you and social media are kinda scary". Another student mentioned that certain similarities between the internet and Orwell's novel could be found. The complete answers can be seen in the table.

Class 4.C

Unfortunately, students in class 4.C needed to pay more attention when they were given the last task, and therefore, not everyone in the group filled in the answers in the attached table. Although the data is not complete, the students' observations are interesting. From the available answers, it can be seen that the students are aware of surveillance, monitoring, and no privacy on social media. Learners showed interest in getting more information about how social media and internet companies collect and handle their data, how to prevent constant surveillance via mobile phones, how to resist manipulation and how discrimination through algorithmic computation works. Students reported they had learned something new about the unfairness of algorithms and the fast spread of

disinformation. Two learners mentioned G. Orwell and certain similarity between his novel and the real world of social media. Despite my request that everyone write down at least one idea, the word “nothing” was expressed three times in the table. One of the students even stated, I quote “We knew everything”, which was explained to him as an exaggeration. Students’ responses can be seen in the table below.

11 LESSON 3

The ERR Framework Stage	Time	Teaching Method	Organisational Form	Teaching Aids
Evocation	5min	Introduction/Review	Individual, frontal	worksheet
	5min	Scanning	Individual, frontal	worksheet
Realisation	15min	Presentation "Disinformation"	Individual, frontal	worksheet
	10min	Buzz Groups	group learning	worksheet
Revocation	10min	Think-Pair-Share	Individual, frontal/ group learning	worksheet

The third lesson has been planned to summarise basic information about disinformation and introduce students to its standard classification, introduce students to fake and manipulative behaviour and its examples from internet websites and familiarise them with the concept of three types of social media bubbles. Using actual website examples, students will test whether they have fathomed the division and the topic and if they can use their knowledge in practice. The final part of the lesson is dedicated to comparing excerpts from the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with real disinformation.

Learners are engaged in the lesson by recalling/reviewing the content of the previous lesson and scanning through ten headlines related to real fake news. Students are introduced to the critical categories of disinformation during the presentation, as well as the four primary manipulative techniques used by individuals and companies on social media. The presentation comprises rules for fact-checking the content shown in the social media feed and a short notice on filter bubbles, epistemic bubbles, and echo chambers. Students are asked to explore the area of disinformation by working in groups, using real examples, and trying to classify each according to the preceding breakdown. The “Think-pair-share” method is a simple and time-saving variant of a dialogue, which is excellent preparation for teamwork (Sieglová, 2019, p. 62). Involving this technique, students will develop their acquired knowledge by employing excerpts from Orwell’s novel related to disinformation and propaganda. They will elaborate their theories on whether there are any points of contact between the real world of disinformation and the novel.

11.1 Introduction/Review

After a short introduction and review of the previous lesson, students are asked to use the scanning method in exercise Nr. 1, which comprises ten fake news, to get the gist of the posts. Learners should think about what the common topic of these posts is. They are asked to answer two questions as well. The first question examines whether students can guess the reason for creating such posts. The second question asks about the possible dangers of the given posts.

Class 4.A

Learners were briefed about the content of the lesson. The first five minutes were dedicated to the review focused on what students remember about Orwell's novel and ways of manipulation conducted by internet companies and social media networking sites. The answers could be considered satisfactory. Students could classify the book within the genre and concisely describe the plot. Regarding *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, students mainly remembered the final part describing Winston's submission to the system. In terms of manipulation, they mostly remembered discrimination techniques in the job online advertisement. Learners also plentifully mentioned sneaky practices in surveillance and data collection conducted by Google and Facebook.

Class 4.C

Students in 4.C were reasonably well-prepared for the last lesson, and they were looking forward to all the activities that were briefly introduced to them. Regarding the review of the previous lesson, some of the students shortly summarized the plot of Orwell's novel, pointing out that it is a story set in a totalitarian environment where the individual is constantly subjected to surveillance and manipulation. Indeed, they did not remember the details of the storyline and the plot. Nonetheless, when asked who the main character was, some learners answered that it was an "official" or a "clerk". Similarly to Class 4.A, learners in 4.C remembered well manipulative techniques employed for collecting personal data. Unlike their colleagues, students in Class 4.C did not forget to mention certain racist biases in the algorithmic computation for specific ethnicities.

11.2 Scanning

The first part of the third lesson has been designed to let students cursorily scan the upper part of the worksheet, where ten pictures of real disinformation were placed. They were asked to find the common theme and answer two other questions related to the motivation to create such a type of posts and their threats to the public.

Class 4.A

Five of fourteen present students in Class 4.A declared that the content they were studying was fake news. Four students did not answer this question at all. One learner referred to the presented excerpt as “outrageous articles which make no sense. Another student labelled the samples with the words, “absurdity” and “disinformation”. Other two learners made their point that “everything [in the extracts] is not true” and it is “tabloid press”. At this point, it was indispensable to clarify that expressions “tabloid press” and “disinformation” are not necessarily identical, even though yellow press often uses unethical journalistic methods twisting the truth. It was also imperative to ascertain whether students understood that all the excerpts were fake news. Learners admitted this fact in the subsequent discussion. As regards the second question “What do you think is the reason for creating these posts?” students cited a variety of options. “Views”, “attention”, or “popularity” seem to have been mentioned most frequently as the main reason. Students also stated, “damaging the reputation of a person”, “making chaos”, “making fun of someone”, “attacking these people” (meaning the victims of fake news), and “to embarrass and manipulate” as other motives. Most of the responses to the question of what the danger of fake news may be relied on these statements: Five learners said that this type of news may make people believe something that is not real. Six of them also added that such misleading facts may lead to hazardous behaviour and consequences (“spreading more hate”, “it can be dangerous for society”, “it can hurt someone”, “it can be dangerous for people who trust it”, “fake news may make some people do something bad to other people”, and “spreading more disinformation and making conspiracy theories”). Two students highlighted that users of social media platforms may be put in jeopardy mainly due to manipulation. One of the learners expressed his opinion that fake news is not perilous, stating that the only problem is it distracts users from real news.

Class 4.C

Two students were absent, so the data are not complete. However, almost all the present students, after a brief study of the examples, identified them as “fake news”, “lies”, “manipulation”, “controversial topics”, or “the introduction of a dramatic element where it normally does not belong”. Surprisingly, this class produced more ideas and perspectives on the matter than their peers in class 4.A, who are typically a more diligent and hard-working class. In response to question number two, students often mentioned the following terms, “ridicule”, “making fun of someone”, “increasing the articles’ readership based on the captivating headlines”, “damaging the subjects’ reputation with disinformation”, “spreading lies and falsehoods”, “earning money” or “inciting conflicts”. According to the students, the most common motive of the excerpts is manipulation (7x). As potential dangers, students listed the following possibilities: “convincing readers it is the truth”, “causing chaos or hatred”, “imposing opinions”, “instilling fear”, “sparking societal disputes”, “motivating to attack an individual and causing harm to others”.

11.3 Presentation on “Disinformation”

The following part of the lesson was focused on a presentation called “Manipulative Content and Social Bubbles”. The presentation was divided into four essential parts. The initial segment of the presentation included the concepts of disinformation and misinformation and the differences between them. Subsequently, a basic categorization of disinformation types was provided to the learners: *satire or parody*, *misleading content*, *imposter content*, *fabricated content*, *false connection*, *false context* and *manipulated content*. Each type was succinctly described, including a representative example. The following section was dedicated to the steps for verifying information condensed into brief phrases: “*Consider the source*”, “*read beyond*”, “*check the sources*”, “*supporting sources?*”, “*check the date*”, “*is it a joke?*”, “*check your biases*”, and finally “*ask the experts*”. The third part introduced the four most common deceptive online practices that students may encounter: *sockpuppetry*, *sealioning*, *astroturfing* and *catfishing*. The terms were explained through real-life examples. The final component of the presentation covered the three underlying categories of social bubbles: *filter bubbles*,

epistemic bubbles, and *echo chambers*. In order to avoid technical terminology, the types as mentioned above were defined as:

Filter bubbles – When you do not hear the other side.

Epistemic bubbles – When you do not see the other side.

Echo chambers – When you do not trust the other side.

Illustrative examples from the social media environment supplemented the explanation of the social bubbles' categories.

Class 4.A

Students in class 4.A attentively listened to the presentation and actively participated by asking questions. They were able to discern the difference between disinformation and misinformation quite accurately. It was evident that they needed to become more familiar with the categorisation of the disinformation itself. However, when explaining its various types, they quickly grasped the specific categories as they had had personal experience with most of them through social media. Of the four essential types of deceptive behaviour, students were only aware of the term “catfishing”, which they could explain effectively. Concerning social bubbles, it appeared that most students were not well-versed with these terms. One student, interested in computer science, was acquainted with the term “echo chamber” and had some vague awareness of “filter bubbles”. When asked if these artificial online communities could be dangerous, most learners agreed that they could be.

Class 4.C

Similar to class 4.A, the student had some awareness what disinformation was. However, they could not precisely determine which aspects are crucial for distinguishing it. From their responses, it was clear that they were not familiar with three of the presented terms and that they could define the deceptive technique called “catfishing”, yet not very accurately. The mention of “astroturfing”, especially the reference to guerilla marketing, genuinely surprised them in connection with the popular online booking platform Airbnb. The term “sealioning” was unfamiliar to the students, but after the explanation, some mentioned that they might have encountered this deceptive method on social media

networking sites. Out of the three possible social bubbles, students only marginally knew the concept of “echo chambers”. After becoming acquainted with these terms, students acknowledged that content personalisation, which commonly occurs on social media platforms and browser engines, can be a significant problem.

11.4 Buzz Groups

Next, the students were divided into buzz groups. Each group received a different example of real disinformation from the internet. Their task was to assess the type of disinformation and contemplate the main idea of each. As examples, modified versions from the online article “Evaluating Online Information: Types of Misinformation” from Iowa University Libraries were utilised (accessible from <https://guides.lib.uiowa.edu/c.php?g=849536&p=6077637>). Students were allowed to use the notes they had taken during the presentation to complete the task. One group received an excerpt featuring a photograph of Mark Zuckerberg, a headline, and an introductory paragraph, followed by an image of an audiovisual type of disinformation and an image with a short caption. Another group received two longer texts, one with the headline “Biden Urges Americans Not to Let Dangerous Online Rhetoric Humanize Palestinians” and the other claiming that “Sugar as addictive as cocaine, heroin, studies suggest”. The third group received a photograph of a woman with a short caption and an extended excerpt from a newspaper critiquing a political decision.

Class 4.A

Students in class 4.A, while enthusiastically engaging in the task, struggled to correctly identify most of the presented disinformation. The main issue, according to their feedback, was the lack of context and their limited experience in categorizing disinformation. Once the context of the articles was revealed to them, it could be observed that the categorization began to make sense to them. Regarding the identification of the main idea in the presented excerpts, students most mentioned following reasons: an attempt to harm someone, provoke negative attitudes towards the individuals mentioned in the articles, demean the subjects in the excerpts, radicalize parts of society, gain more attention or more views and alter the political views in society. One of the students, in the context of an article comparing the effects of sugar to heroin stated, “I think that

everybody knows that sugar is “drug” [sic], so the creators want to make this context so that people don’t take too much sugar.” This somewhat less skilfully articulated statement brought an interesting perspective within the context of evaluating the excerpts. However, the student was explained that the article was not written with good intentions, and if he had paid more attention to reading, he would have fathomed it.

Class 4.C

The learners were divided into four groups. Each group received a unique selection of real disinformation from the internet. In addition to the three excerpts used in the lesson with class 4.A, a fourth example was used. It contained a short text titled “White Tour Groups Shrinks Down to Molecular Size for Journey into President and a photo without a caption or description. A very pleasant surprise was that, in comparison to their peers from class 4.A, more than half of the learners correctly defined the type of disinformation according to the given criteria. They correctly classified posts that involved satire and false connection (an internet article comparing the effects of sugar to hard drugs). However, they often misclassified the photo excerpt in which Barack Obama and Vladimir Putin were juxtaposed. They assumed it to be a *false context*, but the example should have been correctly categorized as *manipulated content*. The motives for creating fake news repeated the themes from the previous activity, including damaging someone’s reputation, promoting a particular individual or spreading fear and panic.

11.5 Think-Pair-Share

Before the final phase of the lesson, the class was divided into equally sized groups, as it was necessary to discuss gathered facts within the group during the last part of the “think-pair-share” activity. Each student received a copy of an excerpt from Orwell’s novel. Excerpt 1 was taken from pages 26 and 27. The text for Excerpt 2 can be found on pages 27 and 28. Both passages deal with the data manipulation within the Ministry of Truth agenda. For the sake of smoother work, both excerpts were accompanied by a Czech translation on the other side of the worksheet. Students, however, were instructed to use the translation only as a last resort. They were first informed to study the text individually, then discuss their findings with a classmate, followed by a group of four and ultimately arrive at a conclusion within the group. After studying the excerpts and discussing them,

the students were required to answer the question on the worksheet which was, “Can you find similarities between the examples of real misinformation and the manipulative news content from the excerpts of the novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*?”

Class 4.A

Students were provided with instructions on how the last lesson was structured and precisely how to proceed in order to fulfil the scenario of using “think-pair-share” activity. They were informed that they had ten minutes for the entire activity. Students were advised to take notes in the text and highlight in colour the parts related to the control question. Unfortunately, none of the students utilized this option. It may have been the reason for what the answers to the control question revealed – not everyone clearly understood the assignment. The goal of the activity was to find a possible resemblance between the excerpt of Orwell’s novel and the world of disinformation. Within the groups, somewhat misleading answers, such as “misleading or fabricated content is probably the closest to the excerpt” appeared. However, such a reply did not correspond to the assignment. Besides one laconic answer, which was “nothing”, probably meaning “no similarities had been found”, there were several instances of the answer “that in some countries, disinformation is similar to the excerpt”. A few responses mentioned “rewriting history” or “changing history” or “using influential people to mislead normal people”. Unfortunately, from these responses, it is not entirely clear whether learners attempted to compare the novel and reality or just described the status quo in one of them. Some students interpreted the answer to the question as a description of practices they had learned from the text. They then verbalized their findings as a summary of methods and procedures that lead to concealing the truth from readers, emphasizing that “today we can encounter such a situation (of twisting the facts) even more frequently”. One of the students, a C2 certificate holder, who is constantly in opposition, claimed to have had found “absolutely no resemblance”, which did not surprise me. Nevertheless, similar opinions appeared with greater frequency than expected.

Class 4.C

The students received the same excerpts as Class 4.A, Excerpt 1 (pages 26 and 27), and Excerpt 2 (pages 27 and 28, revealing data manipulation at the Ministry of Truth. After

briefly explaining of what the “think-pair-share” activity meant, students got to work. Within ten minutes, they created an exciting interpretation of the excerpts. However, in the context of comparing the world of real disinformation and the fictional reality of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, they could not find any parallels. When asked if they noticed any similarities, they almost unanimously agreed. Nevertheless, they were unable to explain why they did not record their observations in their worksheets. Instead, the learners extensively described what they had learned from the excerpts. For example, students included the following ideas to explain the gist of the literary segment: information alteration, spreading lies, destroying original content, and overlaying it with modified information, an attempt to twist the truth to make economic results look more favourable, or enforcing a single truth. Unfortunately, we did not manage to obtain the desired data here, except for the mentioned oral responses.

12 LESSON 4

The last lesson of the instructional block, “The use of George Orwell’s Novel 1984 in teaching the topic of social media in ELT” was divided into approximately two equally long parts. The first 25 minutes were dedicated to presenting projects students had worked on in small groups. The students were tasked with creating a concept for their own social media network, categorising it based on discussed criteria, defining the target audience, specifying the type of content it would mediate, and, most importantly, outlining how the platform would combat potential manipulation, surveillance by internet companies, and prevent the spread of misinformation. The second part of the lesson (20 minutes) focused on answering six control questions to provide insights into the previous lessons’ impact on the students. The data for both parts is incomplete, given the fact that four students were absent in Class 4.C during the last lesson. In Class 4.A, one female student was absent due to illness. Despite the absent students, the lessons in both classes proceeded without complications. The learners were well-prepared, and the absence of their classmates did not adversely affect the quality of the presentation delivered. For the sake of clarity, the presentations will be analysed separately in the next chapter. Regarding the segment dedicated to the interview with the students, it appeared that some questions were formed too intricately considering the students’ language proficiency. Therefore, a simplified explanation was provided on the spot, particularly for question nr. 6, where students were prone to describe the selected words from Orwell’s novel rather than comparing them to the reality of social media networking sites. The entire interview will be dissected to enhance the clarity of the text further in the relevant chapter.

The interview comprised these six questions:

- 1 In what way do you think social media could contribute to creating a world similar to that described in the novel 1984?
- 2 Did excerpts from the novel 1984 help you better understand the dangers of certain social media features, such as surveillance and control of information?
- 3 After exploring the dystopian theme are you interested in getting familiar with more dystopian novels? If so, why?

- 4 What do you consider the greatest danger of contemporary social media, and in what ways do you see similarities between social media and the world depicted in the novel 1984?
- 5 Would you say that getting to know the novel 1984 has enriched your opinion on social media in any way?
- 6 Could you identify parallels between the following expressions in the novel 1984 and the world of social media (telescreen, doublethink, newspeak, thought police, room 101)?

13 EVALUATION OF THE PRESENTATION

As the chapter title suggests, the final projects of individual classes will be presented and evaluated here. For this task, each class was divided into five groups. In these groups, the students were assigned to prepare a presentation according to the specified criteria mentioned in the previous chapter. Each student was also expected to actively contribute to the actual presentation, a goal successfully achieved in both classes. All groups submitted their work on time and in the required quality. Students demonstrated unexpected creativity and imagination, and their final works were exceptionally well-executed. Individual works will be introduced within the respective classes below.

Class 4.A

Group 1

Group 1 consisted of four girls. Their safe social platform was called *Beesafe* and is mentioned to be a social networking site similar to Facebook, which offers enhanced protection for both younger and older people. The protection that is offered for younger people (15–35) comprises a multilevel authentication when signing in, using the user’s ID, name, age and other mandatory items, as well as scanning the user’s face. The security provided for the older users, in addition to the previous steps requires setting up a bank account. Simultaneously, it also guarantees protection against fake accounts. The site is equipped with a system for detecting and deleting fake accounts. It also allows the user to choose if he or she wants to follow requests. The site can notify the users whether they have received an automatic message and warns them when their bank account is endangered.

Group 2

Two male students formed Group 2. They named their social platform *learn.gub* and its target audience was mentioned to be teenagers between 12 and 19. The wordplay *gub*, derived from the combination of the words “group” and “hub”, implies that the social site has been designed to create a secure study environment. This platform focuses on image/short video informative content and ensures the safety of its users through a verified protocol. The process of verifying users is based on their expertise in certain subjects as maths or literature. These users will be rewarded for their contributions

through a special monetization programme. Unverified users will be tagged as “unverified” with a note that their posts can contain misinformation or disinformation.

Group 3

Group 3 also comprised two male students. Their social media site was named *Y* and was designed primarily to provide users with image posting/sharing content. As students mentioned, it was also intended to be a space for discussion with a slight moderation – similar to a hybrid of Instagram and Twitter. The target clientele should consist of users between 16 and 30. The main topics found on this site are everyday life, gaming, politics, anime and movies, music, and other forms of entertainment. Regarding maintenance, security and moderation, main pages will be overseen by the platform’s moderators, whereas smaller communities on the site will moderate their content themselves. Inappropriate and illegal content featuring deliberate racism, sexism and disinformation will be removed. The site guarantees its users that their personal data will not be sold to third parties and its finances will come from personalised advertisement. Premium paid accounts will not have advertising displayed. Despite having moderators on *Y*, some misinformation is bound to slip through. For this reason, students came up with the idea of including a banner within discussion forums, stating that not everything users read is true, and it is highly advisable to fact-check the content.

Group 4

There were two students of each gender in Group 4. The students opted for the name *ConnectU* for their social media platform. It is supposed to be a safe, free discussion forum for students in order to facilitate mutual cultural exchange and concurrently a place where students collaborate on mastering their academic curriculum. The users are intended to be divided into study groups according to age so that each student joins the appropriate group. Learners will be allowed to upload image or video content, mostly related to the study areas – the site will provide the user with a plethora of thematic groups (for instance, biology, theoretical physics) Anticipated primary users are students aged 14 and above, who are expected to have a primary interest in this platform. The credibility of content will be verified through partnerships with reputable fact-checking organizations. Any potentially suspicious content will be flagged, and users will be recommended to seek information from verified sources.

Group 5

Two female and two male learners also formed the last group. The students named their network *SoundSense* and chose “We’ve heard it all” as their marketing slogan. The social media platform is envisioned as a music recognition site designed for all age groups and safeguarded against third-party misuse. *SoundSense* can help the user identify a song. It provides basic information about songs, artists, or albums and creates a playlist that is later shared with the befriended users. The site employs artificial intelligence as an assistant in discovering music – users utilize a recording module, where they sing a melody or write a part of the song they remember, and AI searches for the corresponding track.

Class 4.C

Group 1

Group 1 comprised two female students. They dubbed their social network *Estudiantes*, claiming its attributes resemble Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, except that it is exclusively designed for students who seek answers to their everyday problems on this platform. Account creation is free and is not age restricted. Students should only pay a small authorization fee for tutoring and requested materials. Users are supposed to share their knowledge from their fields of study, share photos and videos taken at school events, purchase study materials from other learners or arrange tutoring from a selected student. If the provided study material is determined to be counterfeit, the user risks temporary or permanent suspension of access to the network. Unfortunately, the students did not provide any options for protecting the network from potential surveillance or the influence of misinformation.

Group 2

Group 2 consisted of three female students and one male. As a title for their safe social networking site, the students chose the name *SeniorCircle*. The name can suggest that it is a social network dedicated to seniors, providing them with a safe and friendly environment for interaction, sharing experience and community support. The students developed a sophisticated protection system enabling seniors to choose who can view their profiles, posts, and personal data. The platform is designed to employ a user verification system to eliminate fake profiles. It also furnishes seniors with a tool to report any suspicious or inappropriate conduct, offensive content, or dubious contact. A team of

moderators is employed to monitor the content and interactions. The platform uses vigorous cybersecurity precautions against possible information security threat.

Group 3

Three female students formed Group 3. The learners named their social network *Full Up*. They introduced it as a wide-ranging social media platform, combining features of social networking sites with image/video-based sites and instant messaging systems. The platform is suitable for users aged 18 and above. It utilizes ID verification to access the account and employs source verification for posting and sharing content. The students also mentioned that fake identities are eliminated on this network but did not specify the exact method. To prevent the spread of misinformation, students on their network turned off the reposting function. They implemented standard reporting options along with the ability to block and ban users with no possibility of returning to the platform.

Group 4

The fourth group was formed by only one student, as she learned about the assignment late due to her previous absence, and thus prepared the presentation independently, having no interest in joining any of the existent groups. The student entitled her social network *SecureSocial*. The site is supposed to be used only by students aged between 13 and 26 and its primary purpose is to share images and notes related to education. Regarding precautions, the content is filtered to prevent inappropriate material from reaching the end user. In the case of the user's inappropriate behaviour, the social network responds promptly. The student highlighted that the user undergoes authentication during the login, although the exact process was not specified. Like Instagram, users can set their profile to private within their accounts, and thus limiting access to their content for other users.

Group 5

The last group consisted of three students – two female and one male. The students named their social networking site *Translate-Me* and chose “Making friends has a new interface” as its motto. The learners devised a variation of a social network where dictionaries or translators are unnecessary. A user only needs to create an account, find a potential friend in the target country, and start conversing. The social network can translate up to one hundred languages in real-time. The trio also introduced bonuses that come with registering on this network. If a user signs up on another user's recommendation, he or she will be provided with 10 TranslateCoins. When the user has earned 20

TranslateCoins, he or she can purchase a funny emoticon, and for 50 TranslateCoins, it is possible to acquire a new avatar. When it comes to the user's security, upon creating an account, only basic information is required. On the other hand, the user must use a strong password. Content from *Translate-Me* cannot be linked or shared elsewhere. If a user's account is hacked, they receive an immediate notification. Reported accounts are publicly flagged.

14 EVALUATION OF THE INTERVIEW WITH STUDENTS

As indicated in Lesson 4's schedule, in its second part, after the students had done their presentation, they were required to respond in writing six questions. They had 20 minutes to respond. In case of any discrepancies or misunderstandings in the text, students could ask for clarification on the specific idea behind the question. None of the learners took advantage of this opportunity. Upon evaluating their responses, it was evident that not everyone understood the control questions correctly, and some provided very general answers, unfortunately leading to distortion of the expected results. Nevertheless, it can be observed that the use of Orwell's novel prompted students to contemplate the use of social media at least.

Class 4.A

The very first question brought forth diverse opinions. Some students believed that it was not possible for social media to contribute to the creation of totalitarian states because it requires "a specific group of people who take control". Other students stated that it could happen due to the increasing level of censorship on networks and because of misinformation. Learners also mentioned that increased manipulation or redefining of words and meanings, such as in the slogan "from the river to the sea", could contribute to such a change. Ten out of thirteen present students stated that the excerpts from Orwell's novel helped them better understand the hidden dangers on social media. One learner even mentioned that she was not aware of how serious the situation was. Unfortunately, only two students stated that dystopian themes interested them enough to read another cult book. One student noted that he had read both *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The reasons why students were interested in this literary genre varied from the belief that it is too depressing and nihilistic to mentioning their favourite genres such as comedy-themed books or romantic stories.

As the greatest threats of social media, students identified misinformation, fake news, favouring only one option (cancel culture), personalised advertising, constant surveillance, propaganda, inappropriate handling of personal data by users. As similarities with *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, students mostly cited misinformation, which in the novel occurs in printed media, and constant stalking through telescreen. One student

said that he believes that the internet companies literally eavesdrop on us, similarly, like in Orwell's novel. On the other hand, one student stated that many things on social media are "fake", as in the book. Only five students mentioned that encountering Orwell's novel had enriched them in the context how social media operate. Two were not sure, and remaining learners replied that their knowledge of the social media environment was sufficient beforehand.

Regarding parallels between the selected terms from the novel and the world of social media, truly interesting interpretations emerged. *Telescreen* was likened, for instance, to a mobile phone, spying on users through web cams, an application in user's phone, or even propaganda spread on networks. *Doublethink* was paraphrased as a representation of how politicians present themselves publicly, likened to controversy, another term for manipulation or hypocrisy. *Newspeak* was uniformly labelled by students as slang used by teenagers on social networks. Some students used the term *Thought police* as a reference to moderators on social networking sites or "Twitter freaks". *Room 101* was aptly categorized by one student as the dark side of the internet, while another student equated it to the "human head", that is, "the brain".

Class 4.C

The students mostly agreed that social media most significantly intrude into privacy. One student mentioned that the idea of social media influencing the emergence of a totalitarian society seemed absurd to her. However, she acknowledged that social media does share specific characteristics with Orwell's novel. The students almost unanimously responded that excerpts from *Nineteen Eighty-Four* helped them better perceive the dangers hidden on social media. One student expressed undisguised surprise at how the reality of the novel and social media resembles in terms of surveillance and loss of privacy.

Responses regarding the possibility of students exploring dystopias in literature were mixed. Some students said that they would consider reading books, while others stated that this theme was too depressing for them or that reading is not their favourite pastime. The students identified the greatest dangers of social media as manipulation of personal information, surveillance of their activities on networks, the spread of misinformation and fake news, and the loss of privacy. In these areas, the learners found intersections with

Orwell's novel. Eight out of eleven students noted that encountering *Nineteen Eighty-Four* had enriched their understanding of how social media operate.

For the final question, students elaborated more on the meaning of each specific word taken from the novel rather than focusing on parallels between their meanings and the world of social media. Several students responded that the *telescreen* essentially equates to constant social network surveillance. Some students likened *doublethink* to social media, which convinces users what to think. Two learners compared *newspeak* to slang used for communication within social platforms. One student analogized *Room 101* to the internet because it knows everything about its users.

15 EVALUATION OF THE ESSAY

Students were given precisely seven days to complete the essay assignment, which posed the question “Are social media Orwellian?” The length of the work was specified as 200 to 250 words. Students were forewarned that, while the assignment might encourage a comparison between Orwell’s novel and the world of social media, under no circumstances they were obligated to draw such parallels if they did not personally identify with such a stance. The purpose of this assignment was to assess, through written work, whether the entire instructional unit, and especially the use of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, had any significant impact on the students’ critical thinking. 29 essays were gathered in total, with the vast majority being of high quality. With the students’ permission, the best essays will be available for review in the appendices.

Class 4.A

Students from class 4.A held slightly divergent views on whether social media are Orwellian in comparison to their peers from class 4.C. Their opinions were not equivocally inclined towards agreeing with the essay prompt. One student expressed the view that such thinking is paranoid and characterized it as a pessimistic and exaggerated assertion. He added that if someone were to use social media as a weapon, there would certainly be people who would stop such a person. Another learner stated that despite certain similarities between Orwell’s novel and the functioning of social media, one cannot speak of inherent likeness. He articulated that “social media are a complex and evolving tool that necessitates responsible use and awareness of privacy concerns.” Another student highlighted the differences rather than similarities by opining that, unlike the surveillance depicted in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, social media are driven by users’ participation and choice. Understandably, students expressed themselves in their essays on social media from the perspective of their users, attempting to highlight their merits, such as the claim that the internet is a free space where everyone can express themselves freely.

In several essays, the stance was expressed that it is chiefly members of older generations who view social media primarily in a negative light. It was interesting to find out that students perceive social media not only as a source of entertainment but also as a source

of information. On the other hand, the remaining 13 students stated that social media, respectively certain aspects of their functioning, exhibit unmistakable similarities with *Nineteen Eighty-Four* – for instance, in terms of the user surveillance, the spread of misinformation, the functioning of algorithms, and their influence on formation of echo chambers and filter bubbles. Regarding the latter, one student expressed that “this filtering of information can lead to a limited exposure to diverse perspectives, reminiscent of the *newspeak* in the novel.” One student emphasized a significant parallel by noting that algorithms function similarly to *Big Brother*, incessantly collecting information about our online interactions. Another student stated that “we as students are aware of the potential of Orwellian aspects of social media, and therefore, behave cautiously on these platforms.” Despite varying angles of view, most of the students in class 4.A expressed either a certain or a clear similarity between social media and the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Class 4.C

In class 4.C, students submitted 13 essays. One of them did not include conclusion, and one essay was disqualified from the final evaluation as it was identified as plagiarism. Similar to their peers in class 4.A, students initially expressed positive views on social media. Their attitudes ranged from the belief that social media fosters global connectivity, allowing them to bridge geographical distances, share their experiences, and engage in meaningful conversations to the opinion that social media enable those who cannot be in a frequent contact to maintain relationships. One student expressed the view that as teenagers, they can gain a plethora of experiences on the internet. Another student, on the contrary, stated that on social media it is much easier for their users to talk about problems or issues that may be embarrassing for the person. Introverts, he claimed, can find friends more easily, and if you follow a successful entrepreneur, it can inspire you to achieve your own dreams. Of course, the perspective emphasizing the different perception of social media usage from the viewpoint of the older generation occurred again. The same student mentioned that the young people use social media for communication, sharing photos, ideas, or searching information within the area of their interest.

Among students, when expressing themselves whether social media are Orwellian, was not found a single voice contradicting this assertion. Naturally some opinions were of a

more uncertain nature, but nonetheless, such unanimous agreement on the dystopian dimension of social media was a significant surprise. It was evident that students had a relatively extensive insight into the issues. One student found parallels between “the dark side” of social media and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in constant surveillance, data collection and the influence of algorithms. The same student mentioned the term “The Big Tech” in his essay, an analogous term to *Big Brother* in the world of tech giants. The opinion that we do not fully live in a world like *Nineteen Eighty-Four* but that such a transformation could happen suddenly was expressed a few times. In a similar way, another student argued that to prevent a similar dystopian transformation “it is essential for individuals and society to strike a balance between the benefits and risks, guarding against pitfalls of an increasingly Orwellian digital world”. Another student saw a connection between Orwell’s novel and the world of social media “on many levels”, as if the government was watching the users’ every digital step. The opinions of remaining learners did not vary much, with many associating the Orwellian dimension of social media with government surveillance through this very medium. Two students even expressed the impression that they were literally eavesdropped on. They reacted to the fact that after everyday conversations with friends, advertisements for the products they recently talked about with someone suddenly appeared on their screens.

CONCLUSION

Based on the exploration of utilising George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in teaching the topic of social media in ELT, this diploma thesis aimed to assess its potential impact on fostering critical thinking in relation to social media usage. Additional objectives included examining whether the novel could influence students' language proficiency and whether, following this teaching block, students would express interest in delving further into the genre of dystopian literature.

The practical component of the research employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, specifically using a convergent parallel mixed method. The quantitative phase focused on two questionnaires: one gauging the attitudes of students participating in the project towards social media use, and the other mapping the approach of English language teachers to the topic of social media in ELT. The qualitative segment centered on interviews with selected teachers, inquiring about their experience with the use of George Orwell's works in teaching social media, as well as observations of student performance during four planned lessons and evaluations of assigned tasks, presentations and essays.

The findings suggest a certain but a relatively constrained potential. The integration of George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* into teaching social media in ELT appears to offer valuable insights and benefits; however, its impact seems circumscribed in scope. While the use of the dystopian narrative contributes to foster critical thinking and stimulating moderate interest in dystopian literature, its influence on English language proficiency and attitudes to social media usage appears somewhat limited. The timeless relevance of Orwell's last novel and certain parallels in the aspects of surveillance, manipulation and loss of privacy prompted students to contemplate how social media operate and the approach that should be taken toward their use. Many students, in their essays, drew connections between contemporary social media and the world depicted in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The „safe social media“ project, presented by the students to their classmates, exceeded expectations by showcasing a creative approach grounded in a detailed understanding of the social media issues.

Unfortunately, the project duration proved to be rather brief to enable the author to assess the true impacts of incorporating Orwell's novel in teaching on the language proficiency of the participating students. Despite this limitation, the endeavour provided valuable

insights into the students' critical thinking abilities and their capacity to apply literary themes to real-world scenarios. The concise timeframe, however, underscores the need for more extensive studies to fully gauge the lasting effects of utilising *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in English language teaching.

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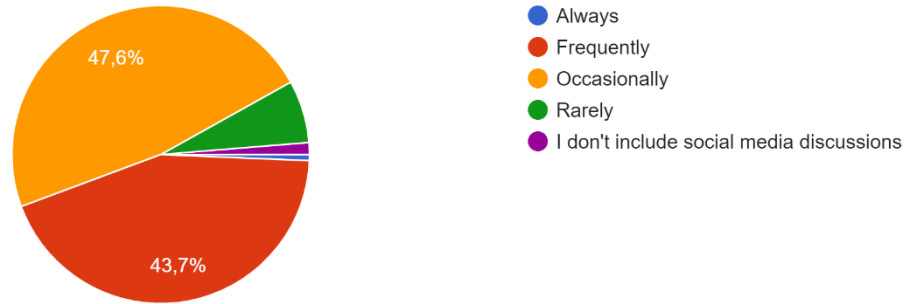
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APPENDICES

The Questionnaire – Integration of Social Media Education in ELT

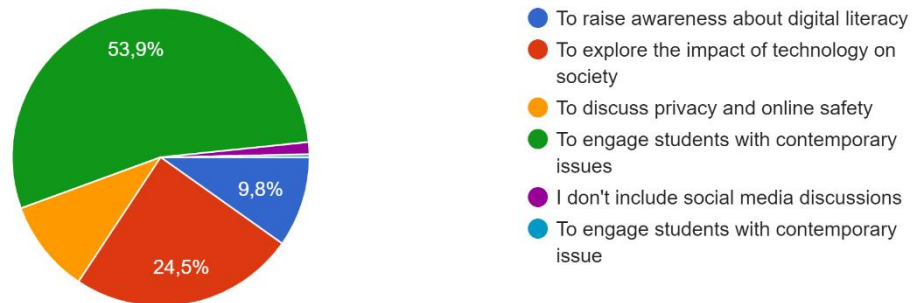
How frequently do you incorporate discussions about social media in your English language classes?

309 odpovědí



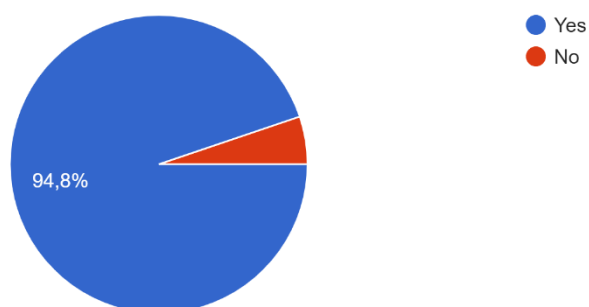
If you include discussions about social media, what is your primary reason?

306 odpovědí



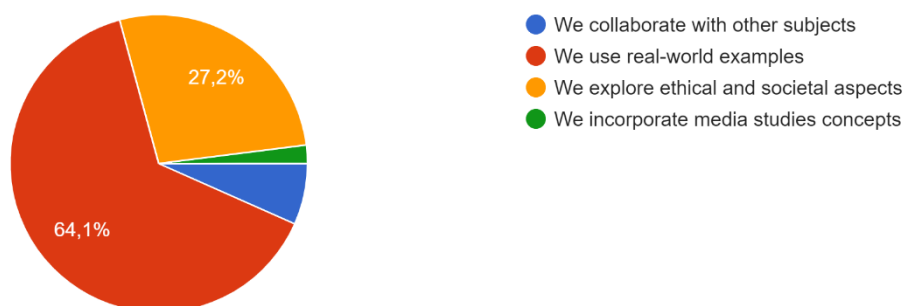
Do you believe it's important to address social media topics in English language classes?

309 odpovědí



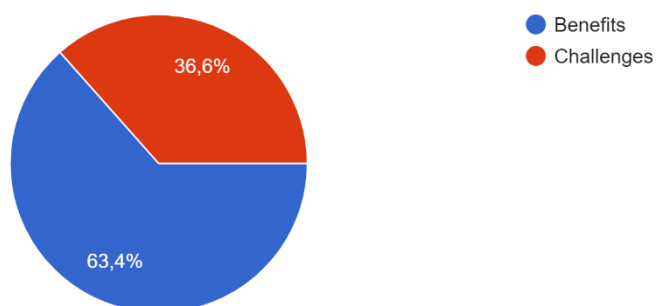
How do you integrate interdisciplinary connections into your teaching when discussing social media topics?

301 odpovědí



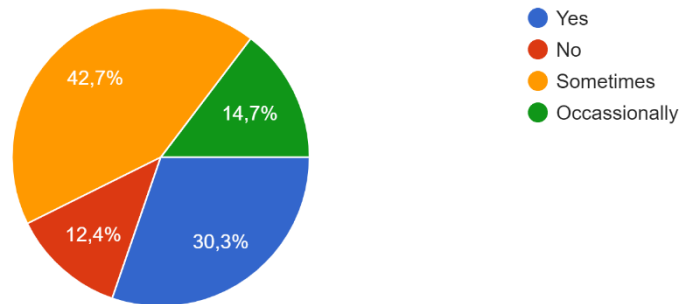
Have you noticed any specific benefits or challenges when incorporating discussions about social media in your English language classes?

309 odpovědí



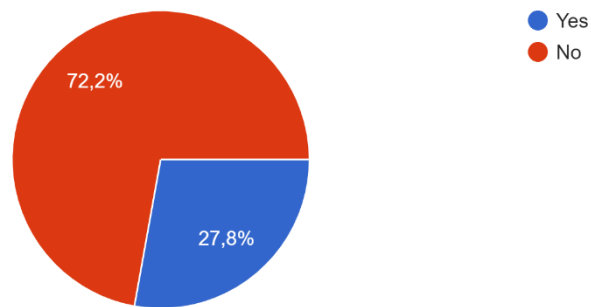
Do you encourage your students to reflect on their own social media usage as part of your lessons?

307 odpovědí



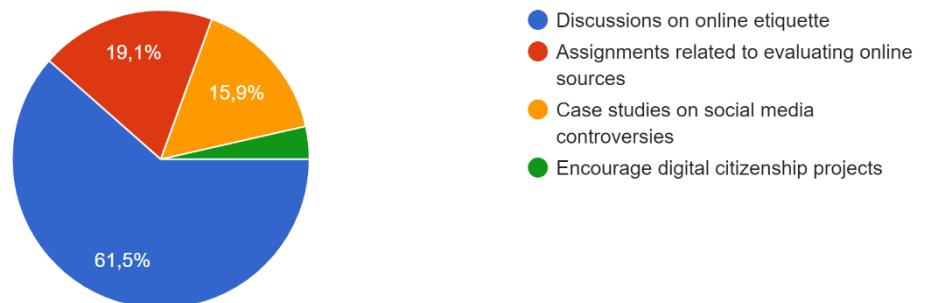
Have you noticed any changes in your students' attitudes or behaviour towards social media as a result of your lessons?

309 odpovědí



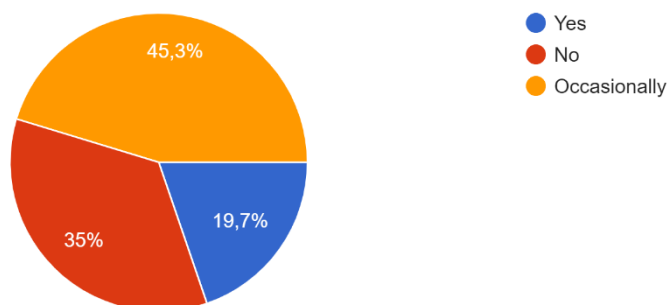
How do you foster critical thinking and responsible use of social media among your students?

309 odpovědí



Do you provide resources or guidance on online privacy and security to your students?

309 odpovědí



Do you think that students' increased awareness of social media's impact on society can lead to positive changes in their online behavior?

309 odpovědí

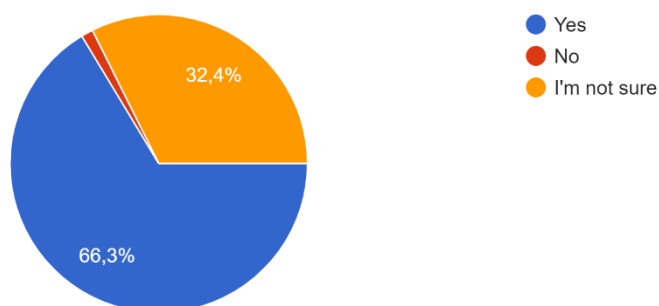


Table 1.0 – Lesson 1: Criteria-based classification 4.C

Criteria	Platform	WS 1	WS 2	WS 3	WS 4	WS 5	WS 6	WS 7	WS 8	WS 9	WS1 10	WS 11
Social Networking Sites	Facebook	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Instagram	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
	Snapchat	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1
	Linkedin	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	QQ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Qzone	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mastodon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Weibo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Twitter	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Instant Messaging Systems	Messenger	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

	Whatsapp	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
	Wechat	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
	Telegram	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Viber	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
	Snapchat	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	Discord	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Image-Based Sites	Pinterest	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Video Sharing/Streaming	Twitch	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
	Douyin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Youtube	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Tiktok	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
	Kuaishou	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
	Teams	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Discussion Forums	Reddit	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Quora	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Micro-and-Macro Blogging	Twitter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Tumblr	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Teams	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0

Table 1.1 – Lesson 1: Criteria-based classification 4.A

Criteria	Platform	WS 1	WS 2	WS 3	WS 4	WS 5	WS 6	WS 7	WS 8	WS 9	WS1 0	WS1 1	WS1 2	WS1 3	WS1 4
Soc. Netw. Sites	Facebook	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	Instagram	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
	Snapchat	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Linkedin	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
	QQ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Qzone	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Mastodon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	Weibo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Twitter	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1
	Instant Mess. Systems	Messenger	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
Whatsapp		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
Wechat		0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Telegram		0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Viber		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Snapchat		1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1
Image-Based Sites	Discord	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0
	Pinterest	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
	Video Sharing/Streaming	Twitch	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
		Douyin	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0

	Youtube	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Tiktok	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
	Kuaishou	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Teams	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Discussion Forums	Reddit	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
	Quora	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
Micro-and-Macro Blogging	Twitter	0	0	0	0	0		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Tumblr	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
	Teams	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

1 – social medium classified correctly

0 – social medium not mentioned

0 in the red square – social medium misclassified

Table 2.0 – Orwell’s Excerpt – 4.A

Student	Question 1: Emotions	Question 2: Interest in the story
Student 1	Feeling of stalking, fright and strong will	It's definitely interesting, but it isn't for me. If I would read it then I would feel really anxious and that's not a feeling I want when I'm reading a book.
Student 2	Prison in a free world	x
Student 3	Negative, depressing, scared that this really exists (Russia)	Not really, I'm not a big fan of reading, but the story looks interesting
Student 4	Hopelessness, and feeling of being nothing but a subject	Not really, as I know the overarching story and I don't really like reading books
Student 5	Paranoia, fear	Learn about it - yes, read the book - no
Student 6	I'm a little bit scared, interested	Yes, maybe, but I'm not definitely a person who loves reading
Student 7	Anxiety, paranoia, feeling of oppression, insecurity, and hopelessness	Yes, it seems deep, the feeling of hopelessness gives me shivers
Student 8	Confusion	Yes, I'd like to know how it ends and how the main characters are evolving
Student 9	I feel little scared of it and it looks like someone is stalking us	It seems interesting, but I don't like these stories
Student 10	x	x
Student 11	*absent	*absent
Student 12	frustration, anxiety, insecurity	Yes, I'd like to learn more but in my native language

Table 2.1 – Orwell’s Excerpt - 4.C

Student	Question 1: Emotions	Question 2: Interest in the story
Student 1	stress, cold, dark, fear	yes
Student 2	fear, anxiety	yes
Student 3	fear, anxiety	no
Student 4	weird feelings	definitely no
Student 5	disgust, sad, scared	I don't think I'd like to learn more about the story. It's so dark for me
Student 6	crazy, sad, dark atmosphere, weird	no, it's really weird and I'm disappointed
Student 7	darkness	yes, it's interesting
Student 8	dark, very sad	no answer
Student 9	dark, sad, cruel	no answer
Student 10	uncomfortable, trapped, hopeless, watched	yes, I'd like to give it a try
Student 11	anxiety, fear, darkness	sure, but I'd be depressed
Student 12	dark, depression, sad	yes

Table 3.0 – K-W-L Chart – 4.C

STUDENT	KNOW	WANT TO KNOW	LEARNED
Student 1	I knew that our mobile phones are monitoring our activity and show us advertisements so we buy more things	How to stop my mobile phone from monitoring me.	I learned about the possibility of the rapid spread of information on the internet which is the same as in the passage from G. Orwell
Student 2	I know that technologies are monitoring my (our) activity, trying to show me (us) more things about the theme to manipulate	I'd like to learn how I can resist manipulation and monitoring. Also, I'd like to expand my knowledge about website verification.	I learned about more types of spreading misinformation and disinformation. Interesting was that the internet websites can spread rumours to manipulate as in Orwell's novel
Student 3	G. Orwell was a writer	How discrimination and advertisement on social media work	Nothing is fair under the control of algorithms
Student 4	Nothing	Nothing	Something new about social media
Student 5	You don't have privacy	What they do with my data	Everything you share on the internet stays there forever
Student 6	We knew everything	Nothing	All you share on social media stays there forever
Student 7	Personalized ads, no privacy	How they collect the data	That there is an interesting book about being watched [sic]
Student 8	x	x	x
Student 9	x	x	x
Student 10	x	x	x
Student 11	x	x	x
Student 12	x	x	x

Table 3.1 – K-W-L Chart – 4.A

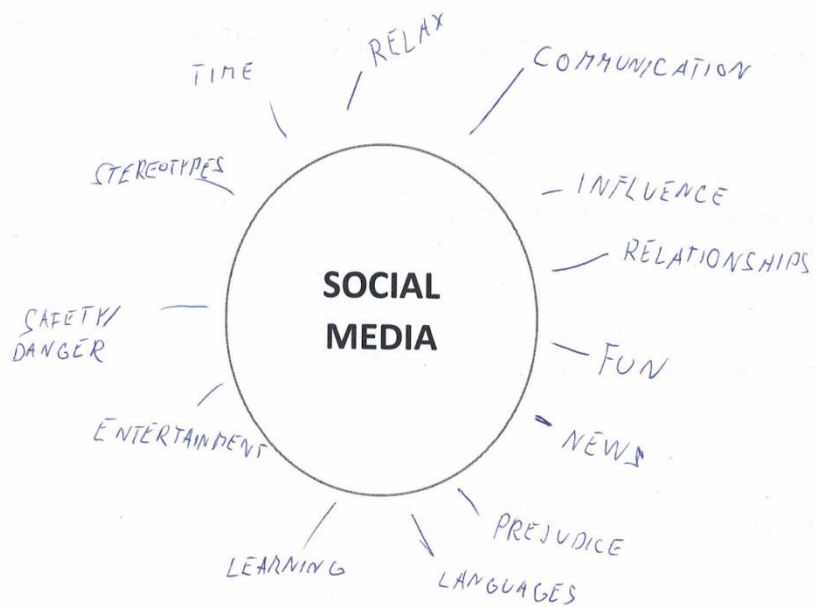
STUDENT	KNOW	WANT TO KNOW	LEARNED
Student 1	it's really interesting because now you can see that a lot of people can't explain something because they haven't got vocabulary or maybe someone can stalk you on website. [sic]	I want to know more informations because it's similar with the our world [sic]	That anyone can hear us or know what we want to buy etc. Because they can hack (unreadable)
Student 2	loss of freedom, people were watching everyone > lack of privacy	more about inventing new words in general	that inovating new words has been done in a hard way - good - why didn't they just use ungood? I think that they were just trying to make it sound pretty
Student 3	it's about education	I want to know more about this book	How works social media, books of Orwell, it's educative
Student 4	lack of privacy, everyone is watched, turning you into a robot	x	Dystopia - bad place, things that are perfect can turn into horrible
Student 5	I knew a lot about surveillance on social media	more controversies about data/misuse and manipulation	some controversies, data manipulation
Student 6	that everything he does everyone sees	why it was the way it was and whay wa there so much stalking	that the system was bad and people were mentally down because of that (bullying?)
Student 7	Mental state of a person is really fragile	When the feelings of fear and uselessness started (beauty standards?)	That there was always something, some problems along the way
Student 8	Discrimination + politics (totalitarianism in the 20th century, prison in a free world)	What kind of torture they used or what is the best way to fight with it.	relationship between people and politicians
Student 9	Everyone knows what you're doing	Why they stalking him almost every day [sic]	People were depressed and the system was terrible. They don't have freedom.[sic]

Student 10	Some people want to kill themselves because of stalking	Why are people so rude to others	That the part of social media is very dangerous
Student 11	I know something about cookies, something about social media and creators of it	I'd like toknow as muh information as I can learn and remember	A lot of things
Student 12	social media are really actual topic and I'd say that I know something about its algorithm [sic]	I'd like to know what Google does with our personal info when not just advertising	More about personalised advertisement and how the algorithm works in some areas
Student 13	big brother is watching there is someone who is still watching you like what are you doing [sic]	I'd like to know what social media and google do with our personal data	That someone is still watching and that social media are kinda scary
Student 14	It's to show what life in totalitarian system is like	The ending of the story	It's similar to todays internet [sic]

SOCIAL MEDIA

LESSON 1

1. Create your own mind map on the topic of social media. If possible, use the technique of associative thinking. (5 minutes)



Worksheet – Lesson 1 (page 2)

2. Classify the given social media according to their type. Use your mobile devices if necessary.

Facebook, Youtube, Whatsapp, Instagram, WeChat, TikTok, Telegram, Messenger, Snapchat, Kuaishou, X (formerly Twitter), Pinterest, Reddit, LinkedIn, Quora, Discord, Twitch, Tumblr, Mastodon, Douyin, Weibo, QQ, Teams, QZone, Viber.

Social Networking Sites: FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, LINKED IN, SNAPCHAT

Instant Messaging Systems: WHATSAPP, MESSENGER, WECHAT, TELEGRAM, DISCORD, SNAPCHAT

Image-Based Sites: INSTAGRAM, PINTEREST

Video Sharing/Streaming Platforms: YOUTUBE, TIKTOK, KUAISHOU, DISCORD, SNAPCHAT

Discussion Forums: X, REDDIT, QUORA, DISCORD, TEAMS

Micro-and-macro Blogging Sites: REDDIT, TUMBLR

3. Please, note into the table whether you agree (Plus) or disagree (Minus) with the argument. The column (Interesting) is intended for recording facts that have caught your attention.

Social Media	Plus	Minus	Interesting
Argument 1	✓		✓
Argument 2			SUMNER
Argument 3	✓		
Argument 4	✓		
Argument 5			✓
Argument 6			✓
Argument 7	✓		
Argument 8			✓
Argument 9	✓		
Argument 10			✓

SOCIAL MEDIA

LESSON 2

“A book excerpt”

* Chapter One *

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were **striking** thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him.

The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. At one end of it a coloured poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall. It depicted simply an enormous face, more than a metre wide: the face of a man of about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome features. Winston made for the stairs. It was no use trying the lift. Even at the best of times it was seldom working, and at present the electric current was cut off during daylight hours. It was part of the economy drive in preparation for Hate Week. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston, who was thirty-nine and had a varicose ulcer above his right ankle, went slowly, resting several times on the way. On each landing, opposite the lift shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was one of those pictures, which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when you move. **BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU**, the caption beneath it ran.

Inside the flat a fruity voice was reading out a list of figures which had something to do with the production of pig-iron. The voice came from an oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of the surface of the right-hand wall. Winston turned a switch and the voice sank somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable. The instrument (the telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting it off completely.

Vocabulary:

Strike – udeřit, odbít, Nuzzle – přitisknout (se), přitulit (se), Swirl – vír, Gritty – písčitý, hrubý, Tack – připíchnout, přichytit, Depict – zobrazovat, Ruggedly – drsně (krásný, atd.), Make for – vyrazit, vydat se, Flight – patro, Ulcer – vřed, Landing – podesta, odpočívadlo, Lift-shaft – šachta výtahu, Gaze – civět, zírat, Fruity – libozvučný, příjemný, Pig-iron – surové železo, Plaque – plaketa, pamětní deska, Distinguishable – rozlišitelný, Dim – ztlumit, ztlumit.

1. What emotions does this short excerpt evoke in you?

2. Did this short excerpt captivate you to the point where you would like to learn more about the story?

Yes, I'd like to give it a try

uncomfortable, trapped, hopeless, watered. Not at all happy, just no light whatsoever

Worksheet – Lesson 2

Social Media

Lesson 2

Excerpts from G. Orwell – 1984/Group 1

Surveillance/Lack of Privacy/Loss of Freedom

Excerpt 1 (Chapter 1, page 2)

Behind Winston's back the voice from the telescreen was still babbling away about pig-iron and the overfulfilment of the Ninth Three-Year Plan. The telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously. Any sound that Winston made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it, moreover, so long as he remained within the field of vision which the metal plaque commanded, he could be seen as well as heard. There was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment. How often, or on what system, the Thought Police plugged in on any individual wire was guesswork. It was even conceivable that they watched everybody all the time. But at any rate they could plug in your wire whenever they wanted to. You had to live -- did live, from habit that became instinct -- in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinized.

Excerpt 2 (Chapter 1, page 12)

His pen had slid voluptuously over the smooth paper, printing in large neat capitals

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

over and over again, filling half a page. He could not help feeling a twinge of panic. It was absurd, since the writing of those particular words was not more dangerous than the initial act of opening the diary, but for a moment he was tempted to tear out the spoiled pages and abandon the enterprise altogether. He did not do so, however, because he knew that it was useless. Whether he wrote DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER, or whether he refrained from writing it, made no difference. Whether he went on with the diary, or whether he did not go on with it, made no difference. The Thought Police would get him just the same. He had committed -- would still have committed, even if he had never set pen to paper -- the essential crime that contained all others in itself. Thoughtcrime, they called it. Thoughtcrime was not a thing that could be concealed for ever. You might dodge successfully for a while, even for years, but sooner or later they were bound to get you.

Worksheet – Lesson 2 (page 2)

1. What is the overall atmosphere of the excerpts?
2. Can you compare the level of surveillance in the excerpts with the surveillance/monitoring conducted on social media?

1. The feeling of ~~the~~ knowing you're being watched and every ~~best~~ sound you make is picked up. Uncomfortable, not safe, not knowing what could happen when you say a wrong thing.

2. It happens all the time when you're ~~the~~ talking about your dream vacation etc., you look on sites and you see exactly what you've been conversating about with people, not the internet. Every step you take is known about, but we might have no clue.

K-W-L Chart

What do you know about the topic?	What do you want to know?	What did you learn?
personalised ads no privacy no free will	What they know, if they really know everything how they do it	about an interesting book that is worth reading, and is educating

Mirror reading – group 3 - part 1

A3

The conclusions algorithms draw about us can be discriminatory, though. To investigate gender bias, Amit and his colleagues initialised 500 'male' agents (who had their gender set to male) and 500 'female' agents who browsed from a predefined set of job-related websites.⁶ After these browsing sessions, they looked at the adverts shown to the agents. Despite similar browsing histories, the men were more likely to be shown a specific ad from the website careerchange.com with the headline: '\$200k+ jobs – execs only'. Women were more likely to be offered adverts for generic recruitment sites. This type of discrimination is blatant and potentially illegal.

1. What is the main idea of the excerpt?
2. What differences in advertisements were observed when they compared the browsing histories of male and female agents?

↳ discrimination in job offers between women and men.

↳ algorithms discrimination

Mirror reading – group 3 - part 2

B3

The president of the company that runs careerchange.com, Waffles Pi Natusch, told the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* that he wasn't sure how the ads ended up skewing so heavily towards men, but accepted that some of the company's ad preferences – for individuals with executive-level experience, over 45 years old and earning more than \$100,000 per year – might push Google's algorithms in that direction.⁷ This explanation was strange since the experimental agents differed only in gender, not in salary or age. Either Google's ads algorithm has either directly or indirectly made the link between men and high executive pay, or careerchange.com had inadvertently clicked a box that targeted their adverts at men.⁸

It was at this point that Amit and his colleagues' investigations ended. He told me that while they received no response from Google when they published their work, the Internet giant changed its interface so that they couldn't run their agent experiments any more. The black box was shut for good.

1. What is the main idea of the excerpt?
2. What differences in advertisements were observed when they compared the browsing histories of male and female agents?

1. It's about Google's ads.
2. discrimination

Mirror reading – group 3 – part 3

C3

Julia Angwin and colleagues at non-profit newsroom ProPublica have opened up a large number of black boxes over the past two years, in a series of articles on machine bias. Using data collected from more than 7,000 criminal defendants in Florida, Julia showed that one of the algorithms widely used by the US judicial system was biased against African Americans.⁹ Even accounting for criminal history, age, gender and future offences, they showed that African Americans were 45 per cent more likely to be predicted by the algorithm to be in a high-risk category for crime.

This type of discrimination isn't limited to the legal system. In another ProPublica study, Julia placed an advert on Facebook targeted at 'first-time buyers' and people 'who were likely to move', but which excluded those who had an 'ethnicaffinity' for 'African American', 'Asian American' or 'Hispanic'. Facebook accepted and published the advert despite it being in violation of the US's Fair Housing Act.¹⁰ Excluding certain groups, even if it is based on their 'affinity' (which Facebook measures by looking at the pages and posts users engage with) rather than their actual race, is discrimination.

1. What is the main idea of the excerpt? *discrimination of African Americans*
2. What differences in advertisements were observed when they compared the browsing histories of male and female agents?



1. *discrimination of African Americans in US judicial system
advertisement on Facebook, which proved even when it was there
ethnicaffinity, African American or Asian American or Hispanic*

2.

ALGORITHMIC DISCRIMINATION

Mirror reading – group 1 – part 1

A1

Online, I found that a loosely organised group of data scientists were responding to these challenges and analysing how algorithms were applied in society.

These activists' most immediate concerns revolved around the transparency and the potential for bias. While you are online, Google collects information on the sites you visit and uses this data to decide which adverts to show you. Search for Spain and over the next few days you are shown holidays you might want to take there. Search for football and you'll start to see more betting sites appear on the screen. Search for links about the dangers of black box algorithms and you'll be offered a subscription to the *New York Times*.

social media collect your data that you research or even click on and based on that they show you what you might like

To gain more money from you, more views on their sites, satisfied customers etc. They need our attention and data for their success.

1. What is the main idea of the excerpt?

How does Google use the information it collects from your online activities to

Mirror reading – group 1 – part 2

BA 1. personalized ads, always being watched, no privacy, oversharing
without consent

Over time, Google builds up a picture of your interests and classifies them. It is straightforward to find out what it has inferred about you using 'ads settings' on your Google account.² When I went into these settings, I found that Google knows a fair bit about me: soccer, politics, online communities and outdoors are all correctly identified as things that I enjoy. But some of the other topics suggested were a bit spurious: American football and cycling are two sports Google thinks I like, but I have no real interest in. I felt I had to set it straight. Inside ads settings, I clicked on the crosses next to the sports I don't want to know about and then added mathematics to the list.

2. they see your history, what you click on, what you watch. They listen to you when you mention something and then they personalize everything

1. What is the main idea of the excerpt?
2. How does Google use the information it collects from your online activities to personalize your online experience?

Mirror reading – group 1 – part 3

Even when you give them your answer on what you want to see, they will show you everything because they don't really care about you.

~~The~~ Everything you do and say ~~is~~ is being monitored, ~~and~~ you can try however you want, they will still find their way to you.

At Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania, US, PhD student Amit Datta and his colleagues conducted a series of experiments to measure exactly how Google classifies us. They designed an automated tool that creates Google 'agents' that open up webpages with predefined settings. These agents then visited sites related to particular subjects, and the researchers looked at both the adverts the agents were shown and the changes in their ads settings. When the agents browsed sites related to substance abuse, they were shown adverts for rehab centres. Similarly, agents browsing sites associated with disability were more likely to be shown adverts for wheelchairs. Google isn't entirely honest with us, though. At no point were the agents' ads settings updated to tell the user the conclusions Google's algorithm had drawn about them. Even when we use our settings to tell Google which adverts we do and don't want to be shown, it makes its own decisions about what to show us.

1. What is the main idea of the excerpt?
2. How does Google use the information it collects from your online activities to personalize your online experience?

Example of real disinformation 1

Biden Urges Americans Not To Let Dangerous Online Rhetoric

Humanize Palestinians

Published Thursday 1:00PM

WASHINGTON—Upon returning from his brief diplomatic trip to the Middle East, President Joe Biden urged the nation Thursday not to let dangerous online rhetoric humanize Palestinians. “As the war between Israel and Hamas rages on, I urge my fellow Americans to remain vigilant, and not fall for any false propaganda that claims people living in Gaza and the West Bank are worthy of human life,” said the 46th president, adding that since the war had begun, U.S. intelligence had discovered countless bad actors flooding the internet with reports that many Palestinians were mothers, fathers, and children who were not terrorists and did not deserve to be trapped without food, water, or fuel while being carpet-bombed into submission. “If you hear a Palestinian being described with terminology like ‘son,’ ‘daughter,’ or ‘in desperate need of medical attention,’ then you should be aware that what you are reading has been specifically designed to stoke empathy.” At press time, Biden added that Americans should also avoid dangerous propaganda that wrongly asserts the billions of dollars in military aid the United States has sent to Israel could be spent on things like healthcare, education, or alleviating poverty at home.

Sugar as addictive as cocaine, heroin, studies suggest

By ROSEMARY BLACK | DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER | DEC 11, 2008 | 7:13 PM

It's one addiction that won't land you in court or an inpatient rehab. But sugar - as anyone who mainlines sweets can attest - can be just as habit-forming as cocaine.

Researchers at [Princeton University](#) studying bingeing and dependency in rats have found that when the animals ingest large amounts of sugar, their brains undergo changes similar to the changes in the brains of people who abuse illegal drugs like cocaine and heroin.

“Our evidence from an animal model suggests that bingeing on sugar can act in the brain in ways very similar to drugs of abuse,” says lead researcher and [Princeton](#) psychology professor [Bart Hoebel](#).

In the studies, he explains, animals that drank large amounts of sugar water when hungry experienced behavioral changes, too, along with signs of withdrawal and even long-lasting effects that resemble cravings.

LATEST

HEALTH

This drug cocktail reduced related diseases and exter mice, human cells

JUL 11, 2018

NEW YORK

Obese New Yorkers a grov new study reports

JUL 10, 2018

U.S.

U.S. charges 601 people in fraud, opioid takedown

JUN 28, 2018

Example of real disinformation 2



Facebook Apologizes For Giving Mark Zuckerberg A Platform

MENLO PARK, CA—In response to criticism about the social network's failure to address the spread of falsehoods and offensive content on its site, Facebook apologized Thursday for giving Mark Zuckerberg a platform. "Lies and harassment have absolutely no place on Facebook, and we want to express our deep regret at offering someone like Mark Zuckerberg a space to..."

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <http://www.abcnews-us.com/2018/04/13/china-space-lab-mostly-burns-up-on-re-entry-in-south-pacific/>. The page features the ABC News logo and a navigation menu with categories like 'HOME', 'LIVE', 'SHOWS', 'SPORT', 'TECH', and 'ENTERTAINMENT'. The main content area displays a large image of the Tiangong-1 space station in space. Below the image is the headline 'China Space Lab Mostly Burns Up On Re-Entry In South Pacific' and a sub-headline 'China's ancient Tiangong-1 space station for the most part wrecked on reentry into the climate over the final South Pacific on Monday, Chinese space specialists said.' The article text begins with 'The exploratory space research center re-entered around 8:55 a.m. Beijing time, the China Manned Space Engineering Office said.' To the right of the article is a 'RECENT POSTS' section with three items: 'McDonald's Announces They're Permanently Closing The Big Macs From Their Menu', 'Palm Beach man tries to 'get inside talk with weed smoke'; James Van Der Beek

Worksheet – Lesson 2

Social Media

Lesson 2

Excerpts from G. Orwell – 1984/Group 3

Surveillance/Lack of Privacy/Loss of Freedom

Excerpt 1 (Chapter 6, page 45)

When he had gone with that woman it had been his first lapse in two years or thereabouts. Consorting with prostitutes was forbidden, of course, but it was one of those rules that you could occasionally nerve yourself to break. It was dangerous, but it was not a life-and-death matter. To be caught with a prostitute might mean five years in a forced-labour camp: not more, if you had committed no other offence. And it was easy enough, provided that you could avoid being caught in the act. The poorer quarters swarmed with women who were ready to sell themselves. Some could even be purchased for a bottle of gin, which the proles were not supposed to drink. Tacitly the Party was even inclined to encourage prostitution, as an outlet for instincts which could not be altogether suppressed. Mere debauchery did not matter very much, so long as it was furtive and joyless and only involved the women of a submerged and despised class. The unforgivable crime was promiscuity between Party members. But -- though this was one of the crimes that the accused in the great purges invariably confessed to -- it was difficult to imagine any such thing actually happening.

The aim of the Party was not merely to prevent men and women from forming loyalties which it might not be able to control. Its real, undeclared purpose was to remove all pleasure from the sexual act. Not love so much as eroticism was the enemy, inside marriage as well as outside it. All marriages between Party members had to be approved by a committee appointed for the purpose, and -- though the principle was never clearly stated -- permission was always refused if the couple concerned gave the impression of being physically attracted to one another. The only recognized purpose of marriage was to beget children for the service of the Party.

Excerpt 2 (Chapter 6, page 46/47)

He saw himself standing there in the dim lamplight, with the smell of bugs and cheap scent in his nostrils, and in his heart a feeling of defeat and resentment which even at that moment was mixed up with the thought of Katharine's white body, frozen for ever by the hypnotic power of the Party. Why did it always have to be like this? Why could he not have a woman of his own instead of these filthy scuffles at intervals of years? But a real love affair was an almost unthinkable event. The women of the Party were all alike. Chastity was as deep ingrained in them as Party loyalty. By careful early conditioning, by games and cold water, by the rubbish that was dinned into them at school and in the Spies and the Youth League, by lectures, parades, songs, slogans, and martial music, the natural feeling had been driven out of them. His reason told him that there must be exceptions, but his heart did not believe it. They were all impregnable, as the Party intended that they should be. And what he wanted, more even than to be loved, was to break down that wall of virtue, even if it were only once in his whole life. The sexual act, successfully performed, was rebellion. Desire was thoughtcrime.

Worksheet – Lesson 2

Social Media

Lesson 2

Excerpts from G. Orwell – 1984/Group 1

Surveillance/Lack of Privacy/Loss of Freedom

Excerpt 1 (Chapter 1, page 2)

Behind Winston's back the voice from the telescreen was still babbling away about pig-iron and the overfulfilment of the Ninth Three-Year Plan. The telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously. Any sound that Winston made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it, moreover, so long as he remained within the field of vision which the metal plaque commanded, he could be seen as well as heard. There was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment. How often, or on what system, the Thought Police plugged in on any individual wire was guesswork. It was even conceivable that they watched everybody all the time. But at any rate they could plug in your wire whenever they wanted to. You had to live -- did live, from habit that became instinct -- in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinized.

Excerpt 2 (Chapter 1, page 12)

His pen had slid voluptuously over the smooth paper, printing in large neat capitals

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

over and over again, filling half a page. He could not help feeling a twinge of panic. It was absurd, since the writing of those particular words was not more dangerous than the initial act of opening the diary, but for a moment he was tempted to tear out the spoiled pages and abandon the enterprise altogether. He did not do so, however, because he knew that it was useless. Whether he wrote DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER, or whether he refrained from writing it, made no difference. Whether he went on with the diary, or whether he did not go on with it, made no difference. The Thought Police would get him just the same. He had committed -- would still have committed, even if he had never set pen to paper -- the essential crime that contained all others in itself. Thoughtcrime, they called it. Thoughtcrime was not a thing that could be concealed for ever. You might dodge successfully for a while, even for years, but sooner or later they were bound to get you.

Worksheet – Lesson 2

Social Media

Lesson 2

Excerpts from G. Orwell – 1984/Group 6

Surveillance/Lack of Privacy/Loss of Freedom

Excerpt 1 (Chapter 2, page 16/17)

Back in the flat he stepped quickly past the telescreen and sat down at the table again, still rubbing his neck. The music from the telescreen had stopped. Instead, a clipped military voice was reading out, with a sort of brutal relish, a description of the armaments of the new Floating Fortress which had just been anchored between Iceland and the Faroe Islands.

With those children, he thought, that wretched woman must lead a life of terror. Another year, two years, and they would be watching her night and day for symptoms of unorthodoxy. Nearly all children nowadays were horrible. What was worst of all was that by means of such organizations as the Spies they were systematically turned into ungovernable little savages, and yet this produced in them no tendency whatever to rebel against the discipline of the Party. On the contrary, they adored the Party and everything connected with it. The songs, the processions, the banners, the hiking, the drilling with dummy rifles, the yelling of slogans, the worship of Big Brother -- it was all a sort of glorious game to them. All their ferocity was turned outwards, against the enemies of the State, against foreigners, traitors, saboteurs, thought-criminals. It was almost normal for people over thirty to be frightened of their own children. And with good reason, for hardly a week passed in which The Times did not carry a paragraph describing how some eavesdropping little sneak -- 'child hero' was the phrase generally used -- had overheard some compromising remark and denounced its parents to the Thought Police.

Excerpt 2 (Chapter 2, 18)

WAR IS PEACE

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

He took a twenty-five cent piece out of his pocket. There, too, in tiny clear lettering, the same slogans were inscribed, and on the other face of the coin the head of Big Brother. Even from the coin the eyes pursued you. On coins, on stamps, on the covers of books, on banners, on posters, and on the wrappings of a cigarette Packet - everywhere. Always the eyes watching you and the voice enveloping you. Asleep or awake, working or eating, indoors or out of doors, in the bath or in bed -- no escape. Nothing was your own except the few cubic centimetres inside your skull.

Excerpt 3 (Part 2, Chapter 1, 76)

Obviously the kind of encounter that had happened this morning could not be repeated. If she had worked in the Records Department it might have been comparatively simple, but he had only a very dim idea whereabouts in the building the Fiction Department lay, and he had no pretext for going there. If he had known where she lived, and at what time she left work, he could have contrived to meet her somewhere on her way home; but to try to follow her home was not safe, because it would

4.A






Social Media

Lesson 3

1. Take a quick look at the pictures below. What is the common theme in the contributions?

fake messages
 disinformation
 - making this
 people popular
 - may be hated
 by others

Top 10 Fake News Articles by Facebook Engagements

1	2	3	4	5
 2,383,021 Lottery winner arrested for dumping \$200,000 of manure on ex-boss' lawn	 2,290,000 Former first lady Barbara Bush dies at 92	 1,304,430 Woman sues Samsung for \$1.8M after cell phone gets stuck inside her vagina	 911,336 BREAKING: Michael Jordan Resigns From The Board At Nike-Takes 'Air Jordans' With Him	 830,116 Donald Trump Ends School Shootings By Banning Schools

- article
 on the internet
 or in news
 - dumb article

6	7	8	9	10
 824,137 Florida Man Arrested For Tranquilizing And Raping Alligators In Everglades	 797,628 Two altar boys were arrested for putting weed in the censer-burner	 760,314 North Korea Agrees To Open Its Doors To Christianity	 633,642 Man Eats Girlfriends Booty For The First Time Dies From E. Coli	 631,589 Muslim Figure: "We Must Have Pork-Free Menus Or We Will Leave U.S." How Would You Respond This?

4.B

2. What do you think is the reason for creation of these posts?

- to make numbers (or likes), make their website famous and more watched

3. What may be their danger?

- The danger of the sites posting this is as people mentioned in the articles can be angry

- The danger of the people mentioned in articles as the hate of other people

Worksheet – Lesson 3 (page 2)

2. Find the main idea (if possible) in the attached article and try to think about the reason for its creation. What type of misinformation is it?

I think it's ~~misinformation~~ Imposed Content.

The main idea is to make people click on the article and open it. ~~It's~~ It's

The article doesn't use unrigorous informations and is spreading false information

3. Can you find similarities between the examples of real misinformation and the manipulative news content from the excerpts of the novel 1984?

~~Yes, they are similar~~ No, I can't see any similarities, maybe content.

Lesson 3 – Excerpt 1 of *1984*

Excerpt 1

With the deep, unconscious sigh which not even the nearness of the telescreen could prevent him from uttering when his day's work started, Winston pulled the speakwrite towards him, blew the dust from its mouthpiece, and put on his spectacles. Then he unrolled and clipped together four small cylinders of paper which had already flopped out of the pneumatic tube on the right-hand side of his desk. In the walls of the cubicle there were three orifices. To the right of the speakwrite, a small pneumatic tube for written messages, to the left, a larger one for newspapers; and in the side wall, within easy reach of Winston's arm, a large oblong slit protected by a wire grating. This last was for the disposal of waste paper. Similar slits existed in thousands or tens of thousands throughout the building, not only in every room but at short intervals in every corridor. For some reason they were nicknamed memory holes. When one knew that any document was due for destruction, or even when one saw a scrap of waste paper lying about, it was an automatic action to lift the flap of the nearest memory hole and drop it in, whereupon it would be whirled away on a current of warm air to the enormous furnaces which were hidden somewhere in the recesses of the building.

Winston examined the four slips of paper which he had unrolled. Each contained a message of only one or two lines, in the abbreviated jargon -- not actually Newspeak, but consisting largely of Newspeak words -- which was used in the Ministry for internal purposes. They ran:

times 17.3.84 bb speech malreported africa rectify

times 19.12.83 forecasts 3 yp 4th quarter 83 misprints verify current issue

times 14.2.84 miniplenty malquoted chocolate rectify

times 3.12.83 reporting bb dayorder doubleplusungood refs unpersons rewrite fullwise upsub antefiling

With a faint feeling of satisfaction Winston laid the fourth message aside. It was an intricate and responsible job and had better be dealt with last. The other three were routine matters, though the second one would probably mean some tedious wading through lists of figures. Winston dialled 'back numbers' on the telescreen and called for the appropriate issues of *The Times*, which slid out of the pneumatic tube after only a few minutes' delay.

The messages he had received referred to articles or news items which for one reason or another it was thought necessary to alter, or, as the official phrase had it, to rectify. For example, it appeared from *The Times* of the seventeenth of March that Big Brother, in his speech of the previous day, had predicted that the South Indian front would remain quiet but that a Eurasian offensive would shortly be launched in North Africa. As it happened, the Eurasian Higher Command had launched its offensive in South India and left North Africa alone. It was therefore necessary to rewrite a paragraph of Big Brother's speech, in such a way as to make him predict the thing that had actually happened. Or again, *The Times* of the nineteenth of December had published the official forecasts of the output of various classes of consumption goods in the fourth quarter of 1983, which was also the sixth quarter of the Ninth Three-Year Plan. Today's issue contained a statement of the actual output, from which it appeared that the forecasts were in every instance grossly wrong. Winston's job was to rectify the original figures by making them agree with the later ones. As for the third message, it referred to a very simple error which could be set right in a couple of minutes. As short a time ago as February, the Ministry of Plenty had issued a promise (a 'categorical pledge' were the official words) that there would be no reduction of the chocolate ration during 1984. Actually, as Winston was aware, the chocolate ration was to be reduced from thirty grammes to twenty at the end of the present week. All that was needed was to substitute for the original promise a warning that it would probably be necessary to reduce the ration at some time in April.

Lesson 3 – Excerpt 1 of 1984 (Czech translation)

Winston nevědomky zhluboka vzdychl jako vždy, když začínal svou každodenní práci, v čemž mu nemohla zabránit ani blízkost obrazovky.

Přítáhl si speakwrite, sfoukl prach z mluvítká a nasadil si brýle. Potom rozvinul a sepnul dohromady čtyři malé svítky papíru, které vyklouzly z pneumatického potrubí po pravé straně jeho speakwritu.

Ve stěnách jeho kóje byly tři otvory. Napravo od speakwritu malá pneumatická roura pro psané zprávy; vlevo větší, pro noviny; a v boční stěně, kam Winston lehce dosáhl rukou, byla velká obdélníková štěrbiná chráněná drátěnou mřížkou. Ta sloužila na odhazování odpadového papíru. Podobných štěrbin byly v budově tisíce či desetitisíce, nejen v každé místnosti, ale v malých vzdálenostech od sebe na každé chodbě. Z neznámého důvodu se jim říkalo paměťové díry. Když člověk věděl, že nějaký dokument má být zničen, nebo dokonce viděl, jak se někde povaluje kus papíru, docela automaticky nadzvedl poklop nejbližší paměťové díry a papír tam vhodil. Proud teplého vzduchu ho pak odnesl do obrovských pecí, skrytých kdesi v útrobách budovy.

Winston rozvinul čtyři svítky papíru a prohlížel je. Každý z nich obsahoval jen jedno nebo dvouřádkovou zprávu, psanou zkratkovitým žargonem – nebyl to skutečný newspeak, ale obsahoval hodně výrazů z jeho zásoby, což byl žargon, který se používal na Ministerstvu pro vnitřní potřebu. Vypadalo to takhle:

times 17. 3. 84 projev vb nesprávně informoval o africe opravit times 19. 12. 83 předpovědi 3 lp 4. kvartál 83 tiskové chyby

zdůvodnit průběžné výsledky

times 14. 2. 84 hojmini nesprávně uvedlo čokoládu opravit

times 3. 12. 83 zpráva o denním rozkazu vb velenedobrá odkazy neosoby úplně přepsat antezal nadřfzschvál

S mírným pocitem uspokojení odložil Winston čtvrtou zprávu stranou. Byl to složitý a odpovědný úkol a bude nejlépe, když se jím bude zabývat až nakonec. Ostatní tři byly běžné záležitosti, ačkoli druhá bude pravděpodobně vyžadovat, aby se prokousal řadou nudných čísel.

Winston stiskl na obrazovce tlačítko „starší čísla“ a požádal o příslušné výtisky *Timesů*, které za pár minut vyklouzly z pneumatického potrubí.

Příkazy, které obdržel, se týkaly článků nebo zpráv v novinách, jež bylo z nějakého důvodu třeba změnit, nebo, jak zněla oficiální verze, opravit.

Tak například *Timesy* sedmnáctého března napsaly, že Velký bratr ve svém projevu z minulého dne předpověděl, že fronta v Jižní Indii zůstane v klidu, ale že se zakrátko rozvine eurasijská ofenzíva v Severní Africe.

Stalo se však, že eurasijské vrchní velení zahájilo ofenzívu v Jižní Indii a Severní Afriku nechalo na pokoji. Proto bylo třeba přepsat odstavec v projevu Velkého bratra tak, aby předpovídal to, co se skutečně stalo.

Anebo zase devatenáctého prosince uveřejnily *Timesy* oficiální předpovědi výroby různých druhů spotřebního zboží ve čtvrtém kvartálu roku 1983, což byl současně šestý kvartál Deváté tříletky. Dnešní vydání přineslo hlášení o skutečném objemu výroby, z něhož vyplývalo, že předpovědi byly v každém ohledu hrubě nesprávné. Winston měl za úkol opravit původní čísla tak, aby souhlasila s pozdějšími. Pokud šlo o třetí příkaz, vztahoval se na velmi jednoduchou chybu, která se dala napravit za pár minut. Přednedávnm, v únoru, vydalo Ministerstvo hojnosti příslib („kategorický závazek“ byl oficiální název), že se přiděl čokolády v roce 1984 nesníží. Ve skutečnosti však Winston věděl, že bylo rozhodnuto přiděl čokolády snížit koncem tohoto týdne z třiceti gramů na dvacet. Takže bylo třeba nahradit původní příslib varováním, že bude pravděpodobně nutné někdy v dubnu přiděl snížit.

Interview with students (excerpt 1)

- 1) In what way do you think social media could contribute to creating a world similar to that described in the novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four"?

The idea of world similar to 1984 seems kind of ridiculous to me because it'll have to come from the government and not the social media, even though social media share some similarities with Orwell's 1984 it doesn't mean that it's some kind of totalitarian regime.

- 2) Did excerpts from the novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four" help you better understand the dangers of certain social media features, such as surveillance and control of information?

It did for sure, it shows how surveillance, control of information, fake news, and overall absolute control over people can affect well being of humans.

* censorship

- 3) After exploring the dystopian theme in English class, are you interested in getting familiar with more dystopian novels? If so, why?

Dystopian theme is really interesting for me. Seeing the despair in people's life gives me weird eerie feelings.

I'm really fond of both dystopian and utopian themes, so I'll try to find more books with this theme.

- 4) What do you consider the greatest danger of contemporary social media, and in what ways do you see similarities between social media and the world depicted in "1984"?

In my opinion the greatest danger is fake news, because not everyone double-checks the authenticity of information and it causes chaos, fake accusations, racism, sexism, homophobia or transphobia.

- 5) Would you say that getting to know the novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four" has enriched your opinion on social media in any way?

In some way it did. It shows how extreme social media can go. Anything from censorship, fake news and other ~~controlling~~ controlling stuff is really bad for us.

- 6) Could you identify parallels between the following expressions in the novel "1984" and the world of social media? (Telescreen, doublethink, newspeak, thought police, Room 101)

Interview with students (excerpt 2)

- 1) In what way do you think social media could contribute to creating a world similar to that described in the novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four"?

By continuing with ~~with~~ ^{at least} this many misinformation, they should make it clear if it's misinformation or not

And by watching us all the time

- 2) Did excerpts from the novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four" help you better understand the dangers of certain social media features, such as surveillance and control of information?

yes, I have never thought it was that serious (surveillance)

- 3) After exploring the dystopian theme in English class, are you interested in getting familiar with more dystopian novels? If so, why?

I don't think so, I'm not a fan of "depressive" or "negative" themed books

- 4) What do you consider the greatest danger of contemporary social media, and in what ways do you see similarities between social media and the world depicted in "1984"?

The similarities are definitely, that lots of things are fake and we are influenced by misinformation even though we don't have the intention to be influenced

For me the biggest danger is, as I already said, "beauty standards"

- 5) Would you say that getting to know the novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four" has enriched your opinion on social media in any way?

It definitely has. I don't think it's that safe and "real" anymore

- 6) Could you identify parallels between the following expressions in the novel "1984" and the world of social media? (Telescreen, doublethink, newspeak, thought police, Room 101)

~~Telescreen~~ Room 101 - power of social media in general
~~not sure of the other ones~~

Telescreen - propaganda on social media (products...)

newspeak - slang between ~~teenagers~~ teenagers

not sure of the other ones

Essay 1 – 4.C

Society's Views on Social Media – Viktorie Zemanová

In today's digital age, society's relationship with social media has become a subject of intense debate. People hold diverse opinions about the impact of these platforms, reflecting the complex nature of their existence. On one hand, social media serves as a powerful tool for communication and connection. It bridges geographical gaps, allows individuals to stay in touch with loved ones, and provides a platform for self-expression and creativity. Moreover, it has been instrumental in spreading awareness about social and political issues.

On the flip side, the downsides of social media are equally noteworthy. It can foster addiction, promote unrealistic standards of beauty and success, and exacerbate issues like cyberbullying and privacy breaches. The proliferation of disinformation on these platforms has also raised concerns about the integrity of information.

Society's perception of social media varies depending on personal experiences and perspectives. While some view it as a boon for fostering global connections and raising awareness, others see it as a bane due to its potential for negative impacts on mental health and societal cohesion.

In conclusion, society's views on social media encompass a broad spectrum of opinions. Understanding both the pros and cons of these platforms is essential for harnessing their potential while mitigating their negative effects. Striking a balance between connectivity, information dissemination, and responsible usage is key to shaping a more constructive relationship with social media.

"1984" by George Orwell explores a dystopian society under constant surveillance and manipulation. Today, concerns about privacy, surveillance, and disinformation draw chilling parallels with Orwell's vision.

Essay 2 – 4.C

The Double-Edged Sword in the Age of Surveillance

Social media has transformed the way we communicate, connect, and access information in the 21st century. While it offers numerous advantages, it also comes with significant drawbacks. In this essay, we will explore the pros and cons of social media and draw parallels between George Orwell's "1984" and the realities of today.

On the positive side, social media fosters global connectivity, allowing people to bridge geographical distances, share their experiences, and engage in meaningful conversations. It has become a powerful tool for activism, enabling the rapid dissemination of information about social and political issues.

However, there's a darker side to social media reminiscent of Orwell's dystopian world. The constant surveillance, data collection, and the influence of algorithms on the content we see raise concerns about privacy and the manipulation of information. The term "Big Tech" has emerged as a parallel to "Big Brother," reflecting the concentration of power in a few tech giants who shape and control the digital landscape.

Orwell's novel also delves into the manipulation of truth, which resonates with the spread of disinformation and "fake news" on social media platforms.

In conclusion, social media is a double-edged sword, offering connectivity and empowerment, but also raising questions about privacy, control, and truth. It is essential for individuals and society to strike a balance between the benefits and risks, guarding against the pitfalls of an increasingly Orwellian digital world.

Marek Špejtek

Is social media Orwellian?

Opinion on social media varies in what age group a person is in. The elderly think it's bad as a whole (being lazy, not going outside etc.), but wouldn't necessarily call it Orwellian. Adults aged 30-40 view it as a somewhat of a good way to communicate with friends but would mostly call it Orwellian. Young adults and teenagers on the other hand would call it mostly great and not at all Orwellian. Personally, I may agree to some extent with the title.

For example, there is some similarity to newspeak. We can even see it happen with the Israel-Palestine conflict. Many Pro-Palestinian protests shout "From river to sea" which is historically an antisemitic slogan. The problem is some social media influencers call it as just meaning freeing Palestine, effectively trying to rewrite the meaning of it.

Otherwise, I don't think it's similar at all. Controlling the flow of information like IngSoc does is impossible, except maybe for a few exceptions like North Korea and China. Nevertheless, even for them it's hard to maintain and citizens seeking freedom will still find the information.

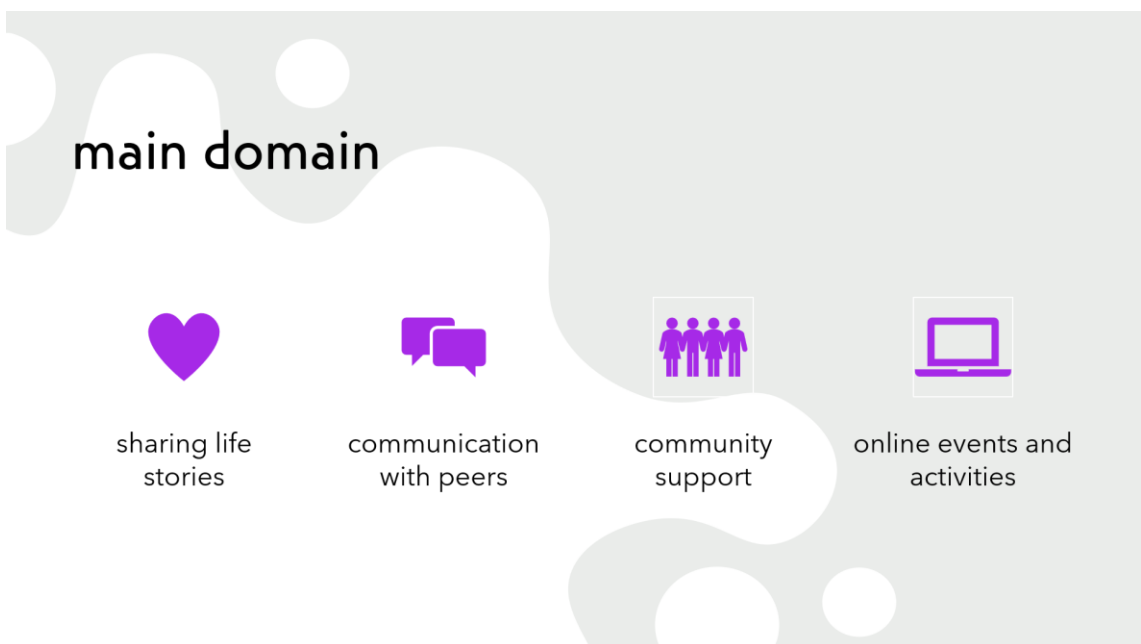
To sum up, I don't think social media is Orwellian at all, even if they have some similarities.

ARE SOCIAL MEDIA ORWELLIAN?

As George Orwell said: „the party“ wants you to believe everything, even if it's not true. If you think about this, it's something that's happening on social media too. Everyone is posting about their „perfect“ life and not about the sad things, that are happenig to them, like to every other person. As a result, some people believe, that there is something wrong with their life, or even worse, that there is something wrong with them, because they don't seem to have as „perfect“ life as they do.

If you think about social media from the influencers view, it's kind of like a big virtual war. You are constantly trying to fight others. Either it is with content, followers, our looks and setting ridiculous beauty standards, which can be dangerous and can destroy our self-confidence. All of this leads to using all kinds of filters, and even if you don't realize this, you are all of the sudden creating fake identity, which in my opinion is Catfishing. And here you have it, from „basic“ follower, who's been only following influencers, there's someone who is deceiving other people as most people, even if it's not their intention. It's one big vicious circle.

In conclusion, I think, that this novel definitely has lots of similarities with misleading population like nowadays on social media.



defending against manipulation, surveillance, and information spread



privacy controls



cybersecurity
measures



verification and
reporting



moderation



target group/audience

seniors looking for companionship

storytellers

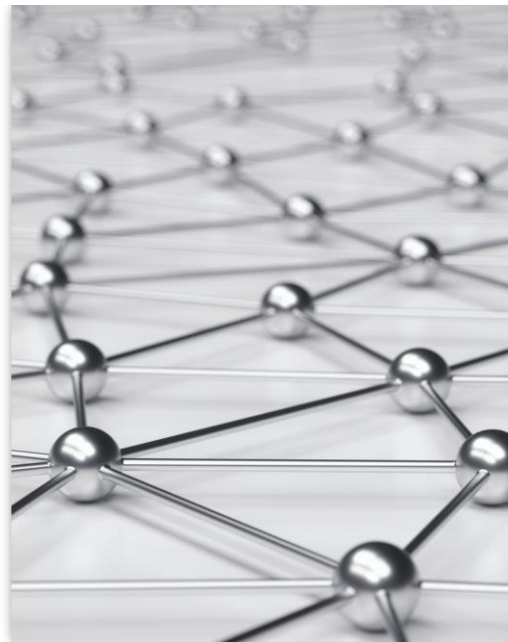
online event lovers

individuals seeking support



WHAT IS ConnectU?

- For us it's more than a social network, we want it to be „safe place“ for students
- Our goal is to create free discussion forum for students from the whole world
- Trying to connect them to: learn about each others culture, help eachother with school stuff...



FACT-CHECKING PARTNERSHIP

- We've partnered with trusted fact-checking organization to verify the accuracy of news, articles and posts, so members won't have to worry about misinformations
- Any content flagged as potentially false will be clearly marked, and users will be encouraged to seek verified sources



TARGET AUDIENCE

- Our app will be divided into several groups by age, so everyone can join to the right one
- Main audience are students 14+, because we feel, that younger students don't feel the urge to join forum like this



HOW IT WORKS

- Users can post photos and videos like on normal social networks, but they also can upload their researches or study materials etc.
- A lot of thematic groups (biology group, theoretical physics, brewers, Goalies), where u can discuss about inovation in your industry. If u want to help with something you only text here and other members can help you. However there are many other ways how to use ConnectU

ANOTACE

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Katedra nebo ústav:	Ústav cizích jazyků
Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Petr Anténe, M.A., Ph.D.
Rok obhajoby:	2024

Název závěrečné práce:	Použití románu <i>1984</i> George Orwella při výuce sociálních médií v hodinách anglického jazyka
Název závěrečné práce v angličtině:	Using George Orwell's <i>1984</i> in Teaching Social Media in ELT
Anotace závěrečné práce:	Diplomová práce se zaměřuje na použití románu George Orwella, <i>1984</i> , při výuce tématu sociálních médií. Zabývá se primárně rozvojem kritického myšlení v souvislosti s užíváním sociálních médií. Hlavním cílem je vytvořit zkušenostní prostředí, které umožní studentům kriticky zhodnotit paralely mezi fikčním světem románu <i>1984</i> a negativními aspekty sociálních sítí, zejména v rovině neustálého dohledu, ztráty soukromí a manipulace a vytvořit si vlastní názor na danou problematiku. Praktická část zkoumá jak jednotlivé části výukového bloku na studenty působí, zda rozvíjejí jejich kritické myšlení, jejich zdatnost vyjadřovat se na dané téma v anglickém jazyce a taktéž pravděpodobnost, zda daný projekt přiměje studenty prohloubit své znalosti v oblasti dystopické literatury. Druhotně také zkoumá přístup učitelů k tématu výuky sociálních médií v anglickém jazyce a jejich postoj k použití románu <i>1984</i> v hodinách věnovaných sociálním sítím.
Annotation:	Titled “Using George Orwell’s <i>1984</i> in Teaching Social Media in ELT”, this thesis focuses on the development of critical thinking in students in the context of social media usage. Its primary goal is to create an experiential environment that allows students to critically evaluate parallels between the fictional world of <i>1984</i> and the negative aspects of social media, especially in terms of constant surveillance, loss of privacy and manipulation. The main objective is to enable the students to form their own opinions on these issues. The

	<p>practical part of the research examines how individual segments of the instructional block affect students, assessing their development of critical thinking, proficiency in expressing themselves on the topic in English, and the likelihood of whether the project will prompt students to deepen their knowledge in the field of dystopian literature. Additionally, it explores teachers' approaches to teaching social media topics in English and their attitudes towards using the novel <i>1984</i> in lessons dedicated to social media.</p>
Klíčová slova:	Utopie, Dystopie, George Orwell, <i>1984</i> , Sociální média
Key words:	Utopia, Dystopia, George Orwell, <i>1984</i> , Social Media
Přílohy vázané v práci:	Grafy (dotazník – učitelé), tabulky, pracovní listy, eseje, prezentace
Rozsah práce:	146 stran
Jazyk práce:	Anglický jazyk