Lesson Plan © Easy Access English

The Feedback Loop

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Reading comprehension, Discussion, Learn about nominalisation and practice using it.

Activity One - Ask and answer with your partner.



1. Do you use social media?
2. Which social media do you use?
3. How much time do you spend using social media each day?
4. How often do you check your social media accounts?
5. Do you post things often?
6. How do you feel when you get 'likes'?
7. Do you count the number of 'likes'?
8. Do you multi-task by looking at your phone whilst doing other things?

Activity Two - Nominalisation

Nominalisation is a useful skill to have in academic writing because it conveys an objective, tone. It can also make the text more concise sometimes.Nominalisation turns verbs (actions or events) into nouns (things, concepts or people). Being aware of nominalisation as an option in your writing will help you be more varied and sound more impartial. It's more natural in English to use verbs than nouns in our speech. In French you use the nominal forms more easily. So you need to know that the more formal writing in English, would be an appropriate way to use these forms. The ability to form nouns from corresponding verbs and vice versa shows the depth of your knowledge of vocabulary in English.

Here are some examples:

- The number of people using insulin is increasing every year which means that we are often short of equipment.
- **The increase** in insulin use creates **a shortage** in equipment.
- The temperature of the planet is rising as a result of global warming.
- **The rise** of the planet's temperature is a result of global warming.
- A team of scientists analysed the data in the lab before they wrote their report.
- **The analysis** of data by a team of scientists in the lab was undertaken before writing a report.



Here are some verbs, can you find their corresponding nouns?

to feedback	to restrict
to participate	to implicate
to deduce	to indicate
to analyse	to illustrate
to sustain	to reject

Activity Three - Comprehension and Reading

1. **Read the text, paying attention to your intonation and stress.**
2. **When you have finished reading, with a partner, find make as many noun verb combinations as you can from the nouns and verbs you find in the text. Which pair can make the most? (***Example - to concern, a concern***).**
3. **Answer the questions: What are the main concerns outlined in this text. What is your personal experience with these issues?**

Validation Feedback Loop

(Source 'The Guardian).

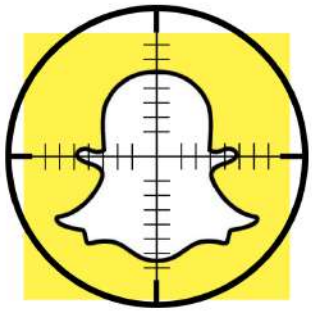
There is growing concern that as well as addicting users, technology is contributing toward so-called "continuous partial attention", severely limiting people's ability to focus, and possibly lowering IQ. One recent study showed that the mere presence of smartphones damages cognitive capacity – even when the device is turned off.

Our smartphones are more powerful and do more things than the most advanced computer at IBM corporate headquarters 30 years ago. And we use them all the time, part of a 21st-century mania for cramming everything we do into every single spare moment of downtime.

Multitasking has been found to increase the production of the stress hormone cortisol as well as the fight-or-flight hormone adrenaline, which can overstimulate your brain and cause mental fog or scrambled thinking. **Multitasking creates a dopamine-addiction feedback loop.**

Human beings are information gathering and processing devices – we rely on information gleaned from our senses in order to process our environment. **Feedback loops** are types of behavioural feedback that result in repetition (or avoidance) of a behaviour or set of behaviours. when we're praised for something, we feel a sense of accomplishment or pride that increases the chance of us doing whatever it was again, humans rely on feedback loops to reinforce actions and behaviours. Facebook and other social media exploit this human psychological vulnerability through a validation feedback loop that gets people to constantly post to get even more likes and comments.

But those concerns are trivial compared with the devastating impact upon the political system that some people believe can be attributed to the rise of social media and the attention-based market that drives it.



Drawing a straight line between addiction to social media and political earthquakes like Brexit and the rise of Donald Trump, experts contend that digital forces have completely upended the political system and, left unchecked, could even render democracy as we know it obsolete.

Billions of people have little choice over whether they use these now ubiquitous technologies, and are largely unaware of the invisible ways in which a small number of people in Silicon Valley are shaping their lives.

The techniques these companies use are not always generic: they can be algorithmically tailored to each person. An internal Facebook report leaked this year, for example, revealed that the company can identify when teens feel "insecure", "worthless" and "need a confidence boost".

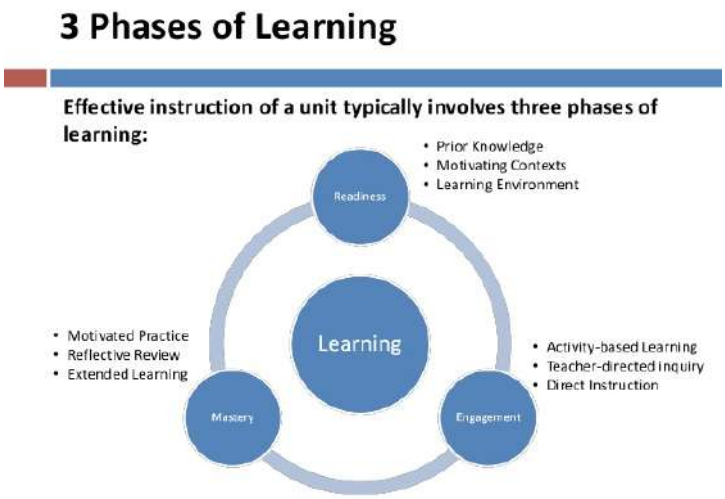
Tech companies can exploit such vulnerabilities to keep people hooked; manipulating, for example, when people receive "likes" for their posts, ensuring they arrive when an individual is likely to feel vulnerable, or in need of approval, or maybe just bored.

The most seductive design exploits the same psychological susceptibility that makes gambling so compulsive: variable rewards. When we tap those apps with red icons, we don't know whether we'll discover an interesting email, an avalanche of "likes", or nothing at all. It is the possibility of disappointment that makes it so compulsive.

It's this that explains how the pull-to-refresh mechanism, whereby users swipe down, pause and wait to see what content appears, rapidly became one of the most addictive design features in modern technology. "Each time you're swiping down, it's like a slot machine," "You don't know what's coming next. Sometimes it's a beautiful photo. Sometimes it's just an ad."

James Williams specialist in the ethics of persuasive design says;
“The dynamics of the attention economy are structurally set up to undermine the human will,If politics is an expression of our human will, on individual and collective levels, then the attention economy is directly undermining the assumptions that democracy rests on.” If Apple, Facebook, Google, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat are gradually chipping away at our ability to control our own minds, could there come a point at which democracy no longer functions?”

Activity Four - **Your Feedback - CR**P… What should you do with it and why do we send it?
After each lesson we send you some feedback, about your progression and participation and also with a re-cap of some corrections and vocabulary. We do this so that you can have some indication of what type of preparation works well for you, and of what areas you need to focus on in your learning. We also want you to review the new vocabulary and points we discuss in the class because we know that this is the best way to optimise your learning. By allowing you to familiarise yourself with the target language before your lesson and then offering activity based learning opportunities for you to ‘learn by doing’ during the lesson, all that you need, to complete the three important phases of learning, is opportunity for reflective review after each lesson. This makes the learning experience nicely circular - our own little feedback loop!



Activity Five - **Nominalisation** - **Team Challenge**. (*Do not prepare at home*).



In a team you have a set amount of time to come up with a paragraph about the addictive powers of social media which contains as many pairs of verb/noun sets as you can use.

Activity Six - **Role Plays** - act out the following role plays in groups of two or three.

1. You are a teenager, doing your homework. Your parent/parents come into your room and tell you that you can’t multi task. They want you to hand over your telephone. You refuse, arguing that you can do several things at once.

2. You are in the cafeteria at work and you tell your colleague/colleagues about some disturbing news you have heard about Emanuel Macron. Everyone but you thinks that you have been reading fake news on social media. You disagree.

3. You are having lunch with a friend and you tell them that you have seen something very upsetting, and life-changing, on your boyfriends Facebook account.

4. You are at home watching a film with your boy/girlfriend. They are looking at their phone more than the film. You are sure that they are not really able to do both at once fully. You try to catch them out.

