Applying Critical Thinking Skills to L2 Group Discussions on Edmodo

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Introduction

Recent studies are showing the importance of critical thinking in language development; however, critical thinking requires time to digest new information and learn from it, and that time is not always provided or available in the scheduled class time. The purpose of this qualitative study was to see if Edmodo, the online global education network, could be used to engage students and assist them in developing their critical thinking skills. In this study, critical thinking questions for an L2 (Second Language) content course were posted to Edmodo, and student discussions were examined to see if elements of critical thinking were displayed. End-of-semester questionnaires and reflection questions were also given to gauge whether students could gain new perspectives from their discussions with classmates. The results show that students were able to demonstrate critical thinking skills throughout the semester, and post-course reflections and questionnaires demonstrate that students gained new knowledge and were able to learn from each other. These findings suggest that Edmodo can be used to help assist students in applying critical thinking skills to English language discussions.

1. Literature Review

While educators realize the importance of critical thinking in the classroom, it is something that is difficult to define. Rezaei et al. (2011), state that the "ultimate objective for teaching critical thinking is to help students make correct judgments based on the careful weighing of available evidence". Historically, critical thinking was not a focus in education, but rather skills like reading and writing, which were necessary for commercial and industrial work, were emphasized (Paul, 1985). American philosopher, John Dewey (1910) was the first to use the term "critical thinking"; however, he more commonly referred to it as reflective thinking. He defines reflective thinking as, "[a]ctive, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions which it tends (1910)". Merriam-Webster dictionary defines reflection as, "a thought, idea, or opinion formed or a remark made as a result of meditation" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). As John Dewey (1910) used the terms critical thinking and reflective thinking interchangeably, it is apparent that reflection is central in critical thinking. It was not until the 1980's that critical thinking became more prominent in education, when the California State University System required all students to study it in order to graduate (Ennis, 2015).

In recent years, the importance and significance of critical thinking has become more apparent (Rezaei et al., 2011). It may be more difficult to strengthen critical thinking skills in the L2 classroom, "as L2 learners need to use multiple cognitive processes for active participation in communication in L2, which could lead to complex cognitive overload" (Baralt, 2015, as cited in Chen & Hu, 2018). However, there is a growing amount of research demonstrating how critical thinking skills can be strengthened through language literacy (Chen & Hu, 2018). While critical thinking has also been deemed as important in English as a Foreign language (EFL) learners, instructors may require training in order to help foster critical thinking in students who may not have been previously exposed to such learning environments (Feng, 2013). Critical thinking is also emphasized in all interdependent key competencies for lifelong learning in the European Framework for CLIL (Marsh, et al., 2012), thus emphasizing its importance. Knowing the importance of and need for critical thinking in the language learning classroom, how can it effectively be implemented into language lessons?

While including and encouraging critical thinking skills in the classroom is

important, doing it correctly can also be quite challenging. There are many different opinions and perspectives about how to engage students in critical thinking (Liaw, 2007; Lin, 2018; Tanaka & Gilliland, 2007; Turuk Kuek, 2010). Lim et al. (2011) recommends that "facilitators should perhaps focus on three facilitation techniques, specifically questioning, expressing agreements, and providing opinions or explanations to foster in-depth level of critical thinking". Providing students with open-ended questions which they can either agree or disagree with, and allowing time and space to consider different opinions and re-assess their current beliefs using probing questions could help promote critical thinking. However, too much involvement from the teacher could lead to students being heavily influenced by the teacher's opinion. Critical thinking is best encouraged in students when they are more involved in discussions with limited, but purposeful facilitation from the instructor, so as not to be swayed by the instructor whom they may hold in a higher regard (Arend, 2009). Providing students with all necessary information to respond seems to reduce opportunities to engage in critical thinking. In order to promote critical thinking, choosing topics that are challenging and open-ended, yet where students are able to access additional knowledge and information is important (Foo & Quek, 2019).

One obstacle to including critical thinking in the classroom seems to be time. Discussions in the classroom are often limited in regards to time and the number of participants, and instructors need to find new ways to allow more time for discussion (Szabo & Schwartz, 2011). One way to help overcome this obstacle could be with an online platform, where students would have more time to reflect, research and reassess. Previous research studies have shown that online discussion forums allow students more time to participate (Foo & Quek, 2019; Hou et al. 2008; Vonderwell et al. 2007; Yu et al. 2019). With more time available, an online platform might also help students to participate more and offer more peer feedback. Giving and receiving peer feedback in an online environment allows students to reflect more critically (Ertmer et al., 2007). Asking thoughtful questions in online discussions has been shown to promote higher levels of critical thinking skills (Arend, 2007, 2009; Szabo & Schwartz, 2011); therefore, it is important to find ways to include them in a curriculum, whether asynchronous or synchronous. While additional research is needed as to how discussions can be implemented online, if online discussion activities are well designed, they can contribute to higher level thinking in students (Foo & Quek, 2019).

The purpose of this study was to examine if and to what extent students could

apply critical thinking skills to online group discussions using Edmodo. The researcher examined the following questions: 1) Was critical thinking exemplified in the students' work on Edmodo, and 2) Did the students feel that they gained new perspectives from the discussions with classmates on Edmodo?

2. Methods

This qualitative study included twenty-nine 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students at a private university in the Kansai region of Japan. The students were in two separate Life Topics I Top-stream/ Mid-stream classes, which are English language content courses aimed to improve overall language proficiency, while placing a special emphasis on reflection and self-expression. The students were of varying English language abilities, generally from advanced beginner to intermediate level. The only requirement for enrolling in this course is that students must have completed all first-year compulsory English language courses: Speaking, Listening, and Reading and Writing. Fifteen asynchronous classes were taught in the autumn term between October 2020 and January 2021. One of the applicable institutional objectives of the course is to "develop learning habits that foster curiosity and serve as a foundation for deep thought"; therefore, critical thinking is a key component in the course.

This course was conducted asynchronously due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Edmodo, the global education network, was used as the main platform for posting work and information, and for communication with the teacher and classmates. Fifteen lessons were taught to be equivalent to about 90 minutes of class time per lesson with additional time for homework. Each lesson (excluding introductory, mid-term & final assignments, etc.) included one reading for each topic (a different topic for each week) and comprehension questions with dictionary translation activities and critical thinking questions discussed in small groups on Edmodo. The required textbook for the course was *Life Topics: Reflections* (Berman & Shimaoka, 2019) and the topics (see Appendix A) and critical thinking questions (see Appendix B) used in this study were taken from the textbook. Weekly work was submitted individually to Edmodo, and only the teacher was able to access this work for grading. Critical thinking questions were posted weekly to small groups on Edmodo, which consisted of 3-4 students in each group. The teacher commented on students' responses, tried to encourage further thought, and also summarized students' general opinions.

Student responses to critical thinking questions were inspected for similarities and connections to critical thinking. They were reviewed for examples of reflective thinking and responding to and learning from each other's answers. A questionnaire about the students' opinions about the class was also given at the end of the semester (Appendix C). This was used to gauge how students felt about the class and whether or not they felt they had learned from it. Finally, students were asked three reflective questions about the class which were posted to the main wall of Edmodo. These questions were used to measure students' opinions about the content, what they had learned in the class, and what they wish they would have studied more.

3. Findings[1]
3.1. Examples of reflective thinking

Students had time to think carefully about the topics and process the information when responding to critical thinking discussion questions. For instance, when giving examples of the positive and negative effects of social media, one student reflects:

> I think my relationship with social media is healthy. I obtain information modelately while using social media modelately. I don't use it too much. So I think I don't depend on social media. I'm using it carefully so as not to cause trouble. So I think I have a good relationship with social media.

Another student writes:

> My relationship with social media is not healthy. Because I spend a lot of time on social media a day. I know that using social media for a long time is bad for my health. But I can't stop using social media. Therefore my relationship with social media is not good. So, I want to improve the status quo.

These examples connect the topics to the students themselves, which indicates that students were able to reflect and think about their answers before sharing their opinions or thoughts.

Reflective examples were shown in all of the posts from students, some being in much more depth. In another example, one student processed the information in

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1 Spelling or grammatical errors in the quotations from students come from their original writing, therefore they are left uncorrected.

the reading about gender-neutral parenting, thought deeply about it, and responded:

> I agree with you about gender neutrality. I am also roughly in favor of gender-neutral parenting. Gender-neutral parenting allows children to be free of stereotypes and to make their own choices. There is no rule that says, "You can't wear a skirt because you're a boy" or "You can't play with dolls and wear pants outside because you're a girl. If children are forced by their parents to conform to the stereotypes that have always existed in their childhood, they are likely to find it difficult to live when they realize their own values. On the other hand, if a boy says, "I only wear pants. I like blue. is also a sense of value. Because there is a fixed concept, that fixed concept is the normal way of thinking, and discrimination is created when it differs from that way of thinking. The idea that there is only one way of thinking about what a person should be according to their gender is different from the beginning, and it is just a very narrow value system that we have created in the course of our lives. Therefore, by raising children in a gender-neutral manner, we can help them recognize that there are as many values as there are people, and that there is no such thing as right and wrong. Also, by learning about various values, children will have a great deal of options in how they live their lives.

It is apparent in their weekly posts that the online platform was able to provide students with reflective time.

3.2. Examples of teacher intervention/ clarification

In order to promote critical thinking, the instructor gently intervened for clarification. The instructor was sure to keep the comments brief and without opinion, so as not to influence the perspectives of the students. For example, a student wrote the following about whether their university should have a gay club:

> I don't think so. Because it isn't natural and many people may not accept it in Japan now. And in [name of their university] there are both male student and female student. So, if the club was made in the University, the members may be discriminated. But, I agree that the club is important for gay. So, if the club was made, we should be explained about the club.And all student must accept it. I think it is best to make the club in other university which have only male student. Gay has become to natural in

some countries. So, I think the club may be natural also in Japan in the future.

The teacher responded with, "I'm curious as to why only universities with male students should have gay clubs? You don't think that females can be gay/lesbian?" To which the student replied, "I think also universities with female student should have gay club. Sorry, I missed writing it."

The teacher also summarized student opinions in order to provide further thoughts and opinions from students outside of their groups. An example of this is:

> I was very impressed with all your responses to whether [this university] should have a gay club or circle. Most of you agreed that [this university] should have a gay club, as it would offer a safe space for gay people to meet and unite with other gay people. Many of you noted that Japan is slowly starting to recognize gay people, although it is still far behind other countries. It would be a good opportunity to educate others about LGBTQ people and to help make it more accepted in society. Some of you mentioned that you don't believe it is a good idea to have a gay club or circle at [this university] because it is not yet widely accepted in Japan, and you worry about the safety of those belonging to the club, and about discrimination which could arise if such a club was created. Some of you felt that if measures were taken to ensure that this does not happen, then it would be a good idea to have a club at [this university]. All your points were interesting and well thought out. Thank you for sharing !

While this example summarizes the students' thoughts and opinions, highlights some specific examples, and compliments students on sharing their ideas, the teacher's beliefs are not given so as not to influence their opinions.

3.3. Examples of responding to each other

In order to ensure that students were actively involved in the discussions without being heavily influenced by the teacher's thoughts, commenting on each other's posts and responding to those comments was included as a percentage of their final grade. While sometimes the comments were lighthearted and somewhat simple, such as the following, this was evidence to suggest that they were actually reading each other's posts and understanding them:

> Original Poster: Hello everyone ! If there are people want to play such activity, I am for to create the circle. I think others shouldn't restlict the

things somebody want to do. People feel fun when people do the thing they want to do. In diversifing society, we mustn't stick to the past forever and ever. We must admit new values. In forever, such people may increase more and more. Now, there may be many people below the surface of the water. So since now, we should change mind to announce that such people is homosexual from themselves. In this way, it is the most important that we change our mind to homosexual people in this problem. I hope that all of us change to admit them. Thanks for reading.

Student 1 Hi, (name)! I am agree for your opinion. It is important for us to admit the new values.

Original Poster: Hi, (name). Thanks for your comment. I'm happy to understand my opinion.

Student 2: Hello,(name)! I sympathize with your opinion that you shouldn't stick to the past.

Original Poster: Hello, (name)! Thank you for your comment.

Other comments dove deeper into further reflection and discussion. For example, when one student wrote about how the differences in how genders see colors and toys is just a marketing trick, another student responded with, "[u]nfortunately my opinion was different from yours. But I was a little convinced by your opinion." The original poster then replied with, "[d]o you think marketing trick gives a bad effect for children?", and the student replied with, "[h]i, (name)! Yes, I do."

There were also other examples of learning new information from each other. When one student wrote about how airplane announcements changed from "ladies and gentlemen" to "passengers", other group members responded with "I think airplane announcements is good example", and "I didn't know airplane announcement was changed!"

3.4. End of semester reflections

At the end of the semester, students were asked three reflective questions: *1) What was the most interesting topic you studied this semester? Why? 2) What is one thing you learned this semester? Explain. 3) What is one thing that we didn't study this semester that you would like to study? Why?* Twenty-four of the twenty-nine students in the classes answered the reflective questions. Their answers were posted to the main wall on Edmodo, so that all classmates could see and comment on them. The responses to question 2 in particular highlighted students' opinions

on learning about new topics, showed changes in their ways of thinking, demonstrated personal self-change, and even indicated the importance of the online group discussions. It was evident in all the responses that students had time to reflect on what they had learned, as all responses referred to content from the readings mixed with personal opinions or thoughts.

Out of the twenty-four students that completed the reflective questions, 78% specifically mentioned that they had learned something new that they did not know before. For example, one student wrote, "[t]his semester, one things I learned is about gender. The textbook to talk about gender is two topics, so I felt like I learned more." Another student wrote:

> I learned a lot this semester, but the one that impressed me most was how to use social media. I actually felt that these social media would be useful when the lessons went online, and the convenience of social media, such as making life more convenient and reducing small stresses by making good use of social media. I was able to learn.

Several students wrote similar statements, mostly about learning about gender, sexuality or social media. While writing about newly learned information might be expected, many students also mentioned that they changed their way of thinking about certain topics.

When reflecting on things they learned this semester, 61% of students mentioned that they had changed their way of thinking about a topic because of what they had studied. For example, when thinking about learning about gay people and their rights, one student mentioned, "[n]ow I think I need to think about things beyond the barriers between men and women", which shows a clear change in their thinking habits. On the same topic, another student mentions, "I felt that it was not familiar from my own life, but I felt that I should make an understanding about gays". Similarly, when talking about gender, one student said, "[t]herefor, even if we meet new genders, we should accept them and reduce the gender stereotype."

Similar to changing their ways of thinking about a topic, many students expressed personal self-change at the end of the semester. 65% of the responses alluded to some form of self-growth. One student wrote:

> The thing I learned this semester is that one thing I can do to manage stress is to write things down. I have never done like this. However I tried to write things I have to do down after I studied this topic. Then I became able to manage stress better.

Likewise, another student wrote, "so it is very important to manage our stress level by ourselves. I'm going to manage my stress and maintain body and heart health." Another student, reflecting about processed foods being addictive, wrote "[s]o, I want to be careful not to overeat processed foods. And I decided to eat a lot of vegetables and fruits. I take care of my health." This shows that the topics and discussions have led this student to re-evaluate their thinking and make personal changes.

While many responses demonstrate learning new information, changes in ways of thinking, and personal growth, 35% of students specifically referred to the importance of the critical thinking discussions in their Edmodo groups. Some students commented on the importance of different opinions. For example, one student wrote, "I learned that it is necessary to question-and-answer session to some extent. Because even if we had the same final opinion, there were considerable differences in the thinking process." Other students noted the necessity of reflection time, such as one student who wrote:

> In the online class, I had to make a sentence conversation with my teacher and class members, so I started to think carefully about how to convey what I meant and what I want to tell in my text. By taking this class, I read various topics and gained various knowledge, but at the same time, I learned how to tell my interpretation and thoughts to others.

Another student wrote:

> I learned to think and show my thoughts about others' thoughts is important. There were some times to show my opinions. But there were not many times to think and show my thoughts about others' thoughts. So, it was refreshing for me.

It seems that this student is saying that they had time to express their opinions in the past, but there was not a lot of time to reflect and respond to what others say. These examples demonstrate the importance of giving students time to reflect on their answers before responding, which is something that might be difficult to do if put on the spot in the classroom.

Other students commented on how the opinions of others could enrich their own thinking. One student relayed this, along with mentioning time to organize their thoughts:

> I learned the importance of exchanging opinions with others in this semester. I'm not very good at expressing my opinion. But, I had to organize my thoughts and convey them to my classmates in this class. At

first I was confused many times, but gradually I was able to express my thoughts well. And it was fun to listen to the opinions of my classmates who had different ideas. By exchanging a lot of opinions in this way, I was able to enrich my thinking.

The responses to the end of semester reflection questions perhaps best portray the importance of critical thinking in the online group discussions, and how students were affected positively by them.

3.5. End of semester questionnaires

At the end of the semester, students were given a bilingual questionnaire consisting of 21 six-point interval Likert-scale questions, 1 being the lowest (strongly disagree) and 6 being the highest (strongly agree) in value. Twenty students completed the questionnaire. While the questionnaire did not specifically ask questions in regard to critical thinking, it helped to gauge their attitudes towards the class and what they had learned (Appendix C). In their responses, the vast majority of students reported that they enjoyed the class and that they felt their English language skills had improved. When asked if they enjoyed the class (Question 1) over 74% of respondents rated it as 5 or 6 (the highest points). While Edmodo was most likely new to most students and took time to become familiar with, almost 60% of students chose 5 or 6, and no students chose 1 or 2 on the Likert scale when asked if they enjoyed using Edmodo (Question 2). This comfort level with using Edmodo seems to indicate that it is a worthy platform for small group discussions online. When asked if this course gave them the confidence to do more advanced work in the subject, over 92% suggested they thought it did (4, 5, or 6 on the Likert scale). While interest in the subject is important in critical thinking, Question 3 asked if their interest was stimulated in the class, and almost 90% of students rated it as 5 or 6. Similarly, more than 70% of the students would highly recommend the course to other students (Question 19), with a rating of 5 or 6 on the Likert scale. No students rated it as 2 or below. The majority of the responses to the questionnaire were positive, which shows that students not only demonstrated critical thinking in their discussions and responses, but also enjoyed the class and found it beneficial.

Conclusion and Future Direction

Edmodo was beneficial in promoting critical thinking in students and there were several examples of this in the discussions and reflections. This was not only demonstrated in the quality of their responses to the questions, but also in their personal assessments of the class itself at the end of the semester. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, many teachers and students have had to resort to online learning; however, using online platforms such as Edmodo can be incorporated into future courses, be they hybrid or completely back in the classroom. The online discussions can be used as one component of the class, allowing students more time to think and reflect on questions before speaking about them in front of others. While further research is needed on the quality and effectiveness of critical thinking questions and teacher interventions, the results of this qualitative study show that critical thinking questions can be incorporated into online discussions in a language course and have a positive effect on students and their learning.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix A

Weekly Topics for the Life Topics Course

- Consumerism
- A sense of purpose
- Same-sex wedding
- What makes you happier: experiences or luxury goods?
- Teenagers and stress
- Gratitude
- Processed foods and addiction
- The benefits of being scared
- Social media and the fear of missing out
- Gender-neutral parenting
- The science of altruism

All topics were chosen from the chapters in the textbook, *Life Topics: Reflections* (Berman, J. & Shimaoka, T., 2019).

Appendix B

Critical Thinking Discussion Questions

Discussion Question 1:

Do you think you buy too many things you don't need? Do you think your shopping habits are different from your parents or the same? Explain.

Discussion Question 2:

Read the Creative Discussion on page 20. Choose something you HATE and imagine it is your sense of purpose. For example, I HATE spiders, so maybe I will write that "My sense of purpose is playing with and taking care of spiders" (of course it's not true!). Then you need to explain WHY it is your sense of purpose in at least 10 good sentences). Example: My sense of purpose is playing with and taking care of spiders. Spiders are such interesting and fascinating insects. I love watching them spin webs and catch other insects in them to eat. I feel that spiders need to be taken care of and protected, and that is my life's purpose. I keep several pet spiders in my room, and give them nice homes to live in. I keep their homes nice and clean and I give them insects that they can eat. I put the insects in their homes and they get caught in their webs and then eaten by the spiders. I love taking them out and letting them crawl all over me. In the future, I hope to collect more spiders to study. I also hope I can learn more about how to protect spiders so that they never become extinct.

Discussion Question 3:

Part 1:

What are the reasons for and against making gay marriage legal in Japan? Think of at least 3 reasons for each.

For gay marriage: 1. 2. 3.

Against gay marriage: 1. 2. 3.Part 2:

Many universities in America have "gay" clubs and circles for people who are interested in the lifestyle and who want to support one another. Should there be a gay club at [this] [u]niversity? Why or Why not?

Discussion Question 4:

Part 1:

Critical Thinking: List five expensive items that you own and five experiences that you have had. Luxury items you own (Ex: a nice wallet) Experiences you have had (Ex: scuba diving)

1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Part 2: Writing/ Discussion Question:

Write about an experience you had (NOT buying something) more than a year ago. Describe the experience you had, where it happened, and how you felt about it at the time (use page 36 in

your textbook to help you).

Discussion Question 5:

Part 1:

> 1. What do you do to relieve stress? Ex: "To relieve stress, I like to go for a walk or a jog. This helps me to get away from the things causing me stress and it helps to clear my thoughts."
> 2. What are some recommendations in the story to relieve stress that you don't do? Do you think you should try them? Why or why not? Ex: "The story recommends cleaning and tidying to relieve stress, but I often don't do this because I am so busy. I think that if I tried cleaning and tidying my room more, it would help to deal with stress. Maybe I can try cleaning and tidying for just 10-15 minutes a day.

Part 2:

⇒ What is one or two things that cause you a lot of stress? What do you think you should do to help you so that it is less stressful?

Discussion Question 6:

List six things you are thankful for. Do you feel that you appreciate these things enough? Explain.

Discussion Question 7:

Part 1:

What food is the most addictive to you? How often do you eat it? How much do you eat at one time? Part 2:

Who is to blame for overeating highly processed foods? The company making them or the person eating them? Explain.

Discussion Question 8:

Answer Discussion I on page 65: What are you most afraid of?   Describe this fear and how you think you might "defeat" it.

⇒ Discussion II question (page 65). Read the posts from your group members. Write a reply to each group member in the comment section and recommend a way to defeat their fear.

Discussion Question 9:

Part 1:

I. Why (do/ don't) you use social media? Give examples.

II. Do you try to get more positive comments, "likes", "followers", or "friends"? Explain.

III. How many times a day do you use social media? How do you feel after you use it?

IV. Many people believe that they had more fun before social media existed, and that people are now missing out on fun because they are so glued to their cell phone. Do you agree? Explain. Would you prefer that social media not exist? Explain.

Part 2:

What are some of the positive and negative effects of social-media use? (3 positive and 3 negative). Is your relationship with social media healthy? Why or why not? Explain.

Discussion Question 10:

Part 1:

What is your opinion of gender-neutral parenting?

Part 2:

Do you think there are natural differences in how genders see colors and toys, or is it just a marketing trick? Explain.

Discussion Question 11:

Part 1:

Give three examples of a time when you gave something to or helped someone and three examples of a time when you received help or something else.

Gave to or helped someone: Received help or something else:

1.   1.

2.   2.

3.   3.

Opinion: Overall, which has given you the most pleasure, giving or receiving? Why?

Part 2:

Give examples of altruistic and selfish behavior that you have seen in movies or on TV.

Altruistic behavior: Selfish behavior:

1.   1.

2.   2.

3.   3.

All critical thinking questions were chosen from the textbook, *Life Topics: Reflections* (Berman, J. & Shimaoka, T., 2019).

Appendix C

End of Semester Questionnaire Life Topics I

Let me know what you thought of the class!

Instructions: Please answer the questions honestly. Your answers are valuable because they will be used to make improvements for future classes.

They might also be used in future research publications; however, your name and personal information will not be mentioned.

以下の質問に対して、率直な回答をお願いします。みなさんの貴重な回答は、今後の授業改善に役立てます。また、いただいた回答を今後の研究に用いることがありますが、その場合、個人が特定されないように配慮します。

* Questions 1-19 were answered using the following Likert scale:

Strongly disagree 全くそう思わない　　:（　Strongly agree 強くそう思う :)

1　　　　　2　　　　　3　　　　　4　　　　　5　　　　　6

   1) I enjoyed this class この授業は楽しかった

   2) I enjoyed using Edmodo Edmodoを楽しんで利用した

   3) My interest was stimulated in this class この授業で、私の好奇心は刺激された

   4) The workload amount required in this course was appropriate. この授業で求められた学習量は適切であった

   5) The material was easy to understand 使用した教材はわかりやすかった

   6) I felt challenged by the material 提供された教材は、挑戦が必要と感じさせるものであった

   7) This course gave me the confidence to do more advanced work in the subject この授業は、英語においてもっと発展的なものをやろうとする自信を与えてくれた

   8) My work was fairly assessed (e.g., through quizzes, assignments, tasks, and other graded work) 公平な評価（例：小テスト、宿題、授業内でのタスクなど）が行われた

   9) I could engage with my classmates クラスメートと協働することができた

  10) The instructions were easy to understand 担当者による指導・指示はわかりやすかった

  11) The instructor was approachable and easy to contact 科目担当者は親しみやすく、連絡がとりやすかった

  12) The lessons were well-prepared and organized by the instructor 授業は担当

者によってきちんと準備されており、うまくまとまっていた

13) Any questions or problems I had were answered quickly by the teacher 質問や困りごとに担当者は素早く対応してくれた

14) I received a lot of feedback and advice from the instructor 担当者から、たくさんのフィードバックやアドバイスを得ることができた

15) My English speaking skills improved in this class この授業で、私の英語スピーキングスキルは上達した

16) My English writing skills improved in this class この授業で、私の英語ライティングスキルは上達した

17) My English listening skills improved in this class この授業で、私の英語リスニングスキルは上達した

18) My English reading skills improved in this class この授業で、私の英語リーディングスキルは上達した

19) I would highly recommend this course to other students 他の学生にこのコースの受講を強くすすめます

20) What do you feel could have been done to improve the quality and content of this course? What would have made the course better for you? (You can answer in English or Japanese.) 何をすれば、この授業の質や内容をより良いものにできたと感じますか？（回答は英語でも日本語でも可）

21) Additional comments for the instructor. (You can write in English or Japanese). 何か担当者にコメントがあればどうぞ。（回答は英語でも日本語でも可

Edmodoを利用したL2グループディスカッションにおける クリティカル・シンキングスキル活用

小林　ジネマリー

キーワード：クリティカル・シンキング、第二言語、オンライン学習、非同期、CLIL

要旨

　近年、言語能力の向上におけるクリティカル・シンキング（CT）の重要性を指摘する研究が注目されている。しかし、CTを身につけたり、活用したりするには時間を要することから、限られた語学の授業時間内でその時間を確保することは容易ではない。本研究の目的は、オンライン上の教育プラットフォーム、Edmodo（エドモド）が第二言語（L2）学習者のCTスキルの育成に役立つかどうかを質的に調査することである。具体的には、Edmodoにアップした質問に対する学生のやりとりにCTが用いられているかを分析し、学生同士のやりとりから新たな視点を得ることができたかを測定するために、学期末に振り返りを実施した。調査結果から、参加者は、学期を通してCTスキルを利用し、新しい知識を増やし、学生間で学び合いが行われたことが明らかとなった。このことから、Edmodoは、英語でのやりとりにおけるCTスキルの利用促進に役立つ可能性が示された。