



Fostering critical thinking skills in ELT through video-based reflection

Defne Erdem Mete^a *



^a*Selçuk University, Konya, Turkey*

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Abstract

As a product of Council of Europe's initiatives to promote intercultural dialogue, the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM)* was published as a tool to help learners reflect on their intercultural encounters. This study aims to investigate whether the AIEVM can be used as an educational tool for English language learners in order to foster their critical thinking skills in a higher education context. Fifteen students taking an Intercultural Communication course at a state university in Turkey participated in the study. For the purposes of the study, videos were used as the type of visual media during the pedagogical treatment which took four weeks. The videos were chosen among ones which had the theme of stereotyping and prejudice. After reflective classroom activities by using the videos, students were given reflective writing assignments based on the AIEVM. Data were collected from weekly reflective writing samples, field notes and an interview conducted at the end of the pedagogical intervention. Bloom's Revised Taxonomy was used to identify the categories of critical thinking found in the data. The study revealed that the students displayed higher-order cognitive skills at the Applying, Analysing and Evaluating levels of the taxonomy, while the Creating category was not addressed in the reflections. It is concluded that the AIEVM can be used as an effective educational tool to foster critical thinking skills by using videos in English language teaching.

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Keywords: *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM)*; English language teaching (ELT); video-based reflection; critical thinking skills; writing

1. Introduction

Enhancing critical thinking skills should be one of the major objectives of language teaching. It is crucial to foster criticality especially on the concepts of stereotyping and prejudice for English language learners in higher education. As stated by Cormeraie (as cited in Yulita, 2013) "there is a dangerous tendency in modern language teaching to present cultures in ways that develop ethnocentric attitudes and reinforce stereotypes and polarities" (p. 210). This point is also highlighted by Bandura (2013) as "foreign language syllabi should involve not only learners' linguistic development, but also knowledge

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +90-332-223-1451
E-mail address: defnemet@selcuk.edu.tr

of both theory and examples of cultural stereotypes, skills to identify them, attitudes to address them, and critical cultural awareness, which helps learners to evaluate cultural phenomena” (p. 181).

In this study, enhancing criticality through video-based reflection in an EFL higher education context was examined by using the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM)* (Barrett, Byram, Ipgrave & Seurrat, 2013). AIEVM is a tool developed by the Council of Europe for helping learners reflect on their intercultural encounters with a focus on visual media. Although there are studies on the use of visual stimuli and a mixture of visual media to investigate issues related to stereotyping in foreign language teaching (Porto, 2013; Porto, 2019), there are limited studies which focus on using videos for facilitating critical reflection on stereotyping and in the context of English language teaching (ELT). Hence, the study attempts to contribute to the fields of ELT and intercultural education by filling this gap. Another significance of the study is that it provides a broad idea on which higher-order cognitive skills in Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy (Pohl, 2000) appear to be addressed in which components of the AIEVM (see Appendix) in the students’ reflections. Therefore, the identification of categories on critical thinking skills addressed in the video-based reflections would enable educators, including English language teachers, to focus on specific components of the AIEVM in the classroom for enhancing certain higher-order cognitive skills. At the same time, finding out the limitations encountered in the facilitation of critical thinking through the AIEVM would inform English language teachers on designing complementary activities to foster criticality where necessary.

1.1. Literature Review

As pointed out by Schafersman (1991), while educators give importance to the transmission of knowledge, teaching learners how to evaluate what they learned is often ignored. Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom, 1956), generally referred as Bloom’s Taxonomy, was developed as a model to standardize learning objectives in education. The cognitive domain of the taxonomy identifies six levels of cognition which are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. In the revised version of the taxonomy, the names of these levels were changed from nouns to verbs and the position of the highest two levels were shifted (Pohl, 2000). Remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating are the cognitive dimensions in this version. While remembering, understanding and applying are generally referred as lower-order cognitive skills of the taxonomy; analysing, evaluating and creating are higher-order cognitive skills. Research has been carried out in different fields of education on the use of the taxonomy for investigating and promoting critical thinking and writing skills (Athanassiou & McNett, 2003; Granello, 2001; Nentl & Zietlow, 2008; Riazi & Mosalanejad, 2010).

Cultural stereotypes in the foreign language classroom prevent the development of intercultural awareness. Pennington (1986) defines stereotypes as “grossly oversimplified and overgeneralized abstractions about groups of people and are usually highly inaccurate although they may contain a grain of truth” (p. 90). Stereotyping can easily turn into essentialism “with the result that group members are treated as having certain invariable and fixed properties, and as being essentially different from members of other groups” (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009, p. 142-143). When stereotyping and essentialism transform into “a negative feeling or attitude towards members of a social group”, it is called prejudice (Yulita, 2013, p. 207). Ultimately, prejudice leads to discrimination. According to Yulita (2013), “critical pedagogy can help students move away from viewing cultures in stereotypical terms, and can facilitate awareness-raising and progression into understanding the power of agency and fluidity of identities” (p. 213) and reflection should be one of the pedagogical approaches to be included in language classrooms for this purpose. Similarly, Jeyaraj and Harland (2016) state that self-reflexivity is crucial for critical pedagogy. Moncada Linares (2016) highlights the need to enhance critical cultural awareness in language teaching in order to help learners avoid essentialism. Bandura (2013), in her study

carried out with Polish university students studying English, found that implementing critical pedagogy with a focus on stereotyping was beneficial for developing learners' critical cultural awareness. Beaven and Golubeva (2016) implemented tasks related to stereotyping and prejudice taken from the European project IEREST in the piloting process and received positive comments from stakeholders and students.

Video-based reflection has generally been studied with a focus on using video recordings for self-reflection in teacher education including language teachers (Brouwer, 2015; Cavanagh, Bower, Moloney & Sweller, 2014; Setyaningrahayu, Widhi & Murtisari, 2019). Schwartz, Lin and Holmes (2003) point out the importance of using technology for facilitating reflection and minimising cultural distance by claiming that “technology enables manageable cross-cultural exchanges that target specific learning goals for reflection” (p. 302). Campbell Wilcox (2009) highlights that journal writing and group discussions should be implemented in foreign language teaching in order to facilitate reflection on videos with a cross-cultural content. In her study on using visual representation to investigate cultural understanding in reading comprehension of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) college students in Argentina, Porto (2013) points out the power of images in addressing imaginative and emotional dimension of cultural understanding. Studies using the Council of Europe's autobiographies, mainly the standard version titled the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* (Byram, Barrett, Ipgrave, Jackson & Méndez Garcia, 2009), focused on different perspectives such as intercultural awareness, narrative writing, reflection and suggestions for improving the Autobiography for adolescents (Andawi, Ngadiso & Drajadi, 2019; Erdem Mete, 2018; Koyama & Matsumoto, 2014; Méndez Garcia, 2017; Ruest, 2020). Lindner and Méndez Garcia (2014) carried out an online exchange between pre-service language teachers by using the AIEVM and found that the participants displayed intercultural awareness and critical thinking. The authors highlighted the link between visual literacy and critical thinking skills through the implementation of the AIEVM. In a recent study carried out with EFL learners in Argentina and Spanish learners in Britain by using technological tools for both real-time and asynchronous communication, Porto (2019) found that Council of Europe's autobiographies, including the AIEVM, foster not only intercultural awareness and reflection, but also critical thinking, imaginative understanding and world citizenship as components of quality education (Nussbaum, 2006). However, there is a lack of studies which specifically deal with video-based reflection in the context of EFL autobiography writing.

1.2. Research questions

Using Bloom's Revised Taxonomy and the AIEVM as its theoretical frameworks, the study aimed to find answers for the following questions:

1. Based on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, is there evidence of higher-order cognitive skills demonstrated in the AIEVMs of the Turkish EFL students?
2. If so, which components of the AIEVM in the students' reflective writing samples include reflections corresponding to the cognitive skill categories of Applying, Analysing, Evaluating and Creating?
3. Can the AIEVM be used as an effective educational tool in an EFL higher education context to facilitate video-based reflection and to foster critical thinking skills?

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The participants of the study were 15 students taking the elective Intercultural Communication course in their third year at an English Language and Literature department of a state university in Turkey. All of the students were learning English as a foreign language. Their proficiency in English ranged from upper-intermediate to advanced levels. 12 of the participants were female and 3 of them were male. The ages of the participants ranged from 21 to 25. None of the students reported taking any kind of intercultural training before this course. 6 of the students had experience of living in a foreign country before, which is 40% of the total number of students. Out of these 6 students, 3 of them had been abroad with the Erasmus exchange program for one semester. The other 3 students lived abroad with their families. One was born in Germany and lived there for 15 years. The other student was born in Turkey and raised in USA for 14 years and the last student was born in Turkey and later lived in Netherlands for 4 years, from the age 8 until 12.

2.2. Data Collection Instruments

Data were collected from video-based reflection papers of the students using the AIEVM, field notes and an interview conducted one month after the pedagogical intervention. The video-based reflection papers were prepared by the students as assignments at the end of each week of the treatment process. For this reflective writing component of the course, students were required to fill in the original AIEVM document and send it to the researcher by e-mail every week. Later, they transferred their answers written on the original version of the AIEVM on a Word document. In this way, instead of the original twenty-page document, they could submit a print-out of one or two pages. In doing so, it was seen that some students used the components of AIEVM as subheadings for their reflections in the print-out versions. Other students did not use subheadings but wrote their reflections as separate paragraphs which addressed a different section of the AIEVM, beginning with opening phrases such as “When it comes to the similarities and differences ...” (referring to the Same and Different section), “When I think about the aims of the producers of the movie, I can say that ...” (referring to the Thinking about the Person or People Who Made the Image section). Therefore, it was clear which components of the AIEVM were referred in students’ reflective writing samples. Students submitted their printed reflection papers to the researcher at the beginning of each class during the pedagogical intervention. The researcher took field notes in every session of the treatment and a semi-structured interview was conducted with the participants one month after the end of the intervention.

2.3. Data Collection Procedures

The first week of the elective Intercultural Communication class was devoted to discussions on identity, essentialist and non-essentialist view of culture and definitions of some concepts like stereotyping, prejudice and othering. This introduction week provided a general preparation for the pedagogical intervention starting at the second week. In the second week, students started watching a video for each week of the pedagogical treatment. Table 1 shows the titles, content and themes of the videos. As seen in the table, a total of five videos were included in the intervention period of four weeks.

Table 1. Information on the Videos

Week No.	Video No.	Title of the Video	Content of the Video	Themes of the Video
1	1	<i>What Kind of an Asian are You?</i>	The video shows two people meeting when jogging in the park. After a short conversation starting with the question “Where are you from?”, communication breaks up and both interlocutors are left with a feeling of frustration. The video aims to stimulate discussion about the dynamics of the interaction, as well as introduce the students to the concepts of stereotyping, othering and essentialism. (Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWynJkN5HbQ)	Stereotyping, othering, essentialism
2	2	<i>Go Home or Face Arrest</i>	A news report about a campaign in UK addressing undocumented immigrants. Large billboards placed on vans warn “Go Home or Face Arrest” (Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p95k_xcIrNM)	Prejudice, othering, discrimination
	3	<i>Life is Beautiful (a brief scene)</i>	In this specific scene of the movie directed by Roberto Benigni, discrimination is presented through signs and notices on the shops. (Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QL2IwNIJaAg)	Racism
3	4	<i>The Danger of a Single Story</i>	The speaker Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie talks about how stereotyping leads to prejudice and essentialism as types of othering. (Available at: https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en)	Stereotyping, prejudice, essentialism, othering
4	5	<i>Don't Ask Me Where I'm from, Ask Where I'm a Local</i>	Taiye Selasi questions whether asking “Where are you from?” is adequate for understanding one's identity. She offers a 3R test (rituals, relationships and restrictions) in order to find out where one really belongs to and introduces the concept of locality instead of nationality. (Available at:	Stereotyping, prejudice, essentialism, othering

			https://www.ted.com/talks/taiye_selas_i_don_t_ask_where_i_m_from_ask_where_i_m_a_local	
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The first four videos were adapted from the intercultural education resource document IEREST (2015) and the same suggested videos were used except for Video 2[†]. The last video was chosen by the researcher as it is related to the content of the first video. While Video 1 focuses on the question “Where are you from?” from the perspective of stereotyping, Video 5 offers an analysis of the same question by focusing on the concept of locality instead of nationality. Therefore, it offers a link with the first video by enabling critical reflection on a different perspective of the speaker.

While the first two videos and classroom activities based on them focused more on communicative aspects of stereotyping and prejudice including gestures and written notices, the last three videos enabled deeper cognitive analysis by opening discussions on concepts of othering, essentialism, discrimination and racism. After watching each video, discussions were facilitated in pairs and groups by referring to the questions in the AIEVM. The students were required to write their reflections on the videos after each class as an assignment and submit them in the next class.

2.4. Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis was conducted in the study in order to get an in-depth understanding of the critical thinking skills of the students. Reflective writing samples collected each week, field notes and a semi-structured interview provided triangulation of data based on grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2014) and this triangulation increased validity. Based on a directed approach to content analysis, the categories of Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy were determined to be the pre-established themes. Multiple readings of the reflective writing samples by two researchers enabled to investigate which section of the AIEVM referred in the reflections corresponded to which category of the taxonomy. The results were compared to the emerging themes of the interview and field notes. Kappa Coefficient for Inter-coder Reliability was calculated as ($\kappa = .884, p < .001$) which indicated a high reliability.

As the study was concerned with higher-order cognitive skills of the students, the categories of Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy which were deemed most relevant to the aims of the study were Applying[‡], Analysing, Evaluating and Creating. Thus, students’ reflections corresponding to the lower-order cognitive skill dimensions of Remembering and Understanding were not taken into consideration.

[†] The second video titled *Go Home or Face Arrest* is on the same topic of the one titled *Go-Home Campaign* which is suggested in IEREST (2015). This video was chosen instead as it was more appropriate for the purposes of the study by presenting types of written notices in the news report and enabling a focus on the communicative aspect of discrimination.

[‡] The category of Applying was especially included in the study due to the fact that relating to the content of the visual media and being able to give specific examples from one’s real life experiences was a significant skill to be investigated and which was reported to be inadequately referred by participants in previous studies (Bandura, 2013).

3. Results and Discussion

The analysis of the data revealed demonstration of critical thinking skills on the categories of Applying, Analysing and Evaluating, whereas the dimension of Creating was not addressed in students' reflective writing samples. This section presents the selected comments of the students referring to these categories.

3.1. Applying

3.1.1. Same and Different

It was found that the Applying category of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy was addressed in students' AIEVMs in terms of relating by applying the content of the video to their own contexts. This was mainly dealt with in the Same and Different section of the AIEVM and was demonstrated by specific examples from the students' lives through a process of comparing and contrasting. While this appeared to be easier for students who had an experience of living in a foreign country, the following examples show that those who did not live abroad were still able to apply their understanding to their own daily life situations.

S1, who did not have an experience of living abroad, was able to relate to the situation in Video 1 by referring to her communication experiences in Turkey:

In terms of similarities, when I say "I come from X (the name of hometown)" to someone, I hear some idioms from him or her which are used specifically in my hometown and which I dislike and do not use myself. For example, in the video, the Korean woman says "Top of the morning to you!", which is weird for the guy and which he probably dislikes. It is almost the same as my experience.

Similarly, S4 could apply the situation in Video 1 to her own communication context by providing an example from her everyday life:

The people around me also keep asking me where I am from. When I say that I am from X (the name of hometown), they want to know my real village in X or where my grandfather was born. The people in my culture are also insistent and prejudiced like the man in the video.

S7's comments about Video 1 show the influence of previous personal experiences (Yulita, 2013) and "normal cognitive processes" (Porto, 2013, p. 228) as a source of stereotyping and prejudice:

Many of us approach each other with prejudice. I had a similar experience. When I first entered the classroom in secondary school, one of the students did not want me to sit next to her. I was very upset. Then, I learned that she did not want to sit with me because she resembled me to a friend that she did not like. After we got to know each other, we became best friends and she apologized to me for approaching me with prejudice.

S5 commented on her rituals, relationships and restrictions, referred as 3Rs by Taiye Selasi in Video 5, by applying them in her daily life experiences:

When I go to my hometown, the first thing I do is to lie on my bed. It is a ritual for me. Rituals are important for us because they shape our identity. Another ritual which I like doing in my hometown is going everywhere by bicycle. I cannot do this here, in the city where I study. The reason I like this place is the relationships I have here. I like my friends in this city. These relationships are home for me. We are locals of where we carry out our rituals and relationships. However, how we experience our locality also depends on our restrictions. We are restricted by gender, age, economic inflation, etc.

While students who did not live in a foreign country referred to daily life experiences of themselves as seen above, those who had the experience of living abroad applied the content of the video to their previous intercultural experiences. When talking about the similarities and differences, S10 wrote about a specific incident that she experienced, which shows her ability to relate to Video 4 and to illustrate with an analysis on the ‘Us versus Them’ dichotomy:

I moved to Turkey in 2011 from Germany. When I started high school, people always asked me different questions like “How is it abroad?” or “What is the weather like abroad?” and so on. This made me to think about what or where this abroad is. I had just come from Germany and I knew how it was like there, but what did they mean with abroad? After some struggle trying to explain that I just could talk about Germany but not about abroad in general, they generally got disappointed. It was very hard to convince them that there were many different countries with different cultures. They just wanted to believe that what they knew about American culture should also be the same in another country like Germany or Norway, even though these countries are not even on the same continent. All these can be explained with them having just a single story about abroad.

About the similarities between himself and the person in Video 4, S12 referred to one of his experiences abroad when he was an Erasmus exchange student. This experience exemplifies essentialism which is claimed to be linked to stereotyping by Holliday (2011):

We all suffer from a single story. At the second year of my university, I was staying in a dormitory and I had African roommates. They were different from what I thought. Before that, I had no idea about African people. The media always showed Africa as an undeveloped place and its people as very poor and uneducated. However, my African friends were educated people and they knew three languages. They were amazing people. Shortly, everyone needs more stories.

S13 was able to relate to Video 5 which led to an evaluation:

I can relate to Taiye Selasi because we both were born and brought up in different countries. I grew up in America, but was born in Turkey and now live in a city in Turkey. Seeing her ambition to get a message out to the world, I see myself trying to change the way people think. Just the fact that I do not have an American passport does not stop me from feeling American. I can speak Turkish and English fluently, so why should I just choose one country to be from? No one can tell me I am not American.

S10 had similar views about Video 5:

As I myself am born in another country than my parents, and a completely different culture, I found some similarities between me and Taiye Selasi. For instance, though I feel very much accustomed to Turkish culture, I also feel comfortable in German culture. So, as I am comfortable in both countries, I can easily say that I am a local of the town I lived in Germany and I am also a local of the city my parents live in Turkey.

S15 wrote about his experience when he was an Erasmus exchange student in Europe as he related to Video 5 and questioned at the same time. His questioning is a good example to deal with in the language classroom as “unmasking unjust power relations in an unequal world becomes a central issue in the teaching of foreign languages or a more egalitarian society less oppressed by stereotypical bias and prejudice” (Yulita, 2013, p. 216).

Obviously, the concept of nationality is manmade as it is pointed out in the video. I definitely agree with what she suggested since I myself experienced the same thing when I was in Europe last year. For instance, even though I had a valid visa and passport, officers at the airport started asking questions about where I am from, why I wanted to go to the country, etc. It was surprising that I was the only one

who was questioned. I wonder what if I had a US passport which is so much more powerful than mine. Most probably, I would not come across such a situation.

Students' feedback in the interview showed that they found themselves able to relate to the videos:

While watching the videos, I thought about similar situations in my life which were caused by prejudices. (S14)

The fact that the speakers in Video 4 and Video 5 talked about their real life experiences had a positive influence for me to relate to the contents. (S2)

When I was watching The Danger of a Single Story, many events that I experienced myself came to my mind. (S7)

Rather than focusing on our differences, we should think about similarities between us and the people who are different from us. This way, we will understand that actually we have many similarities as reflected in the videos that we watched. (S15)

As the above comments of the students show, the Same and Different section of the AIEVM helped the participants to think about situations which they experienced in their own lives in relation to the videos they watched. The concrete examples given by the students were either experiences of the students themselves, or they were related to someone they knew well. Students who lived abroad for some time were able to give examples which were more closely related to the content of the videos. However, unlike Bandura's (2013) study in which it was found that referring to one's own life experiences was not adequate, the study showed that the students who did not live abroad were also able to relate to the videos by giving specific examples given from their own lives. This shows that video-based reflection triggered critical thinking skills at the Applying level.

In her discussion on critical pedagogy, Yulita (2013) points out that personal experiences of students are "key teaching tools for dealing with stereotypes in the language classroom" (p. 214). Having an experience of living in a foreign country is not a prerequisite for Council of Europe's autobiographies. In this study, the AIEVM enabled students who did not live abroad to feel free to refer to their experiences in their own cultural environments. From the perspective of developing intercultural learning, this would enable language teachers to use the AIEVM as an educational tool in the English language classroom without being concerned about their students' lack of intercultural experience. As Ruest (2020) points out "it is the role of educators to introduce to their students the notion of 'intercultural' in its larger meaning" (p. 9).

3.2. Analysing

In order to investigate the Analysing category of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, students' reflections that mainly consisted of questioning and criticizing, including self-criticisms, were taken into consideration. As the students' comments show below, analysing was demonstrated in the components of the AIEVM which require thinking about feelings, communication, aims of producing the videos, disagreements related to the content of the videos, as well as similarities and differences. It was seen that students who had an experience of living abroad were able to make a deeper analysis of the videos.

3.2.1. Your Feelings

After watching Video 4, S2 criticized herself as:

I am sorry to say that I do sometimes judge people without trying to know them. I do not know how exactly it happens. When we get to know each other, sooner or later, I feel sorry for my attitude.

S8 described her questioning in relation to her feelings about Video 5:

When I first saw the image, I felt myself worried. That was because something awakened in me about my experiences. Where am I from? I wondered if I am a local or not. People who watched the video felt the same things since none of us ever questions this aspect of the question of where one is from.

The above comments of the students are criticisms related to daily life communication situations. Unlike these comments, S14, one of the students who lived abroad, shows an analysis including cultural stereotyping. She expressed self-criticism when she wrote about her first reaction while listening to the person in Video 4 and commented on the consequences of the unconscious nature of stereotyping:

When I first listened to Adichie, I felt sorry. I thought that she was completely right and that even I am most probably acting unconsciously according to my single stories about others. This made me think that also others may act or even are acting according to a single story about me or anything related to me, for example my culture.

3.2.2. The Feelings of Other People

Vief-Schmidt (2013) claims that “among the most important cultural skills to be acquired in the process of becoming interculturally competent is empathy” (p. 153). It can be claimed that video as a powerful visual media can provide the means for “stimulating the cognitive through the affective” (Porto, 2013, p. 225). S1’s expressions of empathy for the speaker in Video 4 appears to lead to “global identifications with others beyond the national” as discussed by Porto (2019, p. 523). The student said:

From the eyes of an African woman, I felt a very good example of humanity, sadness, exclusion, sincerity, self-criticism, having an optimistic vision, knowing and acknowledging oneself. As a literature student, it is obviously a source of inspiration for me that the way that she looks at literature and her mental shift develops over time. I think that other people in the same group as Adichie would try to state to the audience that the stereotypes and prejudices, hence the single stories, could harm the virtue, existence, interests, identities and culture of people.

3.2.3. Thinking about Communication

S7 pointed out the importance of attentive listening while commenting on Video 1 as:

The man did not even listen to what the woman said because he judged her with her physical appearance. We must first listen to the person we talk to and give time to him or her. If the man did not approach in a prejudiced way, they could communicate.

While in Bandura’s (2013) study this was not something expressed by the students, some students in this study mentioned the importance of referring to sources of information to avoid stereotyping. About Video 4, S3 said:

Lack of information about a topic is likely to lead to stereotypes. People should think twice before talking to each other. We are living in a technological era and thus we have limitless sources of information via Internet. Therefore, before saying an offensive thing about others, people should at least search it on the internet.

Another student, S6, referred to a specific book that she had read in her analysis of the same video. Her comments, again, emphasize “identification with a shared humanity” (Porto, 2019, p. 537):

The video makes us realize that even our little stereotypes have a big impact in our lives. This reminds me what Mina Urgan mentioned in her book titled Bir Dinozorun Anıları (The Memories of a Dinosaur) in which she talks about a politician that she hated before. However, after meeting him face-to-face, she realized that he was also someone like us. Beyond a politician that she had hated before, he was a father and a grandfather.

3.2.4. Same and Different

S2 made a self-criticism when talking about the differences between the speaker in Video 4 and herself:

The main difference between me and her is that, while she might not have had access to different resources, there were lots of possibilities for me to access several resources like books and internet in order to avoid stereotyping. However, I did not try to search for such resources.

When talking about the differences between the speaker in Video 4 and herself, S10 criticized herself for not being courageous enough to take action against stereotyping:

As a difference, I can say that I am not as courageous as her. She is able to emphasize the importance of the danger of a single story, whereas I do nothing about this issue. I neither act nor produce against stereotyping.

The kind of difference as stated above was repeated by other students which was almost an expression of “I wish I could be like him/her” which shows an admiration for the person in the video and an awareness of the difficulty of the situation. This is similar to what is expressed by Porto (2019) in relation to the imaginative understanding dimension of quality education as “The students were aware of the difficulty or even the impossibility to gain insight into the experience.” (p. 531):

If I were in her shoes, I would not be able to react to him as confident as she was. (S2, Video 1)

If I were there, I would not be as optimistic as the father. (S1, Video 3)

I would not be able to remain as strong as him. (S6, Video 3)

3.2.5. Thinking about the Person or People Who Made the Image

About Video 3, S10 expressed a self-criticism as:

The aim of the people who designed this scene in the movie was, according to my opinion, to create awareness about the absurdity of ethnic stereotypes and to show how cruel we human beings can be. The audience this video was intended for was, I think, every single one of us. We are easily gotten ready to judge or discriminate someone from another nationality which can lead to such scenes.

3.2.6. Thinking Back and Looking Forward

S12, who had been abroad as an exchange student, questioned some sections of the speaker’s talk in Video 5 and stated his disagreement. It is noteworthy that he used the pronoun ‘you’ as if he was talking to the speaker in the video. This can be claimed to be due to his strong feeling of empathy with the speaker and an attempt to emphasize that this section of her speech was the only thing he disagreed with:

It is a wonderful video. It helps me to understand who really I am. The only part I disagree with is that when people ask where you are from, some people really do not try to prejudge you. I can give the example of myself. When I ask the question “Where are you from?”, I am looking for a way to relate, a way of saying “I have been there” or “I want to visit there”, not in order to prejudge you. For me, it is finding some ways to discover about places or things which I know a little or not at all.

In the interview, students stated that their questioning led to an increase in their awareness on the issues of stereotyping and prejudice:

With the help of these videos, I could look at the issues of stereotypes and prejudice with new perspectives. For example, after thinking about Video 5, I realized that African people do not come from one culture but different cultures as they are from a continent, not a single country. (S10)

By the help of the classroom activities on the videos, we questioned our own behaviours. Although we know what stereotyping and prejudice are, we tend not to be critical about ourselves. Writing reflection papers was especially useful. (S13)

I was especially impressed by Video 4 and Video 5 because they made me realize that I also had prejudices. (S6)

Writing reflection papers on the videos we watched helped me to question myself better and to develop my writing skills in English. (S1)

Although I had watched it before, after this class I watched Life is Beautiful movie again and paid attention to the things that I had not thought about much before. (S8)

3.3. Evaluating

This category dealt with the judgements of the students, their arguments to defend or disagree with the content of the videos.

3.3.1. Your Feelings

S10's comments on Video 1 show her judgement as a consequence of her feelings:

When I first saw this video, I can say that I felt angry and found it very rude to be treated according to one's roots. As America is a state with a folk from various nationalities, it is very racist to see others not as American just because of their different background.

S5's words on Video 4 display strong feelings which lead to a judgement:

Adichie is a brilliant woman for me! I absolutely love that there is not a hint of racism in her. Her speech was very inspiring and informative. My idea about Africa has changed after I listened to her speech. Indeed, there is a danger of a single story.

S14's comments about Video 5 demonstrate an evaluation of finding a new perspective sensible, as well as surprising:

When I first saw the image, I felt surprised, because I never thought about a nation as a concept which cannot be applied to a human being. After thinking about it, I found it sensible to associate people according to their locality instead of nationality.

3.3.2. The Feelings of Other People

S3's words on the feelings of others in Video 1 lead to an evaluation:

People from the same nationality of the woman in the video would feel insulted, especially the Asians. Some white people as the guy in the video probably would not care a lot since they think that they are the real Americans. Except for the natives of America, no one is really American.

3.3.3. Thinking about Communication

S4 made a judgement about the person in Video 1 when she wrote about communication:

It would be easier to communicate if the guy would just ask how she was doing or if he had the capacity to understand that America is a country that doesn't have a specific race inside and stopped being rude and ignorant.

3.3.4. Thinking Further about the Image

About Video 3, S10 said:

While thinking about this movie, I can say that although many things seem to be exaggerated, they are not. The only exaggeration may be that about being able to be so optimistic all the time. However, the main goal was to put an emphasis on happiness regardless of the many facts that try to take us down in everyday life.

S14 commented on Video 4 as:

What is emphasized here is that, Adichie had to deal with prejudices through the stereotyped thoughts about her country, however, she herself acted according to the stereotyped images in her head by having just a single story about something or someone. Eventually, it can be easily said that it is something very typically happening without being aware of it. Therefore, she calls it the danger of a single story.

S1, who did not live abroad and is not multicultural, started her reflection paper with the below introduction which includes questioning herself and an evaluation about Video 5:

This speech given by Taiye Selasi is for me a tool to question myself, the environment I live in and even the world. To what extent are we bound to the place where we were born as an individual? Do we really feel ourselves belonging there? Moreover, is the name of a country or city so important or necessary? Is it not our real values, habits, rituals, our relationships with people which make us really us? In fact, it is very difficult for a multicultural person to feel himself or herself belonging to a certain place. I believe that wherever a multicultural person goes, he or she will make himself or herself happy by gaining something for personal development or having good memories.

Although she does not use the word “open-minded” about herself in her AIEVM, S1 goes on with an evaluation about herself and the people around her. This is an interesting example of the ‘Me versus Them’ framing mentioned by Ruest (2020):

On the other hand, I do not think most people think as I do. They prefer to be closed-minded.

S3, who did not have experience of living abroad, gives examples from his father’s life about the rituals, relationships and restrictions as explained in Video 5 and then arrives at this conclusion:

To sum up, as it is said in the video, we are local not in terms of where we were born, but where we feel we are from, with the ones we love and where we feel like at home.

S12, who had a study abroad experience, arrived at an evaluation after relating to Video 5 and wrote the conclusion of his reflection paper as:

I was born in a small town and grew up there. Now, I live in İstanbul. In my hometown, I had an isolated life from the society. However, shop owners in my hometown and in my current neighbourhood

know me. I think this makes me a multi-local person. I lived in Poland too, and I really have a special connection with Poland. It is like my real home where I feel free and comfortable. Sometimes a person can feel he/she belongs to somewhere even though he/she was not born there. It is a little bit complicated thing. I want to finish my words with a meaningful quote I like: “Home is not a place, it is a feeling.”

3.3.5. Thinking about the Person or People Who Made the Image

About Video 4, S10 said:

The reason why she was attending a Ted Talk session and why this was recorded is, according to me, to display how a very tiny thought can lead to huge misunderstandings, prejudices and even to discriminations. I think that both the makers of this video and Adichie did a great job in proving that there is never one story of someone or something. Everyone or everything has his/her or its individual story.

S14 commented on Video 5 as:

When I think about the makers of this video, I think that their aim was to spread this idea of locality. Nowadays, we are much more mobile and global and it is not right to see someone as a member of that country according to his/her passport, or according to that person’s skin colour.

S11 states her disapproval about the speaker’s comments in Video 5 when talking about the aim of the video, which also shows that she wanted to do more search about the speaker although she neither referred to the Finding Out More component in the printed version of her AIEVM, nor filled in the same section in the original version of the document:

I think the video was made because the speaker wants to introduce herself for selling her books all over the world. Why do people not take responsibility as a citizen in their own country? I do not live my life only for myself. I have a responsibility for my society. This video is so meaningless for me.

As seen in the above example, it was found that not filling in some sections of the AIEVM and writing answers for the other components did not necessarily mean that the sections left empty were not addressed in other parts of the AIEVM. This is likely to be due to an attempt of the students to avoid repetitions and shows that, especially when focusing on criticality and using the documents as an educational tool, Council of Europe’s autobiographies should be examined as a whole.

3.3.6. Thinking Back and Looking Forward

S2 explained her disapproval about Video 5 by referring to an example from her relatives:

My aunt and cousins have been living in Germany for approximately twenty years. They can seldom come to visit us in Turkey but they still do not feel themselves as German citizens despite their rituals and relationships in Germany. I think it is because of the restrictions they experience there. They do not feel themselves really belonging there. Therefore, I do not completely agree with Taiye Selasi.

The same example about Turkish people living in Germany was given by S11 in relation to her views on Video 1. While S2’s views are based on her experience with her relatives, S11’s comments which finish with an evaluation are based on her own observations in Germany when she was an exchange student:

I went to Germany. I saw the Turkish people living there. They isolate themselves from German people. Their German is not good, they cannot read German books. They cannot integrate into German culture. They do not understand German people. They are foreign people in German society.

S10's words showed disapproval about Video 5:

I just have one criticism about the Relationships part of Selasi's 3Rs. When a very close friend lives in a different country and you go there often does not necessarily make it a place where you are a local to. I think there should be a family connection, all else would not count.

S13, who was raised in United States and then moved to Turkey with her family wrote about rituals mentioned in Video 5:

Thinking about her three step test about rituals, relationships and restrictions, I agree with it. For example, I love iced coffee and Americans drink a lot of it. I probably got used to it there. Anyway, every time I drink it, I get a feeling that I am in America. Or the rituals of people taking off their shoes at home. Even though I used to take my shoes off going into the house, no one else around me had that ritual, but it did not bother me or it is not a strange thing. However, having my mum and family in Turkey, always being with the people you love is home.

S14 stated a change of thinking after watching Video 5:

In fact, this video has changed my mind. Where we are from and where we were born does not matter. The point is where we really belong to or as Taiye Selasi said: "Home is where you lay your hat".

It was seen that, except for Video 5, there were not many disagreements or criticisms about the content of the videos. The fact that the participants of the study were English language and literature students and, hence, were already familiar with the concepts discussed in the videos due to the literary works that they read might have had an influence on this. For example, related to the Thinking Back and Looking Forward component of the AIEVM, almost all of the students stated that they were already aware of the seriousness of the issues and therefore, while their awareness increased, their thinking on the issues did not change much. They stated that for other people, watching the videos would be very useful to change their way of thinking on the issues. However, Video 5 which presented a new perspective on the frequently used question "Where are you from?" appeared to trigger criticisms and disapprovals as seen in the above comments.

In almost all of the reflections, action orientation related to the Evaluating category was found to be expressed as a willingness to share the videos with other people. S14's evaluation about Video 3 show collaboration as mentioned by Porto (2019):

I recommended watching this scene of the movie to my friends and my family because it impressed me so much that I have watched it several times. We are all human and we have the same rights.

Similarly, S10 stated that she shared Video 4 with others:

Seeing this video has not changed my way of thinking but it has developed and improved it. I gained a clearer mind about the importance of being able to think beyond a single story and being aware of the fact that there are always more stories behind each story. I recommended this video also to others as I thought it would be helpful to widen one's general perspective on cultural issues.

Below are some of the comments made by the students in the interview about their evaluations:

There are people from different nationalities in my dormitory. The activities on the videos helped me to break my prejudices about them. I got more interested in and searched about cultural issues. I learned about cultural intelligence and I found online tests about this type of intelligence. I shared this with my friends and we talked about our test results. (S4)

This class was very useful for my personal development. I shared the videos with my friends. (S5)

After this class, I became more careful about being more concerned with what kind of personality the people I meet have, rather than having a prejudiced attitude. (S9)

On the whole, the reflections of the students showed that there was not a direct correspondence between the components of the AIEVM and Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, which was an expected finding of the study as the questions in each component of the AIEVM could trigger different types of cognitive skills. However, it was seen that some components appeared to trigger specific higher order thinking skills more than others. For example, the Same and Different component of the AIEVM allowed for reflection especially at the Applying and Analysing categories of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. Moreover, Thinking Further about the Image component was especially useful for addressing the Evaluating category. Another finding of the study was that sections on feelings in the AIEVM, both Your Feelings and The Feelings of Other People, were addressed by all the students who displayed the higher-order cognitive skills of Analysing and Evaluating. This can be claimed to show that videos were powerful in activating the affective dimension of cultural understanding and this might have contributed to enhancing the cognitive dimension.

The lack of reflections on the Creating dimension of the taxonomy showed that the AIEVM did not trigger this aspect of critical thinking as a reflection tool on its own. The participants did not form a new pattern or structure by reorganising elements or generate new ideas on viewing things (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). This highlights the fact that additional pedagogical interventions should be applied by educators. For example, activities like writing poems and doing role-plays can be implemented after working with the AIEVM in the English language classroom. Cooperative learning can be encouraged to let students work in groups on projects which deal with issues discussed in the classroom and offer solutions. As Ercan Demirel (2019) points out, "cooperative learning enables students to make use of their thinking, learning and life skills" (p. 345).

4. Conclusions

Despite the relatively short duration of the pedagogical intervention period compared to similar studies with a focus on critical autobiography writing with language learners (Bandura, 2013; Porto, 2019), the students displayed critical thinking skills in the video-based reflections and interviews. It was seen that students who did not have a sojourn experience abroad were also able to relate to the videos by giving specific examples from their lives. The selection of sensitive topics, stereotyping and prejudice, which students could somehow relate to in their daily lives, as well as the use of video as a powerful type of visual media appeared to play a significant role in triggering both the affective and cognitive dimensions of critical cultural awareness. Hence, the findings of previous literature on the use of the AIEVM for fostering critical thinking skills were confirmed (Lindner & Méndez Garcia, 2014; Porto, 2019). With its focus on the use of videos for the implementation of the AIEVM as an educational tool, the study highlighted the benefits of video-based reflection for enhancing critical thinking skills,

especially for EFL learners in higher education. The use of the AIEVM as a reflective component of courses throughout the semester would result in more effective and long-lasting outcomes for critical thinking skills.

The study also showed that although IEREST was designed primarily for Erasmus students, its activities for pre-departure training can be adapted and used as an intercultural education resource for learners who do not have prior intercultural experience of living abroad. While action-orientation was found to be displayed at the level of sharing information with others, this can be encouraged and increased in the foreign language classroom by educators. The educators should also design activities which will enable learners to use cognitive skills corresponding to the Creating dimension of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in order to foster critical thinking skills at the highest level. Students who had an experience of living in a foreign country can be claimed to be more critical in their analyses and evaluations compared to those who did not have such experience. This can be investigated in more detail in future studies that implement the AIEVM through videos.

5. Ethics Committee Approval

The author confirms that this study does not need ethics committee approval (Date of Confirmation: 21.03.2020)

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Appendix. Components of *Images of Others: An Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM)*

Who I am (optional)

The Contents of the Image

What was shown in the image?

What was the first thing you noticed about them?

Is there any other thing which you think is important about them?

Your Feelings

How did you feel when you first saw the image?

What do you think caused these feelings?

If you were the person in the image, would you like people to feel this way about you? Please give your reasons.

Would you like to have an image made of you which looked like this? Please give your reasons.

Would you like to meet the person/people shown in the image in real life? Please give your reasons.

The Feelings of Other People

Do you think the person/people in the image would be pleased with this image of themselves? Please give your reasons.

Do you think they would have preferred to be shown differently? Please explain your answer.

How do you think other people from the same group or culture as them would feel about the image?

Thinking about Communication

In the image, do the person/people shown use language or gestures to communicate with people in the image or with viewers? If so, what language or gestures do they use?

If you were to actually meet the person/people shown in the image, what would you do or say?

Do you have any knowledge of their language and/or culture which could help you to understand and communicate with them? If so, what sort of things do you know?

What do you think you could do to make it easier for you to understand each other?

Same and Different

Thinking about the person/people in the image and yourself, what do you think are the main similarities between them and yourself?

What do you think are the main differences between them and yourself?

Are they like anyone that you know in your own life? If so, in what ways do they resemble them?

When looking at an image, people often compare things in other groups or cultures with similar things in their own groups or cultures. Did you do this?

Thinking Further about the Image

Is there anything about the person/people shown in the video that is exaggerated or emphasized? If so, what?

Is there anything about the person/people that could have been shown that is missing from the image? If so, what were they?

Does the image present the person/people in a positive, negative or neutral way? Give reasons for your answer.

Do you think that the image is a stereotype of the person/people shown in the image? If so, why do you think it is a stereotype?

Do you think this image is fair or unfair as a way of showing this person's/ these people's group or culture? Give reasons for your answer.

Thinking about the Person or People Who Made the Image

Who do you think made the image?

What do you think was their reason for making it?

If they used stereotypes, do you think they used them deliberately or not? Give reasons for your answer.

Who do you think was the main audience the image was intended for?

Why do you think this audience watches or looks at this kind of image?

What attitude do you think this audience usually adopts towards this kind of image?

Do you think this image will make viewers think differently about the people from the group or culture shown? Give reasons for your answer.

Finding Out More

Did you try to find out more about the image and how or why it was made? If so, how did you do it, and what information sources did you use?

Thinking Back and Looking Forward

There were some things which I approve of and these are my reasons...

There were some things which I disapprove of and these are my reasons...

Try to imagine that you are telling someone you know well about the image. Do you think they would have the same opinions as you? Would they approve and disapprove of the same things for the same reasons?

Why might people you know well and who belong to the same group/ culture as you have the same reactions as you?

Has seeing the image changed your thinking in any way? How?

Did you or will you do something as a result of seeing this image? If so, what?

Has doing this Autobiography changed you in any way? How?

Will you do something as a result of completing this Autobiography? If so, what will you do?

(Adapted from: Barrett, M., Byram, M., Ipgrave, J., & Seurrat, A., 2013)

İngilizce öğretiminde eleştirel düşünme becerilerinin video-temelli yansıma ile geliştirilmesi

Öz

Avrupa Konseyi'nin kültürlerarası diyalogu geliştirmek üzere geliştirdiği bir ürün olan *Görsel Medya ile Kültürlerarası İletişim Deneyimi Otobiyoğrafisi*, öğrencilerin kültürlerarası iletişim deneyimleri ile ilgili yansıma yapmalarına yardımcı olması için yayımlanmış olan bir araçtır. Bu çalışma, dokümanın yüksek öğretim ortamında İngilizce öğrenenlerin eleştirel düşünme becerilerinin geliştirilmesi için eğitsel amaçlı kullanımını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmaya, Türkiye'deki bir devlet üniversitesinde Kültürlerarası İletişim dersini alan onbeş öğrenci katılmıştır. Çalışmanın amacı doğrultusunda, dört hafta süren eğitim süreci boyunca görsel medya olarak videolar kullanılmıştır. Konusu basmakalıp düşünme ve önyargı olan videolar seçilmiştir. Videoları kullanarak yapılan yansıma aktivitelerinden sonra, öğrencilere *Görsel Medya ile Kültürlerarası İletişim Deneyimi Otobiyoğrafisi*'ni kullanmalarını gerektiren yansımacı yazma ödevleri verilmiştir. Veriler haftalık yansımacı yazma örnekleri, alan notları ve eğitim sonrasında gerçekleştirilen bir mülakattan toplanmıştır. Verilerin analizinde bulunan eleştirel düşünme kategorilerinin tespit edilmesinde Bloom'un Yenilenen Taksonomi'si kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçlarına göre, öğrenciler üst düzey bilişsel becerileri taksonominin Uyarılma, Analiz Etme ve Değerlendirme seviyelerinde göstermiş, Yaratma kategorisi ile ilgili ise yansıma göstermemişlerdir. *Görsel Medya ile Kültürlerarası İletişim Deneyimi Otobiyoğrafisi*'nin İngilizce öğretiminde videoların kullanımı ile etkili bir eğitsel araç olarak kullanılabileceği sonucuna varılmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: *Görsel Medya ile Kültürlerarası İletişim Deneyimi Otobiyoğrafisi*, İngilizce öğretimi, video-temelli yansıma, eleştirel düşünme becerileri, yazma

AUTHOR BIODATA

Defne ERDEM METE is a faculty member at the Faculty of Letters, Department of English Language and Literature at Selçuk University. She holds an MA in ELT and Applied Linguistics from University of East Anglia, UK and a PhD in ELT from Gazi University. She received the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant scholarship and worked at Syracuse University, USA for an academic year. Her research interests include intercultural communication, environmental awareness in language teaching and teaching Turkish as a foreign language.