

Effectiveness of Artistic Interaction through Video Conferencing

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Abstract

This study investigated Turkish and Canadian primary school students' ways of expressing their perception of interactive art education through video conferencing and that of cultural interaction through pictorial representations. The qualitative research data were collected in the form of pictures and interviews on interactive art education along with cultural components depicted in pictures. The results obtained were analyzed and interpreted based on the quantitative content analysis method. The research results revealed that the majority of the students explained their viewpoints through the effectiveness of the process. The students highlighted the importance of learning a different culture, learning about a different art technique and recognizing new friends in the process. The synchronization regarding interactive art education through videoconferencing was another important experience reflected by the students. Most of the students indicated that interactive art education through videoconferencing encouraged them to learn and understand about different cultures, helped them develop cultural awareness, attracted their attention and increased their motivation.

Keywords: Art education; technology; video-conferencing; intercultural interaction; intercultural art education

Introduction

Today, one of the results caused by the rapid globalization process is that the efforts to establish intercultural interactions are growing and gaining importance (Rural Advanced Community of Learners, 2004). It is quite important for an information-age human to know about various cultures and to become knowledgeable about the differences and similarities between cultures (Guiherme, 2002). One way of understanding the cultural differences and the relationship between cultures is to establish intercultural interaction. Intercultural interaction could be established in different ways through different methods and tools.

One of the important tools for establishing cultural interaction is the art itself and artistic activities as well. Art, in many cultural systems, is used as an effective tool for establishing cultural identities and for relating different cultures with one another (Stupples, 2003; Hudson & Hudson, 2001; Mc Fee, 1995). An individual from a certain cultural group can learn to give meaning to and understand the social structures of different cultures, their faith systems, their values and their life habits via artistic activities (Miller, 2004). Artistic activities include products reflecting the feelings and thoughts,

observations, the features of the cultural environment and the meanings made within this framework (Hague, 2001; Malchiodi, 2003; Malchiodi, 2005).

Today, video-conferencing systems, which are found in interactive environments supported by technology and widely used in universal educational activities, are among educational technologies that allow using certain opportunities and environments in the instructional process, which cannot be provided in face-to-face education. In addition, video-conferencing systems allow transmitting interaction and different experiences between different educational settings with the help of rich communication tools (Motamedi, 2001; Renkl & Atkinson, 2002; Greenberg & Nilssen, 2005). These systems are also used widely in studies on intercultural interaction and in international projects (Rural Advanced Community of Learners, 2004; Cole at. ull. 2004). In contemporary educational institutions, considering the fact that it is necessary to prepare students for a universal society, students should develop and improve educational environments and curriculums within the context of interaction and communication (Leeman & Ledoux, 2003; Jackson, 2005). A number of interactions such as universal educational applications, international cooperation, cultural change, cultural interaction and cultural transfer can be carried out effectively within the context of video-conferencing technologies (Motamedi, 2001).

In a number of cultural systems, art is used as an effective environment for structuring cultural identities and for relating different cultures (McFee, 1991; Mendoza, at. all., 2002; Miller, 2004). With the help of art, an individual belonging to a cultural group can learn to understand the social structures of different cultures, their belief systems, values and lives (Miller, 2004). The most effective way of establishing multi-cultural communication today is art and technology. Artistic activities provide children with an environment in which they synthesize their perceptions to communicate their observations, feelings and thoughts (Malchiodi, 2005). In their drawings, children reflect the features of their environment and the meanings they create in this environment (Hague, 2001). It is possible to raise cultural awareness and to learn different cultures to with the help of art, which is the best way for children to express their own thoughts and feelings.

Everything in art is quite close to culture, and doing cultural sharing via art provides students with a different learning environment. In the process of sharing culture through art, students actually find themselves in a learning environment by overcoming various obstacles. Art facilitates carrying out cultural transfer and provides students with an environment allowing them to cope with language-related interaction and communication problems in intercultural interactions (Boughton & Mason, 1999). This study investigated students' perceptions about technology-supported art education and intercultural interactions with a reference to art applications and art education. More specifically, the purpose was to investigate perceptions of students at two different primary schools –one in Canada and the other in Turkey– regarding the technology and art in the process of raising cultural awareness and cultural interaction while they are sharing cultural art applications through video-conferencing. Based on this basic purpose, the following questions were directed in the study:

1. What are primary school students' perceptions regarding artistic interaction via video-conferencing?
2. What are primary school students' views about intercultural artistic awareness?
3. How do primary school students express their perceptions of artistic awareness of their own culture and other cultures?

Methods and Procedures

Research Design

Qualitative research methods were followed to investigate primary school students' perceptions regarding intercultural interaction. To analyze and interpret the interview data content analysis was used. Coding with respect to the concepts revealed from the data was particularly helpful (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). Qualitative interviews were conducted and they were asked questions to reveal the degree of their awareness related to artistic and cultural values through using technology (The interview questions were focused on sharing culture, sharing artistic representations, learning about other cultures, learning from a teacher who is from a different culture, learning about new art style, teaching their own culture, telling their pictorial representation and the effect of technology-video conferencing on the process). All data were analyzed through determining the themes and relating the data with those themes. Several researchers examine approaches in educational environments not only with the help of scientific data but also via artistic data (Barone & Eisner, 1997; Cole & Knowles, 2001; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). This allows researchers to investigate a different conceptualization – at a postmodern level - regarding how education functions, what it means, and for what purpose activities are carried out in the learning and teaching process (Finley, 2005). In this regard, with the help of primary school students' views and of pictorial representations, the present study could better reveal primary school students' perceptions of interactive art education, of different art techniques, of cultural awareness and of sharing through interaction. While analyzing the pictures art-based inquiry was applied, this is a design that relates art with research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Based on their own impressions, this design tries to reveal perceptions and perspectives regarding various situations through students' artistic expressions (Eisner, 2002).

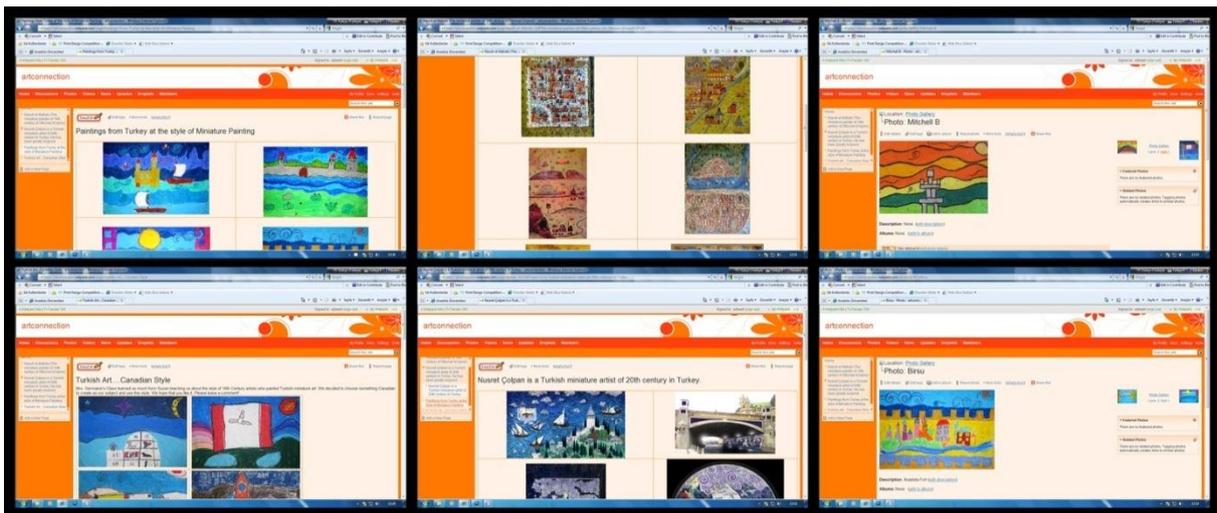
Participants

The study was conducted with one of the two fifth-grade classes in Cagdas Primary School at a town of Eskisehir, Turkey and with the W.H. Day Public School (Simcoe County District School Board) in Ontario, Canada. Criterion sampling was used to determine the schools for application. In the criterion sampling, the Turkish students' proficiency in English Language and the technological facilities of the schools both in Canada and in Turkey (the technology and facilities to allow effective use of video-conferencing) were determined as criteria. The reason for conducting the study with primary school fifth-grade students was that the students in both schools were old enough to reflect what they understood and learnt through their pictorial representations (Artut, 2001). The study was carried out with 44 students: 22 were from Canada and 22 were from Turkey.

Application Process

In the application process firstly the elementary school fifth-grade students in Turkey were interviewed regarding the possible differences between the two cultures, regarding their interest in the other culture and regarding their desire to communicate with that culture. Thus, the children gained a certain level of readiness regarding that culture. In the second phase the researcher of the present study and the art teachers of the students both in Canada and in Turkey participated in the process of knowledge development. In this phase, sample applications and examples from Canadian and Turkish art of drawings as well as the way of informing were determined. In this process, a criterion was set for choosing the artists and the types of art applications similar in both cultures. Within the scope of this criterion, Nusret Çolpan (an artist) and the Turkish Miniatures (a Turkish painting art) were chosen. The Ted Harrison Style as a Canadian painting art and Ted Harrison as an

artist were chosen. The artistic applications of both artists had clear outlines, bright colours and authenticity. These features were in accordance with the artistic development periods of students and allowed relating one application to another. After the researcher and the teachers from both cultures decided the information to be shared, they created a pool of information tools. The pool of information tools included videos, websites, pictures, photos and application samples regarding the subjects determined. Next, this information was shared between the two teachers through Internet website designed for the research application process and file-sharing software (<http://artconnection.wetpaint.com/page/artconnection+Home/links>) (Picture 1). The information in the pool of information tools was used by the teachers to help students become knowledgeable about each other's cultures and understanding of art and about the two artists. This process was carried out in four course-hours (4x40 minutes) in two weeks. Following the information process, the students from both cultures were asked to draw pictures by using the method of artistic narration in their own cultures. The Turkish children drew pictures based on Nusret Çolpan's style, and the Canadian children drew pictures in line with Ted Harrison's style. Then, these drawings were uploaded on a website designed by the researcher and the teachers to share with the students. Sample applications of the students as well as those of the artists were found on this website. The website designed (Picture 1) was also used to give information to the students about the understanding of art for the other culture.



Picture 1. Activity web page

In the next phase, the students themselves discussed the artistic style chosen from the other culture in line with the information they had obtained up to that time, and they examined the drawings belonging to the other culture and explored the perspectives and techniques of that culture.

In the following phase the video-conferencing application was included in the process. Before the application, the art teachers both in Canada and in Turkey were asked to prepare a 30-minute lesson regarding the determined subjects. To carry out the video-conferencing effectively, the connection was tested in addition to time adjustments for synchronization. That is, the students in Canada came to the school at eight o'clock in the morning whereas Turkish students came to the school at three o'clock in the afternoon. During the activity process, the video-conference room of the primary school in Canada - where the application was carried out - and the Video-Conference Room at Open Education Faculty of Anadolu University in Turkey were used by the researcher and the participants in the application. This activity was carried out in a period of two course-hours. In the first thirty minutes

of this period, the art teacher in Canada taught the drawing features of Ted Harrison style practically with the help of the video-conferencing system. All the students participating in the application in Canada in the process showed their drawings to their peers in Turkey and talked about what they wanted to depict and about the things they considered while drawing. Turkish students asked questions to the art teacher in Canada about the application. In the second part of the activity, the art teacher and the students in Turkey carried out the same application. The students showed the students in Canada their drawings they made in line with Nusret Çolpan's style and told the Canadian students about the cultural elements in their drawings. The Canadian students asked questions to the art teacher in Turkey about the art of miniature and to the students about the subjects of the Turkish students' drawings. The medium of communication was English in all interactions. For Turkish students simultaneous translations were available when necessary. In the remaining part of the activity, the students were asked to direct questions to each other and to say what they wanted to say. The Turkish students asked questions to the Canadian students about the weather conditions in Canada, about the clothes they wore at school in Canada and about their likes and dislikes. Similarly, the students in Canada asked similar context and culture related questions to the Turkish students. At the end of the application, the Turkish and Canadian students were asked to state their views about the application and to apply the art style they learnt. The Canadian students drew pictures under the influence of miniature and Nusret Çolpan's style. The Turkish students drew pictures according to Ted Harrison's style. These drawings were uploaded on website previously designed for sharing. During the forum activities carried out via the website, the art teachers both in Canada and in Turkey shared their experiences and reported that the students enjoyed the activity and that it was quite interesting for the students to learn about a different culture. Picture 2 shows the video conferencing process.



Picture 2. Video Conferencing

Data Collection, Analysis and Interpretation

In line with the findings obtained based on the interviews held with the students in the process of the collection of the research data, six main themes were determined. The primary school students were also asked to reflect their acquisitions regarding intercultural interaction carried out via art and to reflect artistic perceptions of different cultures via their pictorial representations, and the data were collected via 'documents' (pictures) and written representations through pictures. In addition, the researcher took part in the process as a 'participatory observer'. Some of the data regarding the evaluation of the process were obtained through this observation. The students' views about the application process were revealed through semi-structured interviews. As a result of the application, the data collected through the pictures were obtained via document analysis. In order to collect data from the interviews, video records were used.

The semi-structured interviews were first transcribed. The data obtained from the interview transcriptions and from the analysis of the pictures drawn were interpreted. The findings obtained via the examination of the interviews and the documents were presented as frequency distributions. Then, the students' views and pictures were interpreted. To maintain the reliability of the study, following the application, the interview-coding keys and the interview transcriptions were read by three independent researchers, who discussed the subjects they "agreed" and "disagreed" on. Necessary adjustments were made accordingly. For the purpose of calculating the reliability of the study, the reliability formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 64) was used, which revealed a reliability value of 98 percent.

Findings and Interpretations

The findings obtained in the study were gathered under six main themes, these are; '*Learning a different art technique*', '*Learning to draw a picture in the manner of miniature art*', '*Teaching how to draw a picture in the manner of miniature art*', '*Learning to draw a picture in the manner of Ted Harrison*', '*Sharing the art and pictures with other cultures*' and '*Learning the differences between picture techniques of other cultures*' , were presented as frequency distributions.

Table 1. Turkish Students' Perceptions of Interactive Art Course

Students' Views (N=22)	f
Learning a different picture technique	19
Learning to draw a picture in the manner of miniature art	12
Teaching how to draw a picture in the manner of miniature art	8
Learning to draw a picture in the manner of Ted Harrison	19
Sharing the art and pictures with others	16
Learning the differences between picture techniques	15

The main themes which the students focused on most were determined as '*Learning a different picture technique*' and '*Learning the differences between picture techniques*'. Pinar, one of the students who mentioned the details of and the difference between the two techniques, stated '*In miniature art, what we drew looked as if it were distant. In the other technique, we deepened the drawing with a black pastel pencil*'. Damla, another student who compared the two techniques and mentioned their technical details, stated;

"The pictures we drew were mostly realistic ones, but the pictures they drew were not necessarily realistic. Some of them were imaginary. For example, the sky was not necessarily blue in their pictures, and in some of the pictures, the sky was in different colours. In our own pictures, as we draw realistic images, the sky is always blue. Generally, we prefer the colour blue for the sky because in our culture, this is always the case. I used to paint the sky blue before this video-conference. Now, I learnt that I can paint it with different colours".

It was seen that in her pictures drawn in the manner of miniature art and as well as those in the manner of 'Ted Harrison', Damla used the technique in detail and that her pictorial depiction reflected her views (Picture 3 and Picture 4).



Picture 3. Damla (11 years/ Miniature)



Picture 4. Damla (11 Years/Ted Harrison)

In her picture that she drew in the manner of miniature art, Damla depicted the 'Porsuk River', a well-known part of the city where Damla lived. In her other picture that she drew in the manner of Ted Harrison, she was able to use this technique by feeling free to choose the colours and by using clearly-seen out-lines. It could be stated that all the students found these two techniques effective with respect to comparison and application of these techniques.

Ege stated *'I learnt that a different picture style is used in different countries'*. Melis emphasized the comparison they made between the two art styles stating *'I learnt other students' understanding of art. We compared each other's pictures'*.

Ege, who reported his views in line with awareness of different techniques, drew two pictures: one in the manner of miniature art and the other in the manner of Ted Harrison. Ege reported that he found Ted Harrison's style easier and more entertaining for application. Ege successfully applied the details of the two techniques. The student chose the *'Maiden's Tower'* as the subject for the miniature style, while in one of the two pictures he drew in Ted Harrison's style, Ege painted a landscape, and in the other picture, he chose the *'Trojan Horse'* - a historical landmark in Çanakkale in Turkey - as the subject of his drawing. In his picture drawn in the manner of miniature art, Ege also drew the boats commonly used in the past to pass the Bosphorus. The subjects Ege depicted in both techniques were about the places historically important in Turkish culture (Picture 5 and Picture 6).



Picture 5. Ege (11 Years/Miniature)



Picture 6. Ege (11 Years/Ted Harrison)

Birsu, mentioned the two techniques as well as the differences between them stating;

"The miniature art was very beautiful. Everything we drew in our pictures was small and beautiful. We painted the images in different colour tones in Ted Harrison's style. In order to make the colours more visible, we deepened them with dark colours. We used different colours like light and dark tones".

In addition, Birsu, who applied the miniature technique effectively and used detailed depictions in her drawings, chose the 'Anatolian Fortress' - historically important in Turkish culture – as the subject of her drawing.

Onur Alp, pointed out the difference between the two picture techniques stating 'I can't believe that I drew pictures in the manner of *Ted Harrison*. *It is easier and more beautiful*'. As can be understood from his views about the picture techniques, Onur Alp enjoyed drawing pictures in the manner of Ted Harrison and applied this picture technique effectively. In his picture drawn in the manner of Miniature art, he chose a mosque as the subject of his drawing.

Zeynep, another student who reported her views about the technique she had learnt, stated;

"I learnt a lot of things; for example, painting from the starting point. In the past, I used to start painting from any part that I wanted. Also, from now on, I decided to draw my pictures in the manner of Ted Harrison".



Picture 7. Zeynep (11 years /Miniature)



Picture 8. Zeynep (Ted Harrison)

It was striking that Zeynep used detailed depictions in her drawing in the manner of miniature art and that she used horizontal perspective for detailed descriptions. In her picture drawn in the manner of Ted Harrison, such details as contour and vivid colours were striking (Picture 8). In addition, it was seen that in her miniature-style drawing, Zeynep depicted the river flowing through the city she was living in (Picture 7).

Melis, pointed out the details of the picture technique stating *'I learnt that I should selectively use the colours, that we can use colours depending on our imagination and that we can use whatever colour we want'*.

In one of her drawings, Melis combined the two styles by using pictorial decorations in the manner of miniature art and Ted Harrison. In her drawing in the manner of Ted Harrison, her choice of colours, preference for piece-painting and use of contour were striking.

Berke, who mentioned technical information that drew his attention during the application process, stated *'We learn new information. Well, we learnt that when we start drawing from the upper part, our pictures get less dirty'*. Batuhan, who mentioned the details of the technique he used, stated *'We can draw our pictures by limiting the colour tones with dark colours and by starting from the central point and painting from the upper part'*.

The fact the most of the students mentioned both the art style they had just learnt and its technique in detail could be regarded as an indicator of the application process and of the effectiveness of the process. It could be stated based on the findings of the present study that the students raised awareness of especially different picture styles. For the students who practically learnt that different cultures could lead to different picture styles, raising artistic awareness via artistic interaction in the application process carried out via video-conferencing constituted an important dimension of the present study.

The views of a majority of the participating students constituted the sub-dimension of 'Learning to draw a picture in the manner of Ted Harrison'. Regarding this sub-dimension, Birsu reported;

"I learnt how to draw a picture in the manner of Ted Harrison. We painted the pictures according to their different colour tones. We deepened the painting with dark colours to make the colours more visible. We used different colours tones like dark and light colours".

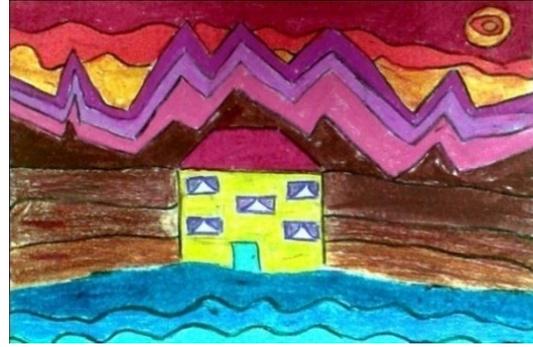
Derin Mert, who adopted this picture style, stated *'I learnt how to draw pictures in the manner of Ted Harrison, and I liked it very much. I understood that I can draw better pictures. Sometimes, people can draw better pictures by using different art techniques'*. Eda, reported;

"We learnt what Ted Garrison's style was by looking at the pictures they showed to us. Also, it was more useful to visually see how to draw a picture in the manner of Ted Harrison via the Internet. I understood it better."

Derin Mert clearly mentioned the details of the technique in his pictorial depiction. It was striking that Derin Mert used a horizontal perspective in his picture he drew in Miniature-style. As the subject of his picture, he chose the *'Porsuk River'*, a well-known landmark of the city he lived in (Picture 9 and Picture 10).



Picture 9. Derin Mert (Miniature)



Picture 10. Derin Mert (11 years/Ted Harrison)

Zeynep pointed out the details of technique she learnt stating;

"I learnt the picture style of Ted Harrison. I learnt that they divide the background scene and draw the picture by using different tones of colours. I drew a palace in the manner of Ted Harrison. I used pastel colour-tones of pink and orange for the sky."

Melis reported her views saying;

"Ted Harrison interested me much. Their art is quite colourful. Well, it really draws the attention of children because when I showed it to my sister, she resembled it to a cartoon film. Well, it is really a colourful art that interests children."

In addition, almost all the students emphasized that drawing a picture in the manner of Ted Harrison drew their attention most during the course. The reason was that the students were observed by the researcher during the interviews to apply the technique effectively because the technique was quite applicable, because it allowed them without any limitation to use any colours they wanted and because the resulting output was quite effective. In the application process carried out, some of the students who were not interested in the art course at all and who considered themselves as unsuccessful helped feel themselves successful and made them more interested in the activity.

In addition, the views of a majority of the students constituted the sub-themes of 'Learning how to draw a picture in the manner of miniature art' and 'Teaching how to draw a picture in the manner of miniature art'. Zeynep, who reported her views in this respect, stated;

"I had never drawn a picture in the manner of miniature art. I learnt it and drew a picture in this style. I think I drew a really beautiful picture. Therefore, I am very happy. If only we had drawn the miniature-style pictures with dry-paint not with pastel, it would have been better."

Melis pointed out the details of the miniature-style saying 'We taught them how to draw a picture in our miniature-style. We have pictorial decorations and contours in miniature art, but I think both of them are beautiful art styles'. Moreover, Utku, pointed out the basic features of the miniature art stating 'The miniature is a very decorative art. You draw a picture by using pictorial decorations. You have to draw the main image bigger and the others smaller. This allows you to see that are not visible in the picture'. In his picture drawn in the manner of miniature art, the Maiden's Tower and the boat trips in Bosphorus, which are historically important for Istanbul, were striking images. As for its technical use, the details of the miniature art, its pictorial decorations and hierarchical emphasis are striking.

Berke, who related his interest in art with the activity applied in class, stated *'I used to like drawing pictures, but when I saw the pictures drawn in the manner of miniature art and in Ted Harrison's style, I liked drawing more and started to draw more beautiful pictures'*. Deniz, mentioned both the effects of the application process and the new technique he learnt stating *'I heard about the miniature art before, but I didn't know a lot about it. Therefore, I was interested in this art, and I learnt it because we drew pictures in the manner of this art...'* Deniz, in his picture in miniature style, depicted the conquest of Istanbul, which was a historical event. In addition, his way of horizontal depiction which did not include any perspectives was striking.

Views of a most students constituted the sub-theme of *'Sharing the art and pictures with other cultures'*. Adal stated *'In this way, I enjoyed the course more. I enjoyed learning more in this way. Also, other people can see the pictures I drew'*. Deniz reported his views saying;

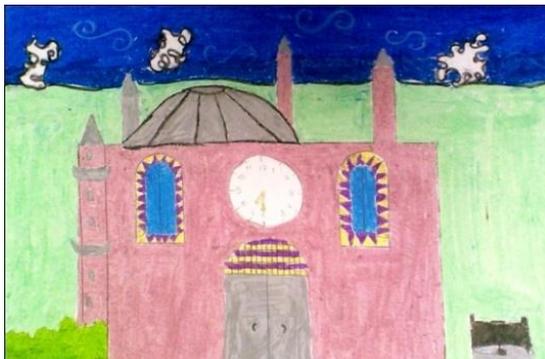
"... while showing our drawings to the students there, they looked at our drawings curiously. I think they were interested in this art. I made a lot of effort in drawing my picture in the manner of miniature art as I would show it to the other students'

Most of the students stated that they paid more attention to their drawings since they would share their drawings with other students in another country in the application process. Based on the observations, it could be stated that sharing pictures via the Internet increased the students' motivation and interest in the application. At the research process the students are encouraged to learn, examine and evaluate on other culture and art by directly interacting with their peers through social learning theory (Bandura, 1977). In this collaborative instructional process, the key challenge of the researcher is trying to meaningfully integrate video conference technology to art education. This process made students to collaborate, organize and interact with peers through cultural representations. Students also observed, practiced and modelled the behaviours of them by interacting directly through synchronous videoconferencing.

It was observed in the activity process that the students drew their attention to the new techniques they learnt in the application process, that they tried to use their abilities in the best way and that they discussed the subjects they chose for their drawings. Similarly, most of the students reported their views about sharing artistic applications stating:

Lamia stated *'We showed our drawings to students in another country'*. Birsu pointed out to sharing pictures in the activity process saying;

"It was beautiful that they showed us their drawings and taught us how to them. And we showed them our drawings and our culture, too. And they showed us some things belonging to their own culture. We showed our drawings to our peers from another country."



Picture 11. Lamia (11 years /Miniature)



Picture 12. Lamia (Ted Harrison)

As the subject of her drawing in the miniature style, Lamia chose the 'Blue Mosque', found in a historical region in Istanbul (Picture 11). Both the pictorial decorations and the detailed work in the picture demonstrated the details of the picture technique of the miniature style. As for the subject of her drawing in the style of Ted Harrison, Lamia depicted a winter scene and painted her picture in pieces with vivid colours (Picture 12). She freely preferred the colours in her drawing.

Derin Mert emphasized the importance of learning via observation and stated;

"They showed us their drawings, and we showed them ours. This might have strengthened our relationship with them. I learnt the things that I wondered. I understood these things more easily. I drew more pictures. We can understand better by examining others' drawings."

Batuhan pointed out both cultural and artistic sharing as well as the effectiveness of the activity stating;

"It was nice to show the drawings because we learnt how a well-known painter in that country drew his pictures. And we taught some things to them, too. The lesson was entertaining and effective because we talked to them about our cultural ties, and they talked to us about theirs. We taught our major artistic values and common heritage to them with the help of our drawings. For example, the miniature art is ever old and beautiful art. We taught this art to them and we drew pictures considering this art style. It is a very effective way of teaching our common heritage. Because this way of teaching is visual, I am sure they will always remember it. And they did the same thing for us."

Berke pointed out that the activity and the teaching method applied in the activity process guided them better. Berke reported his views saying;

"I was most interested in their drawings. They were really good drawings. We showed our drawings to them, and they showed theirs to us. They asked questions. While we were showing our drawings to them, they listened to us in wonder. When you follow the lesson, you learn better. When the teacher lets you become free, you learn nothing. If the teacher just gives the subject, you only draw the picture"



Picture 13. Berke (11 years/Miniature)



Picture 14. Berke (Ted Harrison)

As the subject of his pictorial depiction in the miniature style, Berke chose the region of Porsuk in Eskişehir and depicted the region historically (Picture 13). In his drawing in Ted Harrison's style, the details regarding the technique were striking (Picture 14). Berke, regarding the dimension of

interaction during video-conferencing carried out with Canadian students, showed them the picture he drew in the manner of miniature art.

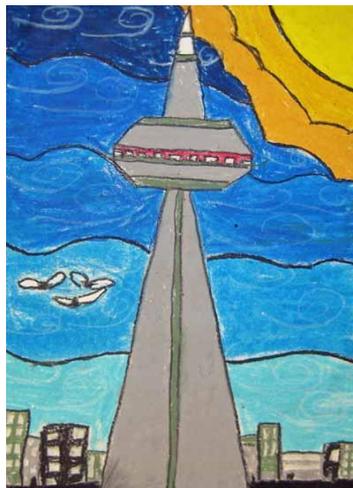
Deniz mentioned both the activity process and its effectiveness stating;

"I liked the lesson executed via video-conferencing with Canadian students. I prefer taking lessons executed in this way. When we draw pictures in class, nobody can see them except for us. But we were able to show our drawings to the Canadian students via video-conferencing, and they liked our drawings... Otherwise, it would not interest me. I became more interested in the lesson because it was visual. And because we were prepared for the lesson beforehand, we obtained information about their drawings."

During the research it was observed that the Turkish students used cultural themes in their pictorial depictions. In Turkish students' drawings, historical sites such as The Bosphorus, the Maiden's Tower, the Anatolian Fortress, the Rumeli Fortress, Topkapi Palace, the Blue Mosque and Trojan Horse; historical events such as the conquest of Istanbul and boat trip in Bosphorus; and the historical depiction of Porsuk River, which is a symbol of the city students live in were striking as cultural themes.

It was observed that in a majority of the drawings of the Canadian students, there were technical features of the artistic decorations and details of the miniature art. In the drawings of the Canadian students, depictions of such images and landmarks belonging to the Canadian culture as the Canadian flag, Canada's National Tower, The Big Nickel – A Canadian coin which is the biggest coin in the world with its size of nine-meter diameter and which was made in 1951 in Ontario in Canada and also which has found a place in the book of Guinness World-Records -, the Canadian Iglo –the Canadian winter houses which are a part of the Canadian culture -, the Ontario Lake, the Canadian Goose and Loon, Trillium – a kind of flower in Canada -, the Gibraltar Point – the oldest lighthouse in Ontario-, the Canada Wonder Land Park in Ontario, the Clock Tower in Niagara, the Ontario-Niagara Falls and the Niagara Falls Park as well as depictions of constructions, living beings and the nature are all striking as cultural themes in the drawings of the Canadian students.

The Canadian students' works under the influence of the miniature art:



Picture 15. Gavin (11 years)

As the subjects of their drawings, some Canadian students chose Canada's National Tower, which they drew with several pictorial decorations under the influence of the Turkish miniature art (Picture 15).



Picture 16. Kelsey (11 years)



Picture 17. Emily (11 years)

Kelsey drew the Canadian Loon (Picture 16), and Emily depicted The Big Nickel (Picture 17) in her picture. In addition, pictorial decorations, ripple-painting and details are all indicators of depiction in miniature style.



Picture 18. Juanita (11 years)

As the subject of her drawings, Juanita depicted the Canadian Flag, the Canada's National Tower, the Canadian Goose and Loon, trillium – a kind of flower in Canada – as well as the Canadian Iglo and decorated their drawings in line with the miniature art (Picture 18). Sarah drew the Canadian flag as the subject of her picture (Picture 19).



Picture 19. Sarah (11 years/Miniature)

As the subject of his drawing, Mitchell D. chose Canada Wonder Land Park found in Ontario. In his depiction, the decorations and ripple-painting seem to be the mixture of the styles of miniature and Ted Harrison. As the subject of her drawing, Shianne chose a scene of the Ontario-Niagara Falls and the mountains around. Mostly the effects of Ted Harrison's style can be seen in her drawing.



Picture 20. Gabe (11 years /Miniature)



Picture 21 Shelby (11 years /Ted Harrison)

Gabe drew the Peace Tower in Ontario (Picture 20), while Shelby drew Gibraltar Point Lighthouse – the oldest lighthouse in Ontario (Picture 21). Especially in Shelby's drawing, miniature-style decorations are striking.



Picture 22. Jade (11 years /Miniature)

Jade in her picture, drew the Skylon Tower found in the region of Ontario Niagara Falls (Picture 22). The miniature-style decorations in her pictorial depictions are striking.

In the pictures drawn by the Canadian students in the manner of Ted Harrison, they mostly depicted daily-life scenes and activities and the places for living. In the pictures children also drew WonderLand and Niagara, Ontario Bridge, different marine animals living in the ocean, water-ski races in the manner of Ted Harrison style and Miniature painting.



Picture 23. Mitchell B. (11 years)



Picture 24. Sydney (11 years)

In his picture, Mitchell B. drew a scene of the nature in the manner of Ted Harrison (Picture 23), while Sydney depicted a school and its environment in his picture (Picture 24).

Both Turkish and Canadian students found the interaction process entertaining. In addition, they reported that it was exciting to learn about different cultures. In addition, it was interesting to learn a new art style and technique; and that learning a subject from a teacher from another culture helped understand the subject more easily. Furthermore, the teachers agreed with their students as well.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The role of art education is quite important for multi-cultural interactions. The reason is that such interactions enable art students to raise cultural awareness, know about their own cultural identities and understand and explain the cultural differences and similarities. In addition, multi-cultural art interactions also help students to develop their creativity and imagination and to gain an original perspective (Chalmer, 1996). Considering the themes determined based on the students' views in the current study, it was seen that the activity-based interaction was evaluated in different dimensions. These dimensions were artistic interaction, artistic sharing, teaching and learning artistic techniques, raising awareness of different artistic styles, learning different cultures, teaching culture, sharing cultural points, raising awareness of cultural differences, establishing communication, raising awareness of new technologies and opportunities and comparing different cultures. A majority of the students reported positive views about these dimensions. It could be stated that this activity carried out via the technology of video-conferencing helped the students raise positive awareness of both the use of technology and cultural and artistic sharing.

Another striking point in the pictorial representations of the students from Canada and Turkey was that the students successfully expressed the pictorial techniques and art understandings taught to them during the interactive courses via the video-conferencing activity. The students from both cultures were quite successful not only in applying the technique of an artist from their own culture but also in applying that of an artist from another culture. The effective application of the two techniques through pictorial representations could be explained with the fact that there was a growing interest in the subject taught by a teacher from a different culture; that the students shared their pictures with students from another culture; that the students tried hard to express their own cultures at best; and that the interaction via video-conferencing influenced the students' interest and motivation. With the role art plays in awareness of other cultures and communication between cultures increases the awareness of cultural values.

Findings of the present study regarding raising students' awareness of cultural differences during the intercultural interaction process were parallel to the findings of another study conducted by Gerstein (2000) on interaction established via video-conferencing with fourth grade students in San Francisco and Taiwan. Gerstein (2000) emphasized that the students raised their awareness of cultural sub-structures and differences in the interaction process via video-conferencing. The findings of another study conducted by Thurston (2004) on a teaching activity carried out via the video-conferencing system with students in Scotland and in the United States of America were also similar to the findings of the present study regarding multi-cultural education and awareness. Chalmer (1996) believes that multicultural art education has its advantage in cultural awareness and allowing students to showcase creativity and imagination through cultural awareness.

In the present study, the views of the students about the importance of technology in artistic interaction and sharing emphasized the contribution of technology to the teaching processes. As in other educational environments, use of technology helps the artistic teaching process gain different dimensions and qualities and makes the process open to developments. In addition, cultural sharing and interaction inevitably occurs both via art and technology. Today, existence of cultural identities as well as sharing these identities is quite important and constitutes the basis of social life. At the same time, cultural awareness helps understand and perceive different cultures. In this regard cultural sharing is quite important for students during the teaching processes especially with the use art and technology.

Depending on the results, conducting research on cultural sharing by using technology through European Union projects – and through other similar projects – could increase the importance of culture. Furthermore, carrying out research with disciplines and students having different individual backgrounds will contribute to the related literature.

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