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PREFACE

Complexities surrounding the globalization and the interconnectedness of nations are creating challenges for nation-states as well as other newly formed political structures. Innovative social, political, and economic structures are being formed and existing structures are being re-formed to adapt to the forces of globalization. With all these changes (and thus innovations), scholars and practitioners are trying to understand how they fit within these complexities and what the future will be like if we do not respond effectively.

Through this conference we brought experts from around the world to share their research and experiences in humanities and educational research. Our conference sparked some exceptional conversations around the very meaning of culture and cultural competencies.

Here, we present some of our scholarly discussions that took place during our conference in a more detailed manner and hope that these scholarly conversations continue to inform us all as we work towards an even more globalized world in which we can celebrate its unity.
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THE EFFECTS OF PODCASTING ON VOCATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS’ CRITICAL THINKING DISPOSITIONS FOR A MATHEMATICS COURSE

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Abstract: This study investigated the effects of podcasting on vocational school students’ critical thinking dispositions. The research was carried out on 84 students of Erzurum Vocational College during the spring semester of 2015-2016 academic year. The “one-group pre-test post-test design” was taken as the research model. Data were collected by employing a Turkish version of the “California Critical Thinking Dispositions Inventory” (CCTDI). The Turkish version of the CCTDI consists of 51 items with 6 subscales: open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, systematicity, truth-seeking, analyticity, and self-confidence. Results indicated that the use of video podcast technology had a significant positive impact on vocational school student’s critical thinking disposition. It was also found that the greatest increase occurred in the truth-seeking, analyticity and systematicity dimensions, respectively. On the other hand the lowest increase occurred in self-confidence dimension.

Keywords: critical thinking disposition, podcasting, vocational school,

Introduction

Over the past decade, research attracts attention to the importance of critical thinking dispositions in education (Bell & Loon, 2015; Lewis, 2012; Naber & Wyatt, 2014; Ojewole, 2013; Şendağ & Odabaşı, 2009; Walter, 2013; Yang, Chuang, Li, & Tseng, 2014, Yorganci, 2016). Critical thinking defined as “reflective decision-making and thoughtful problem solving about what to believe and do thinking” (Ennis, 1987) is a significant component of education (Şendağ & Odabaşı, 2009). Studies point out that critical thinking for educational purposes includes both cognitive skills and dispositions (Facione, 1990). According to Facione (1990), critical thinking disposition is characterized as a “probing inquisitiveness, a keenness of mind, a zealous dedication to reason, and a hunger or eagerness for reliable information”. It includes seven sub-dispositions: open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, systematicity, truth-seeking, analyticity, critical thinking self-confidence, and cognitive maturity (Facione, 1990). Table 1 presents the definitions of these dispositions.

Table 1
Definition of elements of critical thinking dispositions (Facione, Giancarlo, Facione, & Gainen, 1995).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open-mindedness</td>
<td>being tolerant to divergent views and sensitive to the possibility of one's own bias.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquisitiveness</td>
<td>intellectual curiosity and eagerness for learning even when the application of the knowledge is not readily apparent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematicity</td>
<td>being organized, orderly, focused, and diligent in inquiry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truth-seeking</td>
<td>disposition of being eager to seek the best knowledge in a given context, courageous about asking questions, and honest and objective about pursuing inquiry even if the findings do not support one's self-interests or one's preconceived opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyticity</td>
<td>prizing the application of reasoning and the use of evidence to resolve problems, anticipating potential conceptual or practical difficulties, and consistently being alert to the need to intervene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Confidence</td>
<td>to trust the soundness of one's own reasoned judgments and to lead others in the rational resolution of problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maturity</td>
<td>being judicious in one's decision-making</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The significance of well-planned technological tools in obtaining aspects of mathematics such as problem solving, critical thinking, doing operations and conceptual learning have been reported in studies (Raines & Clark, 2011; Tassler, 2003). Researchers have suggested that video podcast technology can be an effective tool increasing the attention and concentration in mathematics course (Boster et al., 2007, Yorganci, 2016). However, the potential of podcasting in education remains unexplored and, there is a limited amount of studies investigating student critical thinking disposition with the use of podcast technology. Therefore, this study investigated the effects of podcasting on vocational school students’ critical thinking dispositions.

**Methodology**

The study used a one-group (no control) pretest-intervention-posttest experimental design to examine the effects of podcasting on vocational school students’ critical thinking dispositions. In this context, all of students were administered the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory as the pre-test and post-test (the same test). The study sample consists of 84 first year spring semester students in Erzurum Vocational College, Ataturk University in 2015-2016 academic year.

**Data sources**

The Turkish version of the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI), which was modified to Turkish context by Kökdemir (2003) has been administered to measure vocational school students’ critical thinking dispositions. The modified instrument was reduced to 51 items with 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not true) to 6 (completely true) in the item-total correlation analysis 6 subscales: open-mindedness (12 items), inquisitiveness (8 items),
systematicity (6 items), truth seeking (7 items), analyticity (11 items), and self-confidence (7 items). The reported alpha reliability of the overall CCTDI is .88 (Kökdemir, 2003).

The alpha reliability of the overall CCTDI for this study was found to be 0.83. In addition, the Cronbach alpha coefficients of subscales were: Truth-seeking 0·80; Systematicity 0·77; Inquisitiveness 0·81; Open-mindedness, 0·74; Confidence, 0·85; and Analyticity, 0·88.

**Video Podcasts**

According to Kay (2014), there are four basic components to be paid attention in preparing a video podcast: establishing context, creating effective explanations, minimizing cognitive load and engaging students. In this context, a total of 70 video podcasts was created for use in mathematics course. The video podcasts covered four main areas including functions, limits and continuity, derivative and integration. Table 2 displays a detailed description of video podcast content.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2</th>
<th>Video podcast content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functions</td>
<td>Functions and Their Graphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inverse Functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exponential and Logarithmic Functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limits</td>
<td>Finding Limits Graphically and Numerically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluating Limits Analytically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-Sided Limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infinite Limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derivative</td>
<td>The Derivative and the Tangent Line Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic Differentiation Rules and Rates of Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Product and Quotient Rules and Higher-Order Derivatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Chain Rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implicit Differentiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Derivatives of Inverse Functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>Antiderivatives and Indefinite Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Video podcasts were uploaded to the course sites on Moodle (the course management system) with the name “MATEMATİK-II”. Students logged into Moodle before utilizing podcasts. Some students did not know what podcasting was. Therefore, step-by-step basic information was developed to guide students during the download of the podcasts from Moodle. Figure I shows a screenshot from video podcasts.

![Figure 1](image)

**Figure 1.** A selected screenshot from video podcast

**Procedure**

At the beginning of the semester, the volunteer students were asked to complete the survey using an online assessment tool. After logging into Moodle, students viewed the invitation, consent form, and were redirected to the online survey. The students took CCTDI as pre-test. Course instructor proposed that students watch the podcasts related to topic after lectures. The CCTDI was given to students at the end of the study as the post-test.
Results

Table 3 displays descriptive statistics of students’ CCTDI scores before and after the intervention. For all subscales, the mean scores corresponding at post-test are higher than those of pre-test. The greatest increase occurred in the truth-seeking subscale. The mean of truth-seeking post-test scores increased by 0.80. The lowest increase occurred in self-confidence dimension. The mean of self-confidence post-test scores increased by 0.11.

Table 3
Descriptive statistics of CCTDI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCTDI scales</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open-mindedness</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquisitiveness</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematicity</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truth-seeking</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyticity</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Confidence</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A paired-samples t-test was used in comparing the difference between the pre- test and post- test scores of the CCTDI. Table 4 displays the results of paired-samples t-test regarding the pre-test and post-test total CCTDI mean scores of the students.

Table 4
Mean difference of the pre-test and post-test CCTDI scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results indicate that the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores was statistically significant. (p=.00, p<.05). The pre-test mean was 3.47, and the post-test mean was 4.47. Overall, students’ critical thinking disposition improved significantly and it could therefore be suggested that using video podcast technology had a significant positive impact on vocational school student’s critical thinking disposition.
Table 5 displays the findings of paired-samples t-test regarding the pre-test and post-test mean scores of CCTDI subscales. Results indicated that the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores was significant on systematicity (p=.00, p<.05), truth-seeking (p=.00, p<.05), and analyticity (p=.01, p<.05).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The study investigated the effects of podcasting on vocational school students’ critical thinking dispositions. At the beginning of the semester, based on the results of the CCTDI administered to the students, their critical thinking dispositions were taken together with open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, systematicity, truth-seeking, analyticity, and self-confidence dimensions. In the video podcast technology intervention, the students were asked to watch the podcasts related to topic after lectures. The CCTDI was given to students at the end of the semester as the post-test.
The results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores (p=.00, p< .05). The pre-test mean was 3.47, and the post-test mean was 4.47. The total post-test mean score of 4.47 indicates that using video podcast technology had a significant positive impact on vocational school student’s critical thinking disposition.

The findings revealed that there was increase in all subscales of the CCTDI. Based on the results, it was found that there was a statistically significant difference in systematicity, truth-seeking, and analyticity dimensions. Systematicity subscale had the highest mean scores in pre and post-test at 3.97 and 4.55, respectively. Secondly, the mean of analyticity subscale post-test scores increased by 0.60. Next, the mean of truth-seeking subscale post-test scores increased by 0.80. The greatest increase occurred in the truth-seeking subscale. However this subscale wasn’t the highest subscale score for the pre and post-test. This coincides with Paans, Sermeus, Nieweg, and van der Schans (2010) beliefs that the greatest increase in the truth seeking dimension means that students are getting better at seeking the best knowledge which is important for evidence-based practice. However, this findings were not supportive of several studies that have found truth-seeking to be the lowest disposition (Ojewole, 2013; Ozturk, Karayagiz Muslu, & Dicle, 2008; Walter, 2013). According to Wangensteen, Johansson and Nordstrom (2010), the reason for the low truth-seeking score is that the students reject to interrogate new knowledge. Such a greatest increase in the truth-seeking score in this study could be attributed to the fact that students assume an active posture and want to analyze new knowledge in video podcasts.

The lowest increase was found in self-confidence dimension. This result is consistent with the result of (Colucciello, 1999). Colucciello (1999) (who targeted nursing students in a single baccalaureate nursing program) have compared two groups of nursing students and found that self-confidence to be the lowest disposition. This result contradicts with the findings of Ojewole (2013).
and Walter (2013). Ojewole (2013), for example, found that participants’ CCTDI means were within the positive disposition range with highest mean scores in inquisitiveness and confidence in reasoning. Self-confidence referring the trust of students’ own ability to reason is an important disposition. Therefore, the students should be encouraged to undergo reflection and discussion upon the problem or the situation.

Critical thinking dispositions are significant component of 21st century higher order thinking abilities because they are a pre-requisite to support the critical thinking process (Ojewole, 2013). Therefore, educators should integrate web technologies in their lectures that can develop critical thinking skills. According to Beyer (1991), critical thinking skills can be obtained with long time education based on a thinking process. For this reason, podcast technology, especially video podcasts, can be used an important tool to acquire critical thinking skills for students because of the convenience and the time and place flexibility that the use of this technology provided.
REFERENCES


