Defying Stereotypes: An EFL Lesson Plan

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Defying Stereotypes: An EFL Lesson Plan by Inna Eliseeva

Introduction
In this lesson plan on defying stereotypes in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class, students will engage in critical thinking activities that focus on examining assumptions, challenging stereotypes, distinguishing between fact and opinion, exploring alternatives, and reflecting before forming opinions. Additionally, the lesson incorporates intercultural awareness and competence, fostering curiosity, openness to other cultures, understanding of cultural practices and products with the ability to relate and make them comprehensible, and critical evaluation of different cultural perspectives.

Class Overview and Considerations
- 10 - 20 students
- 16+ years of age
- intermediate - upper intermediate levels
- general English for communication and traveling

It is important to realize that this lesson works on the following aspects of critical thinking:
- examining assumptions,
- establishing and defying stereotypes,
- distinguishing fact from opinion,
- imagining and exploring alternatives,
- reflecting before giving an opinion.

At the same time this lesson involves particular aspects of intercultural awareness and intercultural competence, which should be stated in the following way:
- a curiosity and openness to other cultures.
- an understanding of practices and products in other national cultures,
- the ability to relate something from another culture and make it comprehensible to members of one’s own,
- the ability to use new knowledge of a culture in authentic situations,
- the ability to critically evaluate the cultural practices and products of different cultures [Frank, 2013].

Anticipated Challenges and Instructional Strategies
It is necessary to highlight the potential difficulties that students may encounter during the lesson and suggest strategies that the teacher can employ to overcome those problems. During the lesson, it is possible to anticipate students will be challenged by the following:
- using the necessary language structures to meditate about the present,
- expressing certainty and probability,
- coming up with ideas about the roots and origins of stereotypes (national stereotypes),
- giving examples of practices and perspectives when discussing the 3P model of culture.

To address these challenges, the teacher might consider the following strategies:
- use the structures yourself when giving instructions for the task, plan this as a freer practice and do not give them examples on the board or somewhere else; nevertheless, after you are through with the first stage of the lesson, attract the attention of the students to the language they have used,
- give a few examples to make the idea more understandable,
- monitor the discussion, mingle among the groups, and give them hints and clues for generating ideas.

Teaching Approach and Evaluation
The following part of the lesson plan provides guidelines for effective instruction, including the importance of clarity, providing examples, incorporating visual aids, and ensuring active listening and support during pair and group work. It also suggests various ways to assess
student performance during the lesson, such as evaluating their interaction, presentation skills, language usage, active listening, and idea generation. The section emphasizes the importance of informal assessment through observation and note-taking, as well as actively engaging with student groups to gather more detailed information for future evaluation using a critical thinking rubric, for example.

At this stage the teachers should try to keep every instruction and guideline as clear as possible. To do this, teachers can provide all the necessary examples, have key concepts in the presentation slides to support ideas, supply the students with plenty of visual aids (images, video), and have language and vocabulary items either on the board or in handouts.

It is essential to use some active listening strategies to check whether the students understood the instructions in the right way and ask them some Instruction Checking Questions (ICQs) along the way. Teachers should also make sure they move around the class to support and provide assistance during pair and group work.

Additionally, some ways of assessing the students during the lesson should be considered:

- assess their interaction in groups and in pairs; observe their presentation mode, use of the target language, active listening and ability to generate ideas.
- assess most of the lesson informally by doing the following: walking around and taking notes of what linguistic and extralinguistic issues arise during the task. These observations serve as valuable insights for identifying areas that require increased attention in the near future.
- it is also possible to join different groups and simply sit together and have a closer look or even join in a conversation and challenge them with some questions, for instance. From a closer look you can see more details necessary for filling in the critical thinking rubric.

**Expected Outcomes**

This section outlines the specific skills and abilities that students are expected to acquire by the end of the lesson:

- reproduce, extend, and modify essential knowledge of the basic content of the lesson,
- summarize learning in written and oral forms in English,
- work collaboratively in small groups to produce an oral or a digital product based on the content of the lesson,
- evaluate, express, and deduce the meaning of basic cultural concepts,
- memorize key terms, use them in discussion, and transform content into digital forms,
- confidently extract information from the given visual, audial, or pictorial context,
- use the obtained linguistic and extralinguistic data in informal conversation and monologue.

**Conclusion**

This lesson plan on defying stereotypes in an EFL classroom encompasses various aspects of critical thinking and intercultural competence. By examining assumptions, challenging stereotypes, distinguishing fact from opinion, exploring alternatives, and reflecting before forming opinions, students develop their critical thinking skills. Additionally, the lesson fosters intercultural awareness by promoting curiosity, openness, understanding, and the ability to critically evaluate different cultural practices and products. The plan anticipates challenges such as language use, expressing certainty and probability, discussing the roots of stereotypes, and providing examples related to the 3P model of culture.

However, by implementing strategies such as modeling language use, providing examples,
and offering guidance during discussions, these challenges can be addressed effectively. The plan also emphasizes the importance of clear instructions, visual aids, active listening, and support during group work. By the end of the lesson, students are expected to demonstrate their ability to reproduce, extend, and modify knowledge, summarize learning in oral and written forms, collaborate in producing oral or digital products, evaluate cultural concepts, memorize key terms, extract information from various contexts, and utilize linguistic and extralinguistic data in informal conversation and monologue. Through this comprehensive lesson plan, students will not only enhance their language skills but also develop critical thinking abilities and intercultural competence, enabling them to navigate diverse cultural landscapes with confidence and understanding.

References

Inna Eliseeva, PhD, Sirius Lyceum, Sirius, Russia, is a student-centered professor specializing in ESL, English and American Literature, text analysis and text interpretation, and culture and critical thinking. She holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics (Discourse Peculiarities of Contemporary English Parody). Dr. Eliseeva strongly believes in the dialogue nature of education and culture and is passionate about hearing the voice of every student.

A detailed plan of the lesson follows, including a rubric. A linked imagery presentation file and supplemental activity can also be found in the following pages.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Lesson Activity/Stages</th>
<th>Students will......</th>
<th>Language Focus</th>
<th>Teacher Role</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 min.</td>
<td>Warm-up: Pre-Task elicitation</td>
<td>Students look at an image on the screen showing a landscape from a country (e.g. Denmark). The class expresses their ideas about what country it could be, supporting their views with reasons why based on the image. Then students express stereotypes about that country (countries that are less familiar to students are sometimes more interesting to discuss as there are sometimes unexpected answers from students).</td>
<td>Expressing certainty, probability in the present (modal verbs may, might, could, be likely to, past simple, 2nd conditional). Making assumptions about the present. Using Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS - Bloom’s CT): identify, relate, generate, predict, infer.</td>
<td>-to stimulate students to deduce the information from the picture and express their ideas in oral form; -to monitor, help, and observe; -to pay attention to how students are using the constructions in focus and what ideas they express; -to write the student's ideas on the board.</td>
<td>Do you like the picture? Why/why not? Would you like to visit that place? What country could that be? Which details from the picture evoke associations with a particular country?</td>
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<td>4 min.</td>
<td>Task: Watching a video and filling out a form (writing)</td>
<td>Students are asked to watch a video where the Simpsons travel to Denmark: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MW-6GK0tMk">The Simpsons Go To Denmark - YouTube</a> until 3.38. Students are to note down any stereotypes, images, and behavior they see in the video, marking if the idea was mentioned in class before viewing the video. The list of pre-brainstormed stereotypes is on the board. Students also receive a set of adjectives (e.g. first-class, sleek, brooding, efficient, openly affectionate, crowded) that are related to stereotypes and that include a space for noun collocations. (see supplement 1).</td>
<td>Practicing receptive skills - watching and listening for specific information connected with stereotypical concepts of behavior (e.g. first-class schools; sleek furniture; brooding TV dramas; efficient apartments; openly affectionate people; world-famous icon; crowded bicycle super highways). HOTS (Bloom’s CT) - choose, select, categorize, combine, arrange</td>
<td>-to explain the task and make sure all the instructions are orderly, clear and precise; -to hand out the papers for filling in stereotypes (see supplement 1); -to observe while the students are watching and make sure that students are on task.</td>
<td>Do you know who the Simpsons are? Have you ever seen any episodes about them? What is specific about this TV series? What are you going to look for in the video? Are all the vocabulary items from the handout familiar to you?</td>
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<td>8 min.</td>
<td>Sharing Answers</td>
<td>The students share what they found in the video. Hopefully, they will find at least 5 of these stereotypes: ergonomic furniture, free health care, eating fish, detective TV shows, architecture, eco-energy, open affection, the Little Mermaid, and bicycles. As they give their answers, have students say whether it coincides with the predictions on the board, and try to explain if the idea has a positive or a negative connotation.</td>
<td>Opinion expressions (e.g. I think, I believe, I guess, etc.), order transitions (first, second, third etc.), adding and summarizing (what’s more, on top of that, in a nutshell etc.), nationality nouns and adjectives (Denmark, Danish, The Danes)</td>
<td>-to listen actively -to be a participant in the conversation, observing, guiding, asking for clarification and helping with the language if necessary; -to check if the concepts the students gave were apparent in the video and if the nouns to match the adjectives were chosen correctly.</td>
<td>Can you give me nationality words for Denmark? What is a corresponding adjective? Name of a resident? Nationality? (the Danes, Danish, a Dane) Do you mean...? Could you repeat that please? Why are you saying that a Little Mermaid is stereotypical?</td>
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<td>4 min.</td>
<td>Open Class Discussion</td>
<td>The students are asked to react to the following adjectives shown one by one trying to give out a national stereotype rooted in their minds, using the following prompt: What nationality is associated with the following adjectives?: punctual, romantic, hard-working, emotional, outgoing, quiet, aggressive, arrogant</td>
<td>Adjectives representing character qualities (punctual, romantic, hard-working, emotional, outgoing, quiet, aggressive, arrogant); nationality adjectives, names of countries; cause and consequence phrases.</td>
<td>-to show the adjectives on the screen or board; -to listen actively; -to provide help and explanations as needed</td>
<td>Do you know the meaning of the words you see? Can you think of another alternative? Is this characteristic negative or positive?</td>
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<td>Time</td>
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<td>6 min.</td>
<td>Pair-work: discussion, decision making &amp; creating</td>
<td>Students are asked to discuss the origins of stereotypes in pairs - specifically, how are stereotypes born and developed in our minds. The class will add their ideas to a mind map (I use Mind Meister to create and share mind maps, but there are other tools). At this stage, students develop digital literacy, soft skills, and pair work.</td>
<td>Expressing certainty, probability in the present (modal verbs may, might, could, be likely to, past simple, 2nd conditional). Making assumptions about the present. Agreeing and disagreeing with each other (Yes, I completely /totally agree; Absolutely; For sure; Yes, that’s absolutely right; Kind of, but that’s not always the case; Actually, I don’t agree with that, No, not really, etc.) HOTS (Bloom’s CT): analyze, examine, discuss, demonstrate, present, create</td>
<td>-to walk around the class, observing the students work, providing assistance, assessing their ability to work in a group, negotiate, listen actively and come to a decision.</td>
<td>Do you remember how to use this web source? What did your partner say? Are you sure you understand that? How do you ask your partner to repeat?</td>
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<td>6 min.</td>
<td>Presenting</td>
<td>Pairs present their ideas to the class, showing the mind map of stereotype roots and origins on the screen. Students from each group explain one idea and give examples of a corresponding prejudice.</td>
<td>Opinion expressions (we think, we believe, we guess etc.). Nationality nouns and adjectives (German, British, Spanish, a Spaniard etc.) HOTS (Bloom’s CT): compare, conclude, formulate, summarize, give examples, defend.</td>
<td>-to show the mind map on the screen; -to listen actively; -to observe, guiding students and asking for clarification and helping with the language if necessary; -to encourage students from different groups to interact and ask each other questions.</td>
<td>How is this related to origins of a prejudice? Can you give an example of a stereotype which may be rooted in media influence?</td>
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<td>Time</td>
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</table>
| 6 min.| Follow Up Discussion / Problem Solving | Students are asked if it is possible to avoid stereotypes and if yes, they should provide practical piece of advice on how to do that? They answer as a class without preparation. | Opinion expressions, meditating about the present and future (real and unreal condition), giving advice expressions and modal verbs.  
HOTS (Bloom’s CT): break down, hypothesize, evaluate, generate | -to listen;  
-tomonitor;  
-to make sure students are being attentive to their group mates and being polite. | What can we do to avoid stereotypes?  
How can we stop thinking this way? |
| 6 min.| Teacher Led Instruction      | The students are introduced to the 3P Model of Culture (Perspectives, Practices, Products). They can see the terms on the slide (Supplement 2), but the examples are not shown at once. | Special terms: culture, intercultural competence, practices, products, perspectives, stereotypes, bias, prejudice  
HOTS (Bloom’s CT): infer, predict, compare, break down | -to present information about the 3P Model of Culture via slides;  
-to explain the main concept within the 3P framework, asking questions and eliciting responses from students | What could PPP mean in terms of culture? |
| 7 min.| Brainstorm / Open Class Discussion | As a class, students brainstorm each of the P aspects of Culture, hopefully coming up with examples of food, clothes, music, traditions, behavior, feelings, and values. The students are then given the notion of intercultural competence and the idea that it is important to develop it to avoid prejudice and stereotyping. | Special terms: culture, intercultural competence, practices, products, perspectives, stereotypes, bias, prejudice  
Opinion expressions, language for agreeing & disagreeing, transitions of giving examples: for example, for instance, an example of that is, a great example is...  
HOTS (Bloom’s CT): give examples, generate, discuss | -to listen, monitor, ask clarifying questions;  
-to make sure students are being attentive to their group mates and polite;  
-to present the notion of intercultural competence and try to get students to come to the idea of avoiding prejudice when giving an opinion or evaluating something | Can you think of any example of a product? Practice? Perspective?  
Do you agree with your group mate’s opinion? Why or why not?  
Can we live without prejudice?  
Is it important to reflect before giving an opinion? |
<table>
<thead>
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</table>
| 9 min. | Discussion / Problem Solving | The students are shown images of food, including some of the most popular and vivid product of various cultures. They work in groups (each group gets a set of 3 pictures from the slides) and discuss what national cultures those products could belong to, as there can really be a few variants, especially if thinking critically. They will also be asked to think of one practice and one perspective for the same country. | Opinion expressions, nationality nouns and adjectives, words denoting food, products and ingredients, evaluative and descriptive adjectives: astonishing, wonderful, delicious, savoury, delicate, flavoury, etc. HOTS (Bloom’s CT): give examples, generate, discuss, hypothesize, formulate | -to walk around the class, observing the students work and providing assistance;  
- to assess the student's ability to work in a group, negotiate, listen actively, and come to a decision. The teacher can join in any conversation and be a part of a group for some time. | Can you think of any adjectives to describe the food and dishes you see?  
What national culture do you think these dishes represent? |
| 8 min. | Presenting | Students from each group introduce their variants of the nationalities which the food is supposed to represent while also giving examples of practices and perspectives. | Opinion expressions, nationality nouns and adjectives, words denoting food, products and ingredients, evaluative and descriptive adjectives, basic cultural terms: culture, intercultural competence, practices, products, perspectives, stereotypes, bias, prejudice. | -to be an active listener, observing, guiding, asking for clarification and helping with the language if necessary. | Are you sure you can think of only one national culture?  
Can this food or dish be found anywhere else?  
Do you agree that this is an example of a practice? Perspective? |
Simpsons in Denmark Stereotype List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stereotypical concept or behaviour</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>first-class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>sleek</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>brooding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>efficient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>openly affectionate</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>world-famous</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>crowded</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Supplement 1

Supplement 2: Click on the image to get the full PDF of the presentation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical thinking skills</th>
<th>What a star! 5</th>
<th>On the right track! 3</th>
<th>Keep working! 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear and Relevant Presentation</td>
<td>I feel confident speaking in public. I can easily promote my opinion politely and without confrontation. I am always ready to clarify, respond, and summarize my ideas.</td>
<td>I am not very confident in communicating with others. I have difficulty promoting my point of view and sometimes can be in confrontation with my peers. I don’t always clarify, respond and summarize my ideas.</td>
<td>I have no confidence when expressing an opinion. I don’t know how to discuss ideas and come to a compromise without confronting others. I cannot respond when necessary and never summarize my ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflecting Before Providing a Response</td>
<td>I always think carefully about my response and try to avoid immediate reactions. I try to evaluate how my reaction will affect another person.</td>
<td>I often try to take some time thinking over my response. I try not to interrupt while another person is speaking.</td>
<td>I respond shortly after the speaker finishes and sometimes interrupt at times to check my understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>I constantly keep eye-contact and provide a cheerful facial expression to make another person feel confident. I always ask questions to properly evaluate things and to ensure successful communication.</td>
<td>I try to have eye-contact with the speaker and try to encourage the speaker by smiling occasionally. I try to ask for clarification of some ideas for the sake of adequate communication.</td>
<td>I rarely have eye-contact with the speaker, and I don’t have a habit of asking questions to clarify the meaning and context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive Listening and Recognizing Emotion</td>
<td>I pay my full attention to another person and have no difficulty in evaluating the person’s emotions judging from the words, intonation, and body language.</td>
<td>I rarely get distracted when listening and try to identify the speaker’s feelings applying the language and body language to the context.</td>
<td>I can easily be distracted from another person and it’s hard for me to understand a person’s emotions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>