The main purpose of the following 10-week mixed method study was to find out the optimal tool from among Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread for the purpose of practicing speaking outside the classroom among EEC (Experimental English Classes) pre-intermediate students at the American University of Armenia in terms of their usability, students' engagement with language use and social engagement. A triangulation method was used for the study and the corresponding data was collected from questionnaires, semi-structured interview, students' written reflections and analysis of students' online behavior. Thus, the findings of the study indicated that in terms of usability and social engagement, the optimal tool among the students appeared to be VoiceThread, while in regard to students' engagement with language use, the optimal one seemed to be Voxopop.

Speaking: Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread

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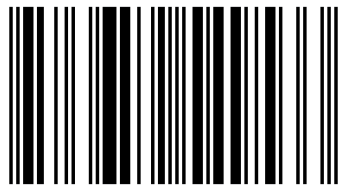
Narine Gevorgyan

Practicing Speaking through Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread

The Optimal Tool in terms of its Usability, Students' Engagement with Language Use and Social Engagement

Gevorgyan

978-3-659-54953-3

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my lovely mother, father and sister who have been supporting and encouraging me throughout my whole life.

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ABSTRACT

It has always been a challenging task for many EFL learners to attain high levels of proficiency in their speaking skills. Because of the classroom time constraints, most of the students usually do not manage to work on their speaking skills properly. Thus, speaking becomes the most complicated language skill for them to master. This is especially true for many Armenian EFL students who have limited opportunities to practice their speaking skills beyond the classroom walls. Nowadays, with the advent of Web 2.00 technologies the students could be given a chance to fill in this gap. However, a question arises in regard to the type of the technology to be used for that purpose.

Thus, the main aim of the following study is to explore the optimal tool from among three Web 2.00 technologies: Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread among EEC (Experimental English Classes) students in Armenia for the purpose of practicing speaking skills outside the classroom in terms of their usability, students' engagement with language use and social engagement. To reveal that, a 10-week mixed method study was conducted with seven EEC students at the American University of Armenia. The corresponding data was collected from four instruments: questionnaires, semi-structured interview, students' written reflections and analysis of students' online behavior.

The results of the data analysis revealed that in terms of usability and social engagement, the optimal tool among the students appeared to be VoiceThread, while in regard to students' engagement with language use the optimal one seemed to be Voxopop.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODCUTION

The purpose of this chapter is threefold. Firstly, it gives an overview of the background of the study, where the issues relevant to the current research are being discussed. Secondly, it presents the statement of the problem, significance of the study and the corresponding research question. Finally, it discloses the structure of the whole thesis with the thorough description of each chapter.

1.1 Background of the Study

Mastering speaking skills has been considered one of the most complicated skills to be mastered by foreign language learners (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; Nunan, 2003; Zhang & Head, 2009). This is, perhaps, one of the main reasons why speaking has been and still continues to be the target issue for many researchers.

According to David (2013), there is a gap between practicing reading and writing skills versus listening and speaking skills. This is one of the major problems that many language teachers face in their instruction. Because of the time limits, the meaningful conversation often does not take place within the classroom walls. Thus, a need arises to fill in this gap. Nowadays, with the advent of Web 2.0 technologies we might tackle the problem of practicing speaking outside the classroom. The other side of the coin is to decide which Web 2.0 tool will be the best one in serving that purpose. In fact, there are various Web 2.0 technologies that are interesting and appealing in terms of their pedagogical implications. Among such appealing tools are Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread. Based on the findings of existing empirical studies (Boyle, Dyment & O'Connell, 2011; Pop, Tomuletiu & David, 2011, Zargaryan, 2012), these three technologies may be valuable speaking tools for practicing speaking outside the classroom.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As stated above, many EFL learners do not usually have enough opportunities to work on their speaking skills because of the limited classroom time and the lack of speaking opportunity beyond the classroom walls. As a result, there is a need of making this speaking happen outside the classroom, and this is especially crucial in an Armenian EFL setting, where practicing speaking skills mainly takes place in the classroom. Besides, having in mind a wide range of Web 2.00 technologies, it is difficult to make a choice in regard to which technology to incorporate into our curriculum. Therefore, the main aim of this study is to find out the optimal speaking tool in terms of practicing speaking outside the classroom among Armenian EFL students at Experimental English Classes (EEC) at the American University of Armenia. In order to overcome the expected frustration among the EEC students concerning the novelty of the various technologies, a choice has been made to select only three of them. Such factors, as the presence of common features and the evidence of educational value, have played a major role in deciding upon which technology to choose.

Thus, bearing in mind all these factors, three Web 2.0 technologies, specifically Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread are going to be evaluated from the perspective of EEC learners in terms of the usability, students' engagement with language use and social engagement. Moreover, the attitude of EEC learners toward using these very technologies for the purpose of practicing speaking outside the classroom is going to be explored as well.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Taking into consideration the absence of opportunity to practice speaking outside the classroom, the findings of the present research study can be mutually beneficial for both the teachers and the learners in terms of spreading awareness

about the potential technologies that could be used for practicing and developing speaking skills beyond the classroom walls. Therefore, the outcome of the study may tackle the problem of limited practice of speaking English, as well as may serve as a recommendation for EEC teachers concerning what kind of technology to incorporate into their curriculum.

1.4 Research Question

The research question that the present study addresses is the following:

What is the optimal tool from among Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread for practicing speaking outside the classroom among EEC students in terms of

- their usability
- students' engagement with language use
- social engagement?

1.5 The Structure of the Thesis

Apart from Chapter 1, the current thesis entails four more chapters, which are as follows:

Chapter II discusses a literature review on Web 2.0 technologies in general, explores VoiceThread, Voxopop and Voki in terms of their features and then shares available empirical studies concerning the educational value of the aforementioned technologies.

Chapter III presents the proposed methodology by restating the research question and briefly describing the research design, setting and participants, sampling procedures, instrumentations, procedures and the corresponding analysis.

Chapter IV presents the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data with the aim of answering the posed research question.

Chapter V summarizes and discusses the findings, the possible limitations and a need for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Nowadays, with the emergence of Web 2.0 technologies, students could be given an opportunity to practice their speaking skills outside the classroom. For many years the computer applications have been relevant in the field of written language, however with the rapid development of Web 2.0 tools there was a shift from written to spoken language (Stanley, 2013). According to Grosseck, (2009) "Web 2.00 refers to the social use of the Web which allow people to collaborate, to get actively involved in creating content, to generate knowledge and to share information online" (p. 478). In fact, these Web 2.0 tools are considered to be valuable technologies in mastering speaking skills due to their multiple features of creating environment for the authentic use of language and the negotiation of meaning through collaboration and communication (Bustamante, Hurlbut & Moeller, 2012; Stanley, 2013; Pop, 2011). Based on the findings of various research studies (Bradt & Tackett, 2011; Bustamante, Hurlbut & Moeller, 2012; Anderson, 2006; Drexler, Baralt & Dawson, 2008), Web 2.00 technologies

- promote negotiation of meaning through collaboration and communication

- engage and motivate students to use the target language

- encourage shy students to raise their voice in an online environment

- provide opportunities to practice the four language skills

Thus, taking into account Web 2.00 technologies mentioned above, it can be inferred that Web 2.0 tools could be valuable ones for practicing speaking in the sense that they help foreign language learners overcome such speaking obstacles, as a lack of confidence, shyness and speaking in front of the class. Moreover, many

of these Web 2.00 technologies are asynchronous meaning that learners can participate in the discussions from different time and place settings they feel more comfortable with. It should be mentioned that Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread are one of those tools that allow asynchronous communication. Now let us discuss each of these speaking tools in terms of their features and then share available empirical findings concerning the use of these technologies in educational settings.

2.2 Voki

Voki is a web-based avatar program that allows its users to create their own speaking avatar based on the choice of available characters (http://www.voki.com/). After creation of an avatar, the users can add their voice via phone, text speech, microphone or uploaded file and then share it via email or embed it in their blogs, wikis and many other social websites. This technology might be appealing to the public in the sense that it is completely free. However, there are other Voki products that are not free of charge. For more information concerning the features of Voki and the price of its other products, see Table 1 at the end of this section.

Concerning the implementation of Voki in the classroom, Mirtschin (2010) suggests the following tips. Thus, Voki could be used

- as an introduction to the class. For instance, students can create their avatars and speak a few words about themselves
- for the introduction of the new material in an engaging way
- for revision purposes
- for practicing pronunciation skills

To our knowledge, currently there is only one research study in regard to the use of Voki in the language classroom. Specifically, it is a quasi-experimental study conducted by Zargaryan in 2012 with the aim of exploring the impact of Voki on the students' oral proficiency. The 24 participants, who shared the same proficiency level were evenly groped into control and experimental groups. The textbook and all the speaking activities were the same for both groups. Pre and post tests, as well as interviews and questionnaires were administered in order to gather the essential data. Thus, based on the findings, it was inferred that Voki might be a useful tool for improving EFL students' speaking skills.

Hence, taking into consideration the lack of research, no conclusion could be drawn in regard to the educational value of Voki. What can be inferred is that we need more empirically grounded theories about the effectiveness of Voki as a language learning tool.

2.3 Voxopop

Voxopop is a free message board that allows its users to record their voice and participate in various online talk groups (http://www.voxopop.com/). It is usually called a message board system, because it only uses the voice and there is no room for text. Thus, those messages are recorded in the groups known as "talk groups" where people communicate with each other by discussing a range of different topics. In addition to it, Voxopop gives its users an option in terms of those talk groups, particularly the users can join the already existing groups or they can create their own ones. Besides, the users have the opportunity to keep those talk groups private or to leave them open to public. Furthermore, Voxopop is completely free of charge and unlike Voki, it does not offer any other product designed specifically for classroom settings.

To our knowledge, two research studies concerning the use of Voxopop for educational purposes have been carried out so far. The first one refers to the comparative study conducted by Pop, Tomuletiu and David (2011) for the purpose of finding out EFL adult students' attitude towards the implementation of two asynchronous voice tools: Voxopop and VoiceThread for practicing speaking English at home. The participants were 62 adult EFL students from different proficiency levels who, apart from classroom speaking activities, were assigned Voxopop and VoiceThread speaking assignments focused on practicing different grammatical structures in context. Voxopop speaking activities were oriented toward practicing different tense forms, such as present perfect versus past simple, present continuous for the future versus future tense, etc. On the other hand, VoiceThread speaking activities were focused on practicing yes/no and wh-questions. However, it should be noted, that no evidence has been found concerning the duration and procedure of the study, specifically the number and frequency of those speaking activities. Another point to be mentioned is that in the study Voxopop was not only used for practicing speaking, but it also served as a reflection blog for the students in order to leave their feedback concerning the employment of those asynchronous tools. Additionally, an interview at the end of the semester was administered.

Thus, according to the results, both Voxopop and VoiceThread helped the students reduce their anxiety level and overcome a fear of "losing face" in front of the classroom. Moreover, both of these tools fostered the students' confidence and motivation to be fully engaged in asynchronous speaking activities, and this was especially evident in case of advanced level students, who in addition to assigned Voxopop speaking activities, were also involved in the existing talk groups of their personal interest. It was also interesting to find out that different proficiency level

students appreciated different features of those speaking tools. For instance, concerning Voxopop, the beginner level students liked the idea of re-recording themselves in case they were not pleased with the final product. The advanced level students, on the other hand, valued the presence of existing talk groups for building conversations around such high-stakes tests, as TOEFL, IELTS, etc.

Aside from revealing the students' opinion about the implementation of the aforementioned tools, the students were also asked to draw parallels between their regular classroom speaking activities and asynchronous ones. Hence, based on the interview results, the advantages of practicing speaking via Voxopop and VoiceThread were as follows:

- The opportunity of re-recording and editing one's speech

- The absence of pressure in regard to an immediate reply as opposed to face to face communication in the classroom

- The sense of ownership and independence

- The opportunity of exchanging ideas with people from all over the world and being exposed to different accents

It should be noted that in the study the advantages of Voxopop and VoiceThread outweighed the disadvantages since "format novelty" was found to be the only drawback stated by the students.

Overall, based on the findings of the preceding study, it can be inferred that Voxopop and VoiceThread might reduce students' anxiety level and increase motivation. However, the findings of the study are not in line with those of a recent descriptive study by McNeil (2014), where it was revealed that the employment of Voxopop did not reduce students' anxiety level. Particularly, the main aim of the

study was to find out the sources of foreign language anxiety (FLA) that emerged in Voxopop environment and whether there was a correlation between the affordances acknowledged by the students in that environment and FLA. In that study the term affordance was explained as any kind of an opportunity (good or bad) offered by that environment for the students. Such affordances included time for listening to the assignment, reflecting, preparing an answer, using additional materials, etc. The participants of the study, who were 15 low-intermediate Korean EFL university students from different departments, were enrolled in a required English conversational course. Thus, the students were assigned Voxopop speaking activities concerning the topics covered in the classroom once a week. Moreover, the students were not only asked to express their personal opinion in regard to the topic, but also to comment on their classmates' posts. The quantitative and qualitative data of that eight week duration study was gathered from the questionnaire and the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale. Thus, the findings showed that students felt anxious when doing their Voxopop assignments. The students were highly worried about their pronunciation, their peers' opinion about their performance and the absence of non-verbal hints.

To sum up, it should be noted that in order to draw credible conclusions concerning the implementation of Voxopop for the purpose of practicing speaking English and its impacts on students' anxiety, we need to conduct similar studies the results of which will be consistent with those of previous studies in the field.

2.4 VoiceThread

VoiceThread is a multimedia application that allows its users to upload images, videos, documents and presentations for further asynchronous communication. The media put into VoiceThread, turns into a slideshow, which you can then share with public by either sending the link or embedding it into the

webpage. Thus, other people can comment on what you have shared in five different ways: using a microphone, webcam, phone, text or simply by uploading an audio file. In regard to this, Kılıçkaya (2010) mentions that these versatile features of VoiceThread not only promote collaboration among the students, but also allow the teachers to implement various language-oriented activities, such as:

- Discussing the story or the novel that has been assigned for extensive reading

- Using comic strips and graphic novels, thus allowing the students to apply their critical thinking skills

- Explaining the topics by using various visuals

Correspodingly, Kılıçkaya (2010) mentions the potential benefits of this Web 2.00 tool for both the teachers and learners. Thus, VoiceThread

- creates opportunities for students to get feedback from both their instructor and peers

- gives a chance to participate in the discussions and share the ideas for those learners who are otherwise shy to do so in the classroom

- works as an assessment tool for the teacher, the latter having a chance to refer back to the students' discussions and then assess their language use in terms of pronunciation and different structures

- promotes group work among the students

- engages all the students to have their own contribution to the discussions due to various commenting features.

Unlike Voki and Voxopop, VoiceThread is not completely free of charge. The prices vary on the number of circumstances, such as class size, individual or school package, etc. For more information, see Table 1.

Based on the existing studies, VoiceThread has been examined in such disciplines, as business policy course (Chan & Pallapu, 2012), social psychology (Augustsso, 2010), languages (Dunn, 2012; Pallos, 2011; Kılıçkaya, 2010), and in terms of such areas, as motivation (Pop, Tomuletiu & David, 2011; Zorigian, 2009), collaboration (Kidd, 2013; Ching and Hsu, 2013) and engagement (Kidd, 2013; McCormack, 2010).

In regard to collaboration, Ching and Hsu (2013) conducted a mixed-method study with the aim of exploring the use of VoiceThread for collaborative learning in an online "Instructional Design Course" in the U.S. The 39 participants who were adult graduate students (their age ranging from 31 to 60) had a very positive attitude and experience toward using this Web 2.00 tool. As a matter of fact, all of them found the interface of VoiceThread user-friendly and very easy to handle. Moreover, all the participants shared the same opinion concerning the fact that VoiceThread helped them to collaborate with each other and feel connected. In regard to this, 50 % of the participants indicated that they felt connected with their peers due to audio and video features of VoiceThread. As stated by Ching and Hsu (2013), the data collected from the observations supported the students' shared opinion with the evidence of the fact that 70 % of responses in VoiceThread were made via audio and video commenting options. However, the frequent use of audio and video features did not encourage the students to demonstrate active participation, because they only did the assignments that were obligatory within the course.

Contradictory to these results are the findings of a quasi-experimental study by Kidd (2013) aimed at exploring the effectiveness of VoiceThread in two online courses (assessment and education) for the purpose of delivering course content. Thus, based on the findings, the participants of both courses, who were graduate and undergraduate students, gave more responses to their peers than it was required. The gap between the results of these two studies becomes bigger when we take into consideration the fact that undergraduate students were not required to leave comments at all. Hence, we can conclude that both studies, which were conducted in an online context, yielded contradictory results. In fact, the explanation for this inconsistency may lie in the participants. Specifically, the study which reported negative results was conducted among adult students most of whom were not only students, but also employees. Consequently, one of the reasons that those adult students were not engaged in the discussions might be the fact that they did not have much time for that purpose. Conversely, Ching and Hsu (2013) critically evaluated the findings of a study by Kidd (2013) implying that the students' engagement could not be measured based solely on the number of responses.

The fact that VoiceThread encourages active participation is also highlighted in a study by Brunvand and Byrd (2011) according to whom the multiple features of VoiceThread meet different learning styles, thus engaging and motivating the students to demonstrate active participation. Overall, in spite of these inconsistent results, there were some that overlapped with each other. Notably, the findings of both studies (Kidd, 2013; Ching & Hsu, 2013) suggest that VoiceThread is favorable in terms of delivering course content, promoting social connection and allowing a room for teacher's social presence.

Apart from highlighting the benefits of VocieThread, Ching and Hsu (2013) presented its drawbacks as well. As the findings show, VocieThread is time-consuming in the sense that students have to refer back and listen to their peers' audio and video comments. The same conclusion has been drawn in an earlier study by McCormack (2010) reporting that students increase their workload when they listen to their peers' comments. Moreover, Millard (2010) mentions another drawback of VoiceThread, which is the fact that there is no way of assuring oneself whether the users read or listen to the previously left comments. Millard (2010) considers this a drawback, because in the presence of such option one can find out how active that specific VoiceThread is.

However, in contrast to these above mentioned findings, the results of three earlier studies (Millard, 2010; Borup, Graham & Velasquez, 2010; Taylor & Huang, 2011) show that VoiceThread does not establish social connection between the students. For instance, Millard (2010) studied VoiceThread in terms of social interaction and collaboration, specifically whether the design of VoiceThread itself promoted social interaction and whether users' comments were interactive by their nature. For that study, web content analysis was used in order to analyze the data gathered from randomly selected 50 VoiceThread samples, from which only 25 samples were utilized for exploring the nature of users' comments. According to the reported findings, the majority of VoiceThreads had predominately been used for educational purposes and only a few for personal motives. In regard to frequently used commenting options, audio and text comments were the prevailing ones, while video responses constituted only 0.3%.

Thus, the results of this study does not coincide with those by Ching and Hsu (2013) according to which video and audio comments were predominant ones. Moreover, the majority of the comments were not communicative, because they

were deprived of any direct address or reference. Specifically, 84 % of the comments did not include questions that would stimulate on-going conversation.

Given these results, we can assume that VoiceThread did not promote social interaction among users, because the comments were mainly in forms of general statements and opinions, meaning that there was no communication among the users. Similarly, in another study by Borup, Graham and Velasquez (2010) it was concluded that VoiceThread did not encourage social interaction irrespective of the fact that it enhanced teacher immediacy.

Bearing in mind all these contradictory results, it is difficult to draw conclusions about VoiceThread in terms of social interaction and collaboration. By and large, there is a need for future replication studies.

Aside from collaboration, social interaction and engagement, VocieThread has been examined in various disciplines and areas. One of those is the use of VoiceThread for improving one's reflective skills. In regard to this, McCormack (2010) conducted a qualitative study with the aim of exploring the impact of VoiceThread on pre-service teachers' reflective skills. Thus, the results of the semi-structured interviews showed that VoiceThread expanded the teachers' reflective skills and engagement. Moreover, recent case study by Augustsson (2010) aimed at finding out the impact of VocieThread on Swedish students' reflective skills indicated the same positive results. Therefore, taking into account the fact that there is no evidence of studies reporting negative results, we can infer that VoiceThread could be beneficial for improving reflective skills.

There is evidence to suggest that VoiceThread is also a valuable tool for delivering presentations. Particularly, Chan and Pallapu (2012) conducted an exploratory study with the purpose of exploring 22 undergraduate students' attitude

towards using VoiceThread in a business course. The findings of the study showed positive results since 64 % of the participants expressed their wish to use VoiceThread in the future, while the rest of the participants reported that they would recommend VoiceThread to their friends as a potential tool for making presentations. Based on the results of this study, Chan and Pallapu (2012) state that VoiceThread is a valuable tool for reviewing exam questions, delivering presentations and discussing various concepts. The findings of an earlier study by Chicioreanu (2010) reconfirm the fact that VoiceThread is beneficial in terms of delivering presentations. Moreover, another study by Pallos (2011) reported that VoiceThread helped the Japanese students not only deliver oral presentations in English, but also gain self-confidence.

Thus, having no evidence of inconsistent or negative results so far, we can infer that VocieThread may be a valuable educational tool in terms of delivering presentations.

Concerning the use of VoiceThread for the purpose of practicing speaking skills, it is challenging to draw any conclusion since there is a lack of such studies. The only one that we have at hand is an unpublished dissertation by Dunn (2012) aimed at exploring the impact of VoiceThread on Spanish high school students' anxiety and oral proficiency. Thus, based on the findings of that quasi-experimental study, it was found out that although VoiceThread did not have any impact on students' anxiety, it increased their oral proficiency level. Apparently, the fact that VoiceThread increased the students' oral proficiency could not be a base for us to make any generalization. Consequently, there is a need for future studies.

Table 1 below summarizes the overall features of the aforementioned technologies. As can be shown, it is only Voxopop that is completely free of charge and has no limitations in terms of recording duration. In regard to this, although Voki and VoiceThread are available for free of charge too, the number of available features are limited for that options. Another differentiating feature among these three technologies is that it is only in case of Voxopop that its users need to download special programs in order to be able to record themselves. Overall, if we compare the features of these three tools, we can say that VoiceThread and Voki seem to have more versatile features than Voxopop.

Table 1

The Features of Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread

Features	Voki	Voxopop	VoiceThread
Products	Voki- free of charge Voki classroom- $29.95 a year Voki presenter- $29.95 a year	Free of charge	Free of Charge (limited features) K-12- $ 79 a year Higher education ⎫ Business ⎬ no fixed prices ⎭
Recording	Microphone Use Dial-in number Upload an audio file Type a text	Microphone	Microphone Phone Webcam Text

			Upload an audio file
Limits	One-minute talk Not all avatars are free	-------	5 VoiceThreads (for free option)
Software to install	-------	Flash player Java	-------
Audio files	WMA, PCM, MP3, WAV	-------	MP3, WAV

To sum up, there is a lack of empirical studies concerning the use of Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread as language learning tools, in particular the implementation of these technologies for practicing speaking skills. Therefore, the following study aims to fill in this gap by providing new empirical findings concerning the usefulness of the aforementioned technologies in terms of practicing speaking English.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The main purpose of the study was to find out the optimal tool from among Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread for the purpose of practicing speaking at home among EEC students. Apart from this, the study aimed at finding out the students' attitude towards the implementation of those technologies. Thus, the study addressed the following research question:

What is the optimal tool from among Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread for practicing speaking outside the classroom among EEC students in terms of

- their usability
- students' engagement with language use
- social engagement?

3.2 Setting and Participants

The participants of the study were pre-intermediate students enrolled in the Experimental English Classes (EEC) offered by the Department of English Programs at the American University of Armenia. EEC, which is an AUA affiliated English language program established in 2005, offers communicative language classes with a focus on four language skills. EEC proficiency levels range from pre-preparatory to advanced ones. The students' proficiency is determined by the results of the placement test based on which they are placed into the corresponding proficiency groups. The number of the participants per group usually ranges from 10-15, however during the research study period the researcher's class consisted of only eight students. In addition to this, one case of attrition occurred since one of the participants had been operated on. Consequently, a very small sample consisting of three boys and four girls aged from 10-15 was

taken for the investigation of the present study. It should be noted that the teacher and the researcher of the study was the same person.

3.3 Materials

The textbook used during the study was "English in Mind 2" by Cambridge University Press (2010). This is the book that EEC program uses routinely for its classes with pre-intermediate proficiency level students. It is a communicative language textbook that presents an appealing content with a focus on four language skills. The components of the textbook are teacher's book, student's book, workbook and DVD-ROM. The textbook entails 14 units covering a range of different topics. From among these 14 units, only three units: "Have fun", "Disaster" and "Ways of living" were used for technology assignments.

3.4 Research Design

As stated by Dörnyei (2007) "Mixed methods research has a unique potential to produce evidence for the validity of research outcomes through the convergence and corroboration of the findings" (p. 45).

Thus, in order to increase the validity of the study, mixed method study with its corresponding quantitative and qualitative data was conducted.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

A convenience sampling was selected taking into account the availability and accessibility of the students in EEC program. Since the study was focused on technology assignments, there was a need to choose participants that would have at least basic computer and Internet skills. In the light of this, the participants of the study were also chosen taking into account their age and proficiency level.

3.6 Instrumentation and Procedure

For the purpose of increasing the validity of the study, triangulation method was used. Therefore, the instruments used for collecting the data were as follows:

- Three questionnaires with both closed-ended and open-ended questions (Appendix A)

- Students' written reflections

- Semi-structured interview (Appendix B)

- Analysis of students' online behavior

3.6.1 Questionnaires. In order to gather more valid data, the questionnaires were administered after the completion of all the assignments per each technology. The questionnaires consisted of twelve closed-ended (Likert scale) and five open-ended items. The open-ended items were short answer questions requiring either numerical or yes or no answers. Moreover, all the items were the same across all three technologies. This was done in order to able to compare the technologies with each other and, subsequently, find out the optimal tool. In addition to this, the questionnaires were given in the native language for the purpose of avoiding possible misunderstandings. The items of the questionnaires were designed around the three main criteria: usability, students' engagement with language use and social engagement.

3.6.2 Students' written reflections. In order to gather additional data about the students' attitude towards the use of the aforementioned technologies for the purpose of practicing speaking English, the students were asked to write reflections after the completion of all the assignments per technology. Since none of the students had never written any kind of reflection beforehand, the researcher provided the students with a few questions that guided them in writing their

reflections. However, the students were told that they did not have to provide answers to all of the questions and that they could go beyond the questions.

3.6.3 Semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interview was conducted with all of the participants on one to one basis after the completion of all the technology assignments. The main purpose of the interview was to find out the students' attitude towards the use of Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread for the purpose of practicing speaking English at home. The interview was conducted after the administration of the questionnaires in order to elaborate on some interesting patterns drawn from the analysis of the questionnaires. In order to avoid possible misunderstandings and gave the students an opportunity to express their thoughts at their best, the interview was conducted in the native language. The interview was designed around three main questions and subsequent probes (Appendix B). The students were aware that their answers would be recorded. The researcher did her best in order to create a relaxed atmosphere and stay neutral throughout the whole interview process.

3.6.4 Analysis of students' online behavior. Throughout the whole study period (10 weeks) the researcher observed the participants' technology assignments in terms of their engagement with language use and social engagement. In order to decrease the students' anxiety level concerning the novelty of such assignments, the researcher decided to assign only two speaking tasks per each technology. Since there was a possibility that in case of completely different speaking assignments the students' answers in regard to the implementation of those technologies would depend on the type of the speaking activity rather than the technology itself, an attempt was made to design such speaking tasks that would be of the same type across all three technologies. In addition to this, the speaking tasks were chosen in accordance with the units covered in the textbook. Overall, it

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took six weeks in order to complete all the six technology assignments (Appendix C). Regarding the alternation of the technologies, it was supposed that the students would be less frustrated if they explored the tools one by one.

Table 2

The Alternation of the Technologies and Speaking Tasks

Duration	Technology	Units and Speaking tasks
		Have fun
Week 1 Week 2	Voki	Task 1. Answering the provided question
		Task 2. Picture description with follow-up questions
		Disaster
Week 3 Week 4	Voxopop	Task 1. Answering the provided question
		Task 2. Picture description with follow-up questions
		Ways of living
Week 5 Week 6	VocieThread	Task 1. Answering the provided question
		Task 2. Picture description with follow-up questions

In order to find out the students' social engagement with the technologies, such factors, as whether the students commented on peers' recordings or whether

they commented on each other's comments, were observed by the researcher. In order not to deteriorate the further results, the teacher neither assigned nor forced the students to comment on each other's recordings, but just once explicitly mentioned that they could feel free to comment on their peers' technology assignments. However, it should be mentioned that Voki (not the Voki Classroom) does not have any "comment" option. Consequently, in order to solve that problem, the researcher created a classroom blog (http://kidblog.org/home/), where the students could post their recordings and comment on their peers' posts.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents the results of the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data for the purpose of answering the posed research question, which was as follows:

What is the optimal tool from among Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread for practicing speaking outside the classroom among EEC students in terms of

- their usability
- students' engagement with language use
- social engagement?

Quantitative data was gathered from both the questionnaire, which was given to the students after the completion of the assignments per technology and the teacher's online observation (duration of speech). Qualitative data was gathered from the students' written reflections, the teacher's online observation and the interview, which was administered after the end of all the technology assignments.

4.2 The Optimal Tool in terms of Usability

The quantitative data was analyzed through SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). In particular, the responses of the questionnaire were coded into numerical variables and inputted into SPSS for further descriptive statistics analysis. The answer to the posed research question was going to be explored based on the frequency of the students' responses. The bar graphs below present the frequency analysis of the students' responses per each item across all three technologies. Note that the vertical axis of the graphs represents the number of the participants. Also, the figures below are presented in the order of the information

they sought to reveal about each criteria: usability, students' engagement with language use and social engagement.
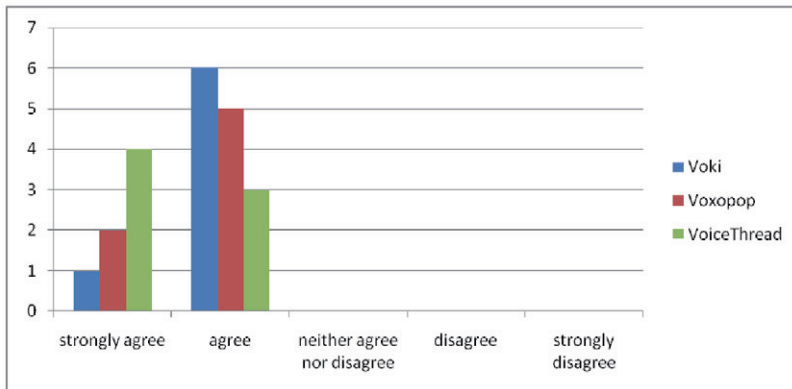

Figure 1. Usefulness of the tools for practicing speaking.

As shown in Figure 1, all of the students gave only postive answers concerning the use of the technologies for the purpose of practicing speaking English at home. However, it should be noted that there is a strong tendency towards the usefulness of Voicethread with four "strongly agree" answers. The same thing has been revealed from the analysis of the students' reflections, where they stated the usefulness of the technologies in terms of practicing speaking. In the light of this, it was interesting to find out how the students perceived the usefulness of the technologies. To reveal that, the following question was asked during the interview: "Why do you think these tools are useful for practicing speaking skills?". Thus, it was found out that the students considered Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread useful tools, because they gave them an opportunity to

- practice speaking English at home

- practice pronunciation of the words

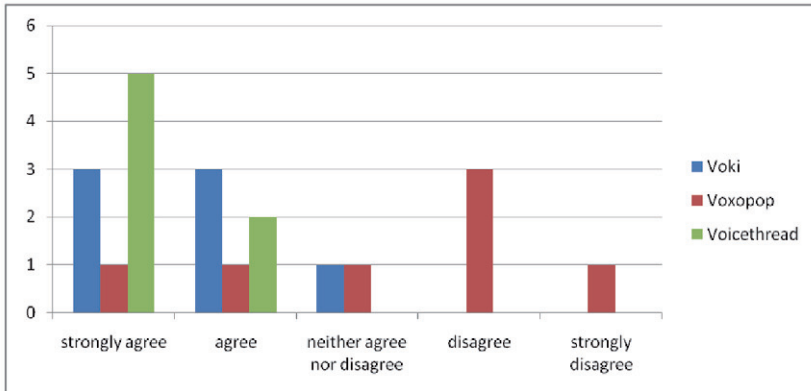- practice using the vocabulary covered in the classroom

Figure 2. Ease of webpage use.

Figure 2 depicts that the majority of the students gave negative responses in regard to the use of Voxopop webpage. Thus, we may infer that in general using Voxopop was not an easy task for the students. During the interview it was revealed that the main reason was the installation of two programs: Java and Flash player, without which the students would not be able to record their voice and play audio. Moreover, the installation of the programs were not enough in order to run Voxopop. Because of the some updates in Java, the Voxopop recorder was affected and in order to be able to fix it, the students had to go to "Java Control Panel" and make some adjustments as described in the "Help" section of Voxopop. The students' negative attitude towards the use of Voxopop was also highlighted in their reflections, where they complained how difficult it was for them to install those programs and make the necessary adjustments. Three students referred to it as a drawback of Voxopop. In addition to this, two students reported that they

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would not be able to do all the necessary adjustments without the tutorial provided by the teacher.

As shown in Figure 2, the case is completely different in terms of Voki and VoiceThread. If we compare the number of "strongly agree" answers, we can see that the webpage of VoiceThread was easier to use.
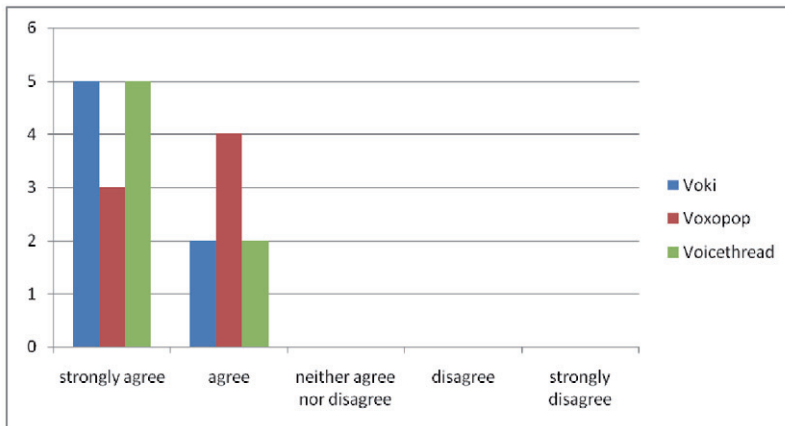
Figure 3. Ease of registration.

As figure 3 displays, all the students gave solely positive results menaing that the registration was an easy and simple task for them across all three technolgies, especially in case of Voki and VoiceThread.
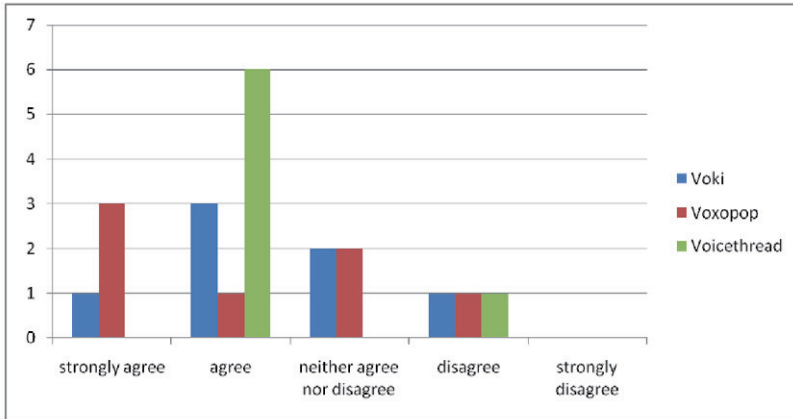
Figure 4. Ease of sharing the recordings.

As Figure 4 shows, in regard to sharing their recordings, the students mainly gave positive answers. However, some of the students expressed negative and uncertain results in case of Voki and Voxopop, which shows that sharing those two tools was not an easy process for them. On the contrary, there was only one negative answer concerning the sharing of VoiceThread. In the light of this, we may conclude that sharing VoiceThread was easier than sharing Voki and Voxopop.
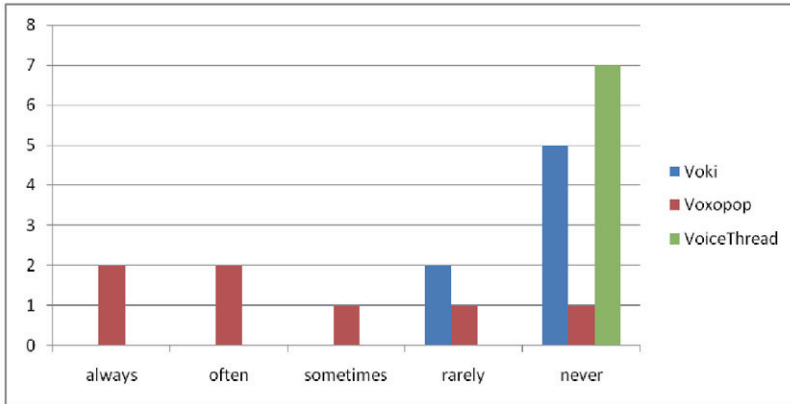
Figure 5. Frequency of problems with webpage use.

As illustrated in Figure 5, all the students gave strong positive answers in case of VoiceThread. This make us imply that the students had no problems when using VoiceThread. On the contrary, the students' responses concerning the implementation of the Voxopop show that they had constantly encountered problems. As it has been mentioned previously, this problem was again connected with the installation of those two programs. In regard to this, one student had written in her reflection that sometimes she was not able to run Voxopop with Google Chrome. In fact, Voxopop is such kind of a program that works well when opened through Mozilla Firefox or Internet Explorer browsers.

Thus, these were the main reasons of the students' negative answers in terms of Voxopop. Concerning Voki, as it was apparent from some of the students' reflections, the main reason was that sometimes Voki didn't process the students' recordings and, subsequently, they were not able to save them.
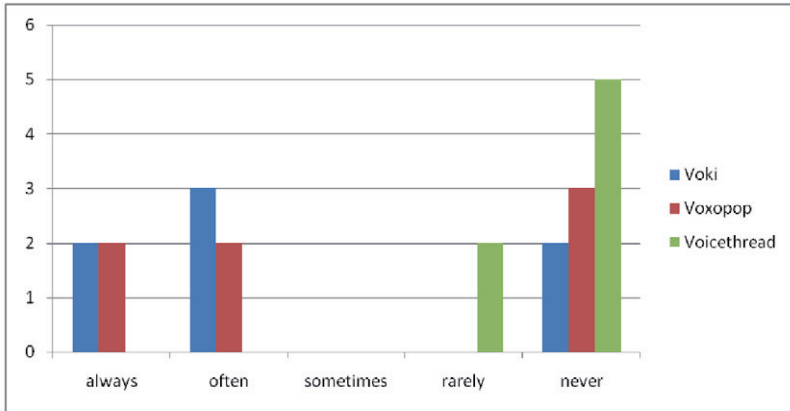
Figure 6. Frequency of recording problems.

As Figure 6 displays, it was only in case of VoiceThread that the students had nearly no recording problems. This was also apparent from the analysis of the students' online behavior, which showed that all the students were able to do their VoiceThread tasks.

Concerning the other two technologies, Figure 6 depicts that the students had faced recording problems on frequently basis. According to the analysis of the students' online behavior, only four students were able to do their first and second Voki assignments. In regard to Voxopop, only five students were able to do their first and second Voxopop assignments. However, this was not the case that the students were lazy and took the advantage of recording problems as an excuse. In fact, those students who were not able to record their voice via Voki and Voxopop, recorded their answers to the questions via computer and then send the mp3 versions to the teacher's email.

To sum up, if we summarize the findings we have got so far, it can be seen that within all the subcategories of usabilty, it was only in case of Voicethread that

the students gave nearly no negative answers. Hence, it can be inferred that in terms of usability VoiceThread seems to be the optimal tool among the students.

Apart from this, during the interview the students were asked to rank the technologies in terms of usability in the order of 1-3, which stand for "most to least" user-friendly technologies. This was done for the purpose of finding out whether there was a gap among the students' answers given during and at the end of the study. Thus, based on the frequency of the students' answers we have got the following results.

Table 3

Students' Rankings of the Tools in terms of Usability

Technology	A total of votes for the first place	A total of votes for the second place	A total of votes for the third place
VoiceThread	5	2	0
Voxopop	0	3	4
Voki	2	3	2

An interesting observation is that neither of the students ranked Voxopop in the first place nor VoiceThread in the third place. In addition to this, the majority of the students ranked VoiceThread in the first place.

Thus, the results of the interview are consistent with the ones drawn from questionnaires, in that in both cases VoiceThread appears to be the optimal tool in terms of usability among the students.

4.3 The Optimal Tool in terms of Students' Engagement with Language Use

The following figures present information about the students' answers to the questions aimed at revealing their engagement with language use across all three technologies.
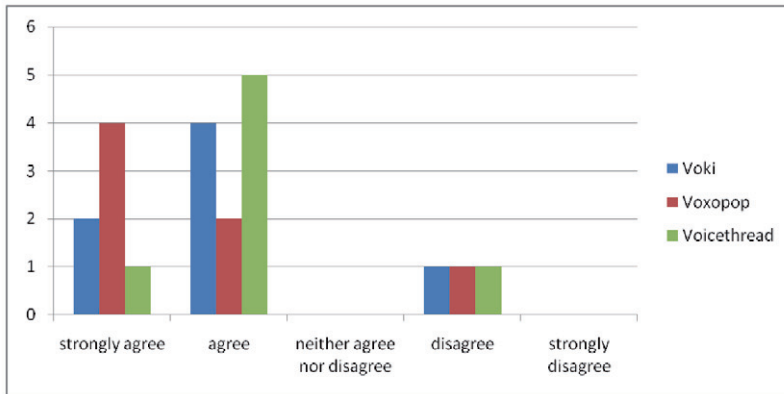
Figure 7. Use of scripts.

As shown in Figure 7, in case of all the three technologies, six students used scripts when recording their answers. This was especially true in case of Voxopop. In fact, it was not surprising for the researcher to reveal that, taking into consideration the fact that all the technology tasks were given as homework assignments where there was no control on the part of the teacher.

As it was revealed from the interview, the students were reading from the scipts in order

- to be fluent

- not to stammer

- not to omit information

- to save time

In regard to this, the following question was posed during the interview: "Can reading from the scripts help students to improve their speaking skills?". Thus, based on the students' answers it was revealed that for the six participants of the study reading from the scripts helped them improve their speaking skills. However, there was only one student that gave negative answer. The paradox was that although he thought reading from the script didn't help him improve his speaking skills, he used them while recording himself. When being asked why then he used them, his answer was "because it was easier and time-saving".
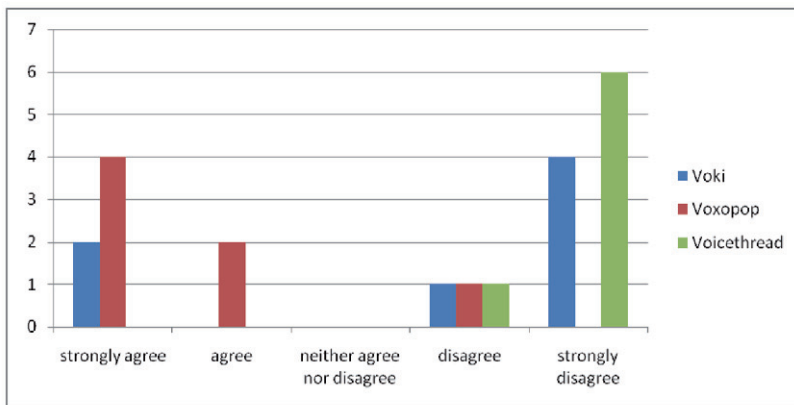
Figure 8. Use of additional materials.

As Figure 8 depicts, the students mainly used supplemental materials in regard to Voxopop assignments. Based on the students' responses, we may infer that they were more engaged with language use in case of Voxopop. However, in order to find out the underlying reason of it, the following question was posed during the interview: "What was the reason of using additional materials mainly in case of Voxopop?". Thus, as it was revealed from the interview the main reason was the type of the task. Six students reported that the first task of Voxopop was

such that it required them to use additional materials. In fact, this was also apparent from the analysis of the students' online behavior indicating that the students' used a variety of expressions and subject specific words especially in case of Voxopop assignments. This seems to be one of the limitations of our study, since the students used additional materials because of the type of the task and not the technology itself.
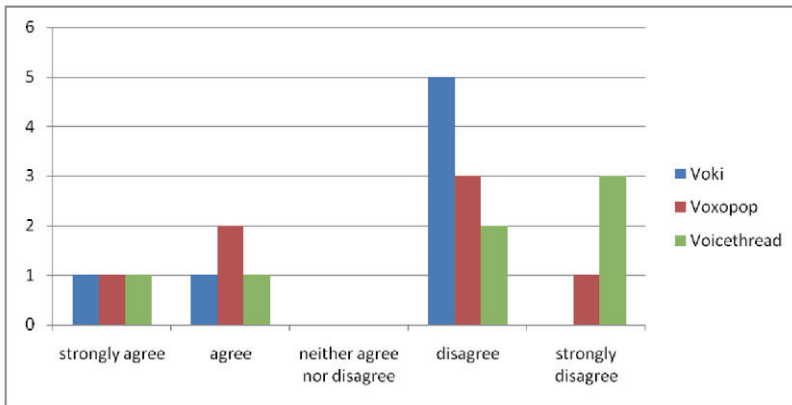
Figure 9. Editing of recordings before posting.

As shown in Figure 9, the majority of the students didn't edit their recordings after some time before posting them across all three technologies. In order to find out the reason, the following question was posed during the interview: "What was the reason that most of you did not edit your recordings after some time before posting them?". Thus, as it was revealed, most of the students didn't edit their recordings, because before saving them, they had a chance of re-recording themselves if not satisfied with the final product. So this was the main reason. However, there were also a few students who edited their recordings before posting. Regarding this, the following question was posed during the interview:

"What was the reason of editing your recordings after some time before posting them?". Thus, as it was explored during the interview, the students edited their recordings in order to

- include new ideas

- make slight changes concerning the order of the sentences

- replace the words with the ones they could pronounce easily

In regard to the students' engagement with langauge use, also a few open-ended questions were included in the questionaire. Table 5 depicts the results of the first question.

Table 4

Re-recording per Each Assignment

Technology	Mean	Standard Deviation
Voki	5	3.2
Voxopop	4	3.1
VoiceThread	3	2.1

As shown in Table 4, on average the students re-recorded themselves more while doing their Voki and Voxopop assignments. In case of Voki (M=5, SD =3.2) we could see the wide range of the tries the participants made in order to re-record themselves for the completion of the same assignment. During the semi-structured interview the participants were asked to explain the reason of re-recording themselves, especially in the case of Voki and Voxopop. As it was revealed, the main reason of re-recording was not because of the fact that the students were not satisfied with the final product, but because they had encountered some recording

problems. For instance, in case of Voki the students made many re-recording attempts because Voki didn't process their recordings. According to some of the students the same thing happened in case of Voxopop as well. However, some of the students stated that they re-recorded themselves, because

- there was a sudden unexpected noise in the neighborhood

- they thought they mispronounced some words

- they omitted some information

- they didn't like how their voice sounded

In terms of the students' engagement with language use, it was also interesting to explore how much time on average the students spent on completion of one technology assignment.

Table 5

The Time Spent on Completion of One Assignment

Technology	Mean	Standard Deviation
Voki	57.8	58.8
Voxopop	66.4	80.1
VoiceThread	26	25

Note. The time is presented in minutes.

As shown in Table 5, the students spent more than an hour on completion of Voxopop assignment. Moreover, we could see the wide range of time the students spent on completion of the same Voxopop assignment (M=66.4, SD=80.1). It was also interesting to notice that for completion of VoiceThread assignment the students did not spend much time as compared with other two technologies. In

regard to this, the following question was posed during the interview: "What was the reason of spending more time on completion of Voki and Voxopop assignments?". As it was revealed, the main reason was because of the type of the task and the technical problems. Subsequently, this make us understand why the students spent more time on completion of Voxopop assignments as opposed to other technologies.

In terms of the students' speech duration across all three technologies, the results of the analysis of students' online behavior are depicted in Table 6.

Table 6

The Average Duration of Students' Speech

Technologies	Mean	Standard Deviation
Voki	30	20
Voxopop	47	11
VoiceThread	35.3	11.6

Note. The duration of speech is presented in seconds.

Thus, as Table 6 displays, the average duration of the students' speech was longer in case of Voxopop. Another interesting observation was that the students' speech did not exceed one minute across all the three technologies. In case of Voki the reason is quite clear, because it can only process one-minute duration talk. In regard to this, the following question was posed during the interview: " Was one minute enough for you to complete your Voki assignment?" Thus, as it was revealed, one minute was quite enough for the students to complete their Voki assignments. The same thing referred to other technologies as well.

Thus, if we summarize the findings we have presented so far, Voxopop seems to be the optimal tool in terms of the students' engagement with langauge

use. However, as it has been previously mentioned, this was mainly because of the type of the assignment.

Apart from this, during the interview the students were asked to rank the technologies in the order of 1-3, which stand for "most to least" engagement with language use. This was done for the purpose of finding out whether there was a gap among the students' answers given during and at the end of the study. Thus, based on the frequency of the students' answers we have got the following results.

Table 7

Students' Rankings of the Tool in terms of Engagement with Language Use

Technology	A total of votes for the first place	A total of votes for the second place	A total of votes for the third place
VoiceThread	1	4	1
Voxopop	5	1	0
Voki	0	1	5

As shown in Table 7, neither of the students ranked Voki in the first place nor Voxopop in the third place. On the other hand, the majority of the students ranked Voxopop in the first place. What was interesting to see that one of the students was not able to rank the technologies in terms of engagement with language use, because according to her there was no difference.

Thus, the results of the interview are consistent with the ones drawn from questionnaires, in that in both cases Voxopop seems to be the optimal tool in terms of students' engagement with language use. Moreover, the conclusions drawn from the analysis of students' online behavior are in accordance with the results obtained from both the questionnaires and interview.

4.4 The Optimal Tool in terms of Social Engagement

The following figures explore information in regard to the students' social engagement across all three technologies.
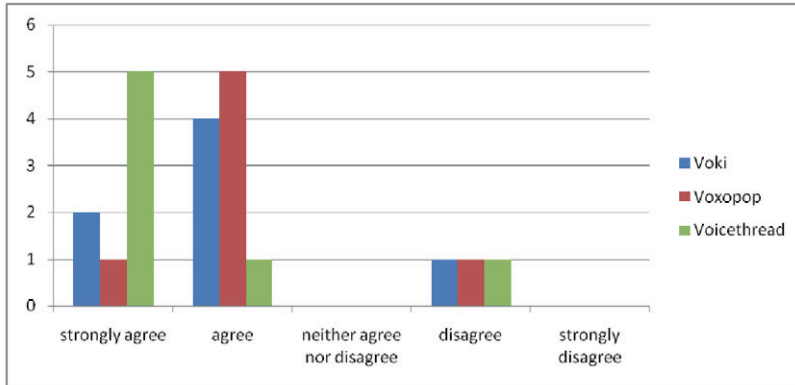

Figure 10. Listening to peers' recordings.

As shown in Figure 10, the majority of the students were actively involved in listening to their peers' recordings before and/or while creating their own ones across all three technologies. This is especially illustrated in case of VoiceThread, where five students strongly agreed with the statement. In regard to this, during the interview the students were asked to provide reasons of listening or not listening to their peers. Thus, the students listened to their peers, because

- they were curious how their peers answered the question

- they wanted to know what words their peers used in their speech

As depicted in Figure 10, there was only one student that did not listen to his peers' recordings before and/ or while creating his own ones. As it was revealed

during the interview he listened to his peers' recordings only after the completion of his recordings in order not to be affected by his peers' answers.

Thus, we may infer that overall the students were engaged with listening to their peers' recordings before and or while creating their own ones especially in case of VoiceThread.
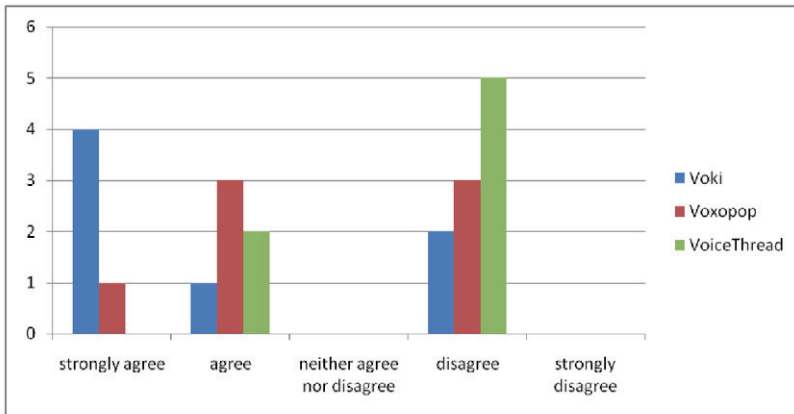

Figure 11. Showing recordings to others.

As Figure 11 dispalys, the majority of the students showed their Voxopop and especially, Voki assignments to their parents, friends, relatives, etc. It was interesting to see that the most of the students did not show their Voicethread assignments to anyone else.

In regard to this, the students were asked to provide the reasons of showing or not showing their assignments to their parents/relatives/friends, etc. Thus, as it was revealed, the students were especially excited about showing their Voki and Voxopop assignments since they were the first two technology assignments that they had ever done. So, this can be seen as another limitation of the study, because

if the technologies were alternated in a completely different order, we would have different results.
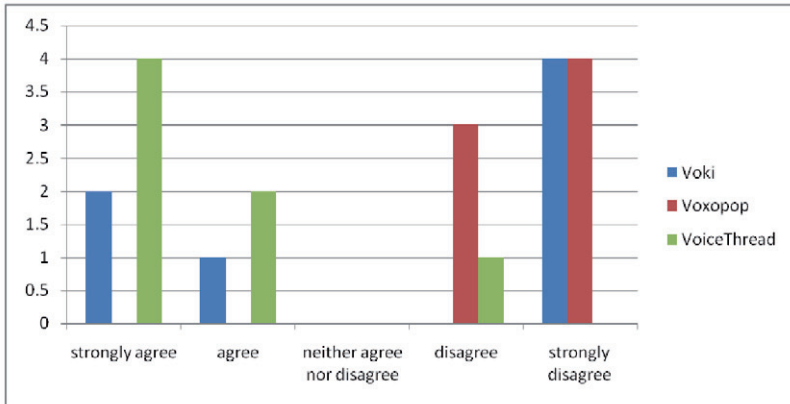

Figure 12. Use of technologies outside the school.

As Figure 12 shows, none of the students expressed their wish to use Voxopop outside school requirements. On the other hand, the majority of the students strongly agreed with the statements of using VoiceThread beyond the classroom walls.

During the interview it was found out that the majority of the students, especially the boys aged from 12-15, did not want to use Voki outside school requirements, because they considered it a "childish" tool. This was also reflected in their reflections. On the other hand, the younger students aged from 10-12 years old, liked Voki very much.

Thus, we may infer that the younger students loved Voki more than the older ones. In terms of Voxopop, the students gave mainly negative answers based on previously mentioned problems. In regard to VoiceThread, nearly all the students

agreed to use that tool outside school requirements, because it was very easy to use and they nearly had no technical problems.

During the interview the students were also asked whether they would like to have such kind of technology assignments during the next semester and if yes, what kind of technology exactly. The students' answers, which were mainly positive in terms of VoiceThread, are as follows:

- Five students expressed their wish to use VoiceThread.

- Two students expressed their wish to use Voki.

- One student expressed his wish to use Voxopop.

For the purpose of finding out the students' social engagement with the technologies, also a few open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire. Table 8 displays information concerning the students' answers to the first question.

Table 8

Referring to One's Own Recording after Posting

Technology	Mean	Standard Deviation
Voki	2	1.3
Voxopop	2	3.4
VoiceThread	3	.75

As shown in Table 8, the students' answers nearly do not vary across all the three technologies. However, in case of VoiceThread the students on average went back to their recordings more as opposed to the other technologies.

Table 9

Listening to Peers' Recordings

Technology	Mean	Standard Deviation
Voki	2	.75
Voxopop	2	.97
VoiceThread	2	1.6

It was also interesting to find out how many times the students listened to their peers' recordings. As Table 9 displays, in case of all three technologies, the students on average listened to their peers twice.

The last item of the questionnaire was the following open-ended question:

Apart from our classroom blog, did you publish your Voki/Voxopop/VoiceThread on other websites (such as personal blogs, website, etc.) or send it to your friends via email?

All of the students gave negative results to the above mentioned question. As apparent from the interview, the students did not publish any of their recordings, because

- they did not want others to listen to their recordings
- some of them were shy of their pronunciation and the way their voice sounded
- some of them thought the others would have no idea what they were talking about

Apart from these items, such factors as whether the students commented on each other's posts or on each other's comments were explored based on the analysis of students' online behavior. However, as it was revealed, none of the students commented on their peers' posts. In order to find out the underlying reason of it,

the following question was posed during the interview: "What was the reason of not commenting on your peers' recordings?". As it was revealed from the answers, the main reasons were because

- the students were shy to do so

- they were afraid that their peers would not like their comments

- it was somehow unusual for them

- none of their peers commented

In regard to the last point, we might infer that the students were waiting for someone to give a start. Thus, none of the students wanted to be the first person.

To sum up, if we analyze the findings that we have presented so far, we may conclude that the students were mainly not socially engaged with the technologies. However, based on the provided results we might conclude that in terms of social engagement VoiceThread seems to be the optimal tool among the students.

Apart from this, during the interview the students were asked to rank the technologies in terms of social engagement in the order of 1-3, where number one was the technology in case of which the students were mostly socially engaged, number two was the technology that the students were less socially engaged as opposed to the first one, and number three was the technology the students were least socially engaged. This was done for the purpose of finding out whether there was a gap among the students' answers given during and at the end of the study. Thus, the students answers are depicted in Table 10.

Table 10

Students' Rankings of the Tools in terms of Social Engagement

Technology	A total of votes for the first place	A total of votes for the second place	A total of votes for the third place
VoiceThread	4	3	0
Voxopop	2	1	4
Voki	1	3	3

As shown in Table 10, none of the students ranked VoiceThread in the third place. Moreover, most of them ranked this tool in the first place. Thus, based on the results, it maybe concluded that VoiceThread seems to be the optimal tool in terms of social engagement.

4.5 Analysis of Students' Reflections

In order to find out the students' attitude concerning the use of the technologies for practicing speaking English at home, the students were assigned to write reflections after the completion of all the assignments per each technology. The students' reflections were mainly written around two themes: whether they enjoyed using the tools for the purpose of practicing speaking and what they liked or disliked about each tool.

4.5.1 Students' reflections about Voki. All the six students expressed positive opinion in regard to using Voki for their speaking purposes. Only one student confessed that he did not like Voki because of its constant technical problems. The table below summarizes the students' likes and dislikes about Voki.

Table 11

Students' Likes and Dislikes about Voki

Likes	Dislikes
Beautiful design	Technical problems with recording
Ease of use	Limited choice of avatars, cool ones only available for Voki classroom
Interesting and creative	Bad voice quality

4.5.2 Students' reflections about Voxopop. Students' reflections in regard to Voxopop were both negative and positive. Four students did not enjoy using it because of its technical problems. However, all of the students mentioned that it was a good tool for practicing speaking. The table below summarizes what the students liked and disliked about using Voxopop.

Table 12

Students' Likes and Dislikes about Voxopop

Likes	Dislikes
Well-organized in terms of talk groups	Hard to use
All the peers' answers are in one place	Technical problems with recording
	Installation of Java and Flash Player

4.5.3 Students' reflections about VoiceThread. It should be noted that all the reflections in regard to VoiceThread were only positive. All the seven students reported that they enjoyed using VoiceThread for the purpose of practicing speaking at home. The table below summarizes what students liked and disliked about using VoiceThread.

Table 13

Students Likes and Dislikes about VoiceThread

Likes	Dislikes
Very easy to use	--------
Time-saving	--------
No technical issues	--------

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The following chapter summarizes the findings of the study and compares them with those of previous studies in the field. Also, it discusses the pedagogical implications of the study, its limitations and delimitations. Finally, it provides suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The main purpose of the study was to explore the optimal tool from among Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread for the purpose of practicing speaking beyond the classroom walls among EEC students based on such criteria, as usability, students' engagement with language use and social engagement. The study also aimed at revealing the students' attitude towards the implementation of the technologies for the purpose of practicing speaking at home. Thus, the following research question was addressed:

What is the optimal tool from among Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread for practicing speaking outside the classroom among EEC students in terms of

- their usability
- students' engagement with language use
- social engagement ?

The interesting fact was that initially it was thought that the optimal tool would be only one of the aforementioned technologies based on the provided criteria. However, as the findings show, in terms of each criteria there is a shift from one technology to another. In particular, based on the findings drawn from the questionnaires, interview and students' online behavior, in terms of usability the optimal tool among EEC students appears to be VoiceThread, because it was very easy to use and caused students no technical problems. Moreover, none of the

students mentioned any negative aspect of the tool in their reflections. It should be mentioned that the findings are in line with those reported earlier by McCormack (2010) and Ching & Hsu (2013) stating that VoiceThread is a user-friendly technology.

In terms of the students' engagement with language use, the findings obtained from the questionnaires, interview and students' online behavior indicate that the optimal tool among the students seems to be Voxopop. However, as it was revealed from the interview with the students, the main reason was the type of the task. As stated by the students, the task was such that it required them to use additional materials. Hence, the students spent a considerable amount of time on looking for the necessary information, and since there were many details to report, the students' speech duration was longer in case of Voxopop. Moreover, since most of the information was a verbatim report, the students' speech included subject-specific words and expressions not covered during the classroom. This was the reason why the students' language varied in case of this very technology.

In regard to social engagement, the findings drawn from the questionnaires, interviews and students' online behavior show that the optimal tool seems to be VoiceThread. Moreover, as apparent from the questionnaire and interview, six students expressed their wish to use the technology outside the school requirements and five students reported that they would like to use the tool during the next semester. However, it should be noted that the students were not so much socially engaged with any of these three technologies. As it was revealed from the analysis of students' online behavior, none of the students commented on their peers' recordings and there was no interaction between them. Besides, as it was explored from the questionnaire, none of the students published their recordings on other

websites. In addition to this, none of the students expressed their wish to publish their recordings in the future.

In regard to the students' attitude towards the use of these technologies for the purpose of practicing speaking at home, only positive answers were given in case of all three technologies. Despite the fact that the students had some technical problems with some of the tools, they all agreed that the technologies were useful for practicing speaking skills, because they gave them an opportunity to practice speaking beyond the classroom walls, to use the newly learnt vocabulary and to practice pronunciation. Although all the students expressed their positive attitude toward the use of these technologies for the purpose of practicing speaking, it was only in case of VoiceThread that the majority of the students expressed their wish to use it both during the next semester and outside school requirements.

Concerning Voxopop, none of the students was going to use it outside school requirements. In addition to it, during the interview it was found out that there was only one student who expressed his wish to use the tool during the next semester. The reason of the students' negative answers was because of the constant problems the students encountered while using the tool.

Based on all the negative responses given by the students so far, we may infer that Voxopop requires its users many things to do, in particular, open Voxpop with the browsers it works well, download special programs and then make some necessary adjustments. This is, perhaps, the reason of the students' negative attitude towards this tool.

In terms of Voki, only three students reported that they would use the tool outside the school requirements. What concerns to using the tool during the next semester, only two students gave positive answer. This maybe explained by the constant recording problems that the students had experienced. As a result, only

four of them were able to do their Voki assignments. Thus, because of the technical problems, the rest of the students were deprived of the opportunity to use the tool. Perhaps all these factors contributed to the fact that Voki didn't turn out to be an optimal tool in any of the given criteria. In regard to one minute talk limit, all of the partcipants stated that it was quite enough for answering the question. However, findings of the current study are not consistent with those reported by Zargaryan (2012), where most of the students mentioned that one-minute was not enough for them to complete the assignments.

To sum up, the study explored two optimal tools for the purpose of practicing speaking at home among EEC students. In particular, in terms of usability and social engagement, the optimal technology seemed to be VoiceThread, while in terms of students' engagement with language use the optimal one appeared to be Voxopop.

5.2 Pedagogical Implications

Taking into account all the students' positive attitude towards the use of VoiceThread for the purpose of practicing speaking English at home and the fact that it has appeared to be the optimal tool in terms of usability and social engagement, we would recommend EEC teachers to incorporate this tool into their lessons, thus creating new learning opportunities for the EEC students and giving them an opportunity to practice speaking at home. The only challenge of the implementation might be the fact that VoiceThread is not completely free of charge. However, taking into consideration the findings of the present and previous studies (Ching & Hsu, 2013; Dunn, 2012; McCormack,2010) which state the usefulness of VoiceThread as a language learning tool, it might be worth paying for it.

Concerning Voxopop, the findings of the study showed that most of the students had negative attitude towards this tool. However, despite that fact, five students out of seven were able to do their both Voxopop assignments. Overall, the teachers could also consider incorporating Voxopop into their curriculum. For that, they are recommended to provide the students various guidelines and tutorials concerning the use of the tool and the installation of the programs.

5.3 Limitations

Throughout the study, a number of limitations have been revealed. Firstly, the study was not conducted on a longitudinal basis and lasted only 10 weeks. In fact, the time restriction affected the number of the technology tasks to be chosen, as a result of which only two speaking tasks per each technology were selected, which seemed to be not enough for the participants to thoroughly explore the technologies. Besides, the sample consisted of only seven students, which means that the results of the study cannot be generalized to larger contexts. Another limitation of the study refers to the alternation of the technologies. Initially, a choice was made to alternate the technologies in a recycling manner, meaning that the students would do the first task of one technology and then switch to completing the first task of the second tool and so forth. However, taking into consideartion the novelty of the technologies and the time restrictions, a decision was made to explore each technology one by one, i.e., do all the two speaking tasks per one technology and then start exploring the second and third ones.

Thus, as it was revealed during the study, the alternation of the technologies affected some of the students' answers. In particular, the findings showed that the students showed only their Voki and Voxopop assignments to their parents, friends and relatives just because of the fact that those were their first technology

assignments. Thus, we may infer that the study would yield completely different results may we have different type of alternation.

The type of the task was another shortcoming of the study. Although the researcher did her best to design all the speaking tasks in a way that would be of the same type across all three technologies, it was found out that the first Voxopop task was a little bit different from the other assignments in that it required the students to use additional materials and this had "chain influence" on the students' answers. In particular, the students spent considerable amount of time on looking for additional sources, which resulted in the fact that in case of Voxopop students spent more time on completion of an assignment and since there were many details to report, it happened so that the students speech duration was longer in case of Voxopop. As a result, it was concluded that Voxopop turned out to be the optimal tool because of the type of the task.

5.4 Delimitations

The delimitation of the study was that it was conducted in EEC and the results of the study are limited to that context. Besides, the results were based on pre-intermediate level students' answers. Another delimitation is the way we have defined the three criteria. In particular they were defined as follows:

- Usability of the technology was defined as to what extent the technology was easier to learn, how user-friendly was the overall design, how useful was the technology in operating particular tasks and whether it caused any problems to its users.

- Students' engagement with language use was defined in terms of how much time the students spent on completion of one assignment, how long the duration of their speech was, whether they used additional materials or read

from the scripts while recording themselves, as well as how many times they re-recorded themselves or whether they edited their recordings after some time before posting it.

- Social engagement was defined in terms of showing the recordings to friends, parents, relatives, willing to use the tools outside the school requirements, publishing the recordings on other social media, listening to peers' recordings, referring back to one's own recordings after posting them, as well as commenting on peers' recordings or on peers' comments.

To sum up, the optimal tools of the study were determined based on the above mentioned criteria, which means that in case of different definitions of the criteria, the study might yield different results.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

Taking into account the fact that the study had a very small sample and was carried out with pre-intermediate level students, a similar study could be conducted with a relatively large sample and with different proficiency level students. In addition to this, the setting could be extended to colleges, universities and language centers. Besides, it is recommended for future studies to alternate the technologies in a recycling manner in order to escape some of the limitations listed in the study. Also, it would be very interesting to carry out a study with the aim of finding out the impact of VoiceThread on students' oral proficiency.

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APPENDICES

QUESTIONNAIRES

Voki Questionnaire

Age _____

Gender _____

Please respond to the following statements by either agreeing or disagreeing.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.Voki is a useful tool for practicing speaking.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. The Voki webpage was easy to use.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Registering on the Voki website was a simple task.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Sharing my Voki was a simple task.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. I was reading from the script (a text written out in advance) when recording. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

6. I used additional materials (printed or online) for completing my Voki assignments. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

7. I edited my Voki after some time before posting it on our classroom blog. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

8. Before and/or while creating my Voki, I listened to my peers' Vokis. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

9. I showed my Voki assignments to my parents/friends/classmates/etc. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

10. I am planning to use Voki outside school requirements. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Please indicate your response to the following questions.

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
11. How often did you have problems with Voki?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. How often did you have problems with recording your voice on Voki?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please write down your answers to the following question.

13. How many times did you re-record yourself for completion of one assignment via Voki ?

_____

14. On average, how much time did you spend on completing every Voki assignment?

_____

15. How many times did you go back to your own Voki recording after posting it?

_____

16. How many times did you listened to your peers' Vokis?

_____

17. Apart from our classroom blog, did you publish your Voki on other websites (such as personal blogs, website) or send it to your

friends   via   email?
_____

VOKI QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGE

Անուն _____

Տարիք _____

Արտահայտեք ձեր կարծիքը հետևյալ պնդումների վերաբերյալ:

	Լիովին համաձայն եմ	Համաձայն եմ	Ոչ համաձայն եմ, ոչ էլ համաձայն չեմ	Համաձայն չեմ	Լիովին համաձայն չեմ
1. Վոկի-ն նպաստում է խոսակցական հմտությունների բարելավմանը:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Վոկի վերկայքը հեշտ էր օգտագործել:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.Վոկի վերկայքում գրանցվելը հեշտ էր:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. Վոկի-ն տարածելը հեշտ էր (ձեր ստեղծած վոկի-ի հասցեն):

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

5.Վոկիի առաջադրանքները կատարելիս ես կարդում էի տետրից:

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

6. Ես օգտվում էի լրացուցիչ նյութերից վոկիի առաջադրանքները կատարելիս:

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

7. Մինչ բլոգում իմ վոկի-ն տեղադրելը, ես այն ենթարկել եմ որոշակի փոփոխությունների:

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

8. Իմ վոկին ստեղծելուց առաջ/ ընթացքում ես լսել եմ իմ ընկերների վոկիները

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

9. Ես ցույց եմ տվել իմ վոկի-ի առաջադրանքները իմ ծնողներին, ընկերներին, դասընկերներին և այլն:

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

10. Ես պատրաստվում եմ օգտագործել վոկի-ն նաև դասի շրջանակներից դուրս:

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Պատասխանեք հետևյալ հարցերին ընտրելով տարբերակներից մեկը:

	Միշտ	Հաճախ	Երբեմն	Հազվադեպ	Երբեք
11. Ինչքա՞ն հաճախ եք խնդիրներ ունեցել վոկի -ի հետ:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Ինչքա՞ն հաճախ եք խնդիրներ ունեցել ձեր ձայնը վոկի-ով ձայնագրելիս:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Խնդրում եմ գրեք հետևյալ հարցերի պատասխանները:

13. Քա՞նի անգամ ես ձայնագրել ինքդ քեզ վոկիի մեկ առաջադրանքը կատարելու համար:

_____

14. Միջին հաշվարկով, ինչքա՞ն ժամանակ ես ծախսել վոկիի յուրաքանչյուր առաջադրանքը կատարելու համար:

_____

15. Քա՞նի անգամ ես վերադիտել քո վոկի-ն այն բլոգում տեղադրելուց հետո:

_____

16.Քա՞նի անգամ ես դու լսել քո ընկերների վոկի -ները:

_____

17. Բացի դասարանի բլոգում քո վոկի-ն տեղադրելուց, արդյոք դու այն տեղադրել ես նաև այլ կայքերում (անձնական բլոգ կամ ուղարկել քո ընկեր/ընկերների էլեկտրոնային հասցեներին):

_____

VOXOPOP QUESTIONNAIRE

Age _____

Gender _____

Please respond to the following statements by either agreeing or disagreeing.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.Voxopop is a useful tool for practicing speaking.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. The Voxopop webpage was easy to use.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Registering on the Voxopop website was a simple task.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Sharing my Voxopop was a simple task.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I was reading from the script (a text written out in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

advance) when recording.

6. I used additional materials (printed or online) for completing my Voxopop assignments.

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

7. I edited my Voxopop after some time before posting it on our talkgroup.

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

8. Before and/or while creating my Voxopop, I listened to my peers' Voxopops.

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

9. I showed my Voxopop assignments to my parents/friends/classmates/etc.

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

10. I am planning to use Voxopop outside school requirements.

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Please indicate your response to the following questions.

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
11. How often did you have problems with Voxopop?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. How often did you have problems with recording your voice on Voxopop?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please write down your answers to the following question.

13. How many times did you re-record yourself for completion of one assignment via Voxopop ?

_____

14. On average, how much time did you spend on completing every Voxopop assignment?

_____

15. How many times did you go back to your own Voxopop recording after posting it?

_____

16. How many times did you listened to your peers' Voxopops?

_____

17. Apart from our classroom blog, did you publish your Voxopop on other websites (such as personal blogs, website) or send it to your friends via email?

_____

VOXOPOP QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGE

Մեռ _____

Տարիք _____

Արտահայտեք ձեր կարծիքը հետևյալ պնդումների վերաբերյալ:

	Լիովին համաձայն եմ	Համաձայն եմ	Ոչ համաձայն եմ, ոչ էլ համաձայն չեմ	Համաձայն չեմ	Լիովին համաձայն չեմ
1. Վոքսոփոփը նպաստում է խոսակցական հմտությունների բարելավմանը:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Վոքսոփոփի վերկայքը հեշտ էր օգտագործել:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Վոքսոփոփի վերկայքում	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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գրանցվելը հեշտ էր:

4.   Վոքսոփոփը
տարաձելը   հեշտ   էր
(Ձեր   ստեղծած☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
վոքսոփոփի-ի
հասցեն):

5.Վոքսոփոփի
առաջադրանքները
կատարելիս   ես☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
կարդում էի տետրից:

6. Ես   օգտվում   էի
լրացուցիչ   նյութերից
վոքսոփոփի   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
առաջադրանքները
կատարելիս:

7.Վոքսոփոփի
առաջադրանքը
խմբում   տեղադրելուց☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

որոշ ժամանակ անց
ես այն չնչել եմ և
նորից ձայանագրել
որոշակի
փոփոխություններ
կատարելով:

8. Իմ վրքստփոփը
ստեղծելուց առաջ/
ընթացքում ես լսել եմ
իմ ընկերների
վրքստփոփերը

9. Ես ցույց եմ տվել իմ
վրքստփոփ-ի
առաջադրանքերը իմ
ծնողներին,
ընկերներին,
դասընկերներին և
այլն:

10. Ես պատրաստվում եմ oգտագործել վոքսոփոնը նանԼ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ դասի շրջանակներից դուրս:

Պատասխանեք հետևյալ հարցերին ընտրելով տարբերակներից մեկը:

	Միշտ	Հաճախ	Երբեմն	Հազվադեպ	Երբեք
11. Ինչքա՞ն հաճախ եք խնդիրներ ունեցել վոքսոփոնի հետ:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Ինչքա՞ն հաճախ եք խնդիրներ ունեցել ձեր ձայնը վոքսոփոֆ-ով ձայնագրելիս:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Խնդրում եմ գրեք հետևյալ հարցերի պատասխանները:

13.Քա՞նի անգամ ես ձայնագրել ինքդ քեզ վոքսոփոֆի մեկ առաջադրանքը կատարելու համար:

_____

14. Միջին հաշվարկով, ինչքա՞ն ժամանակ ես ծախսել վոքսոփոֆի յուրաքանչյուր առաջադրանքը կատարելու համար:

_____

15.Քա՞նի անգամ ես վերադիտել քո վոքսոփոֆ-ն այն վեջնականապես ավարտելուց հետո:

_____

16.Քա՞նի անգամ ես դու լսել քո ընկերների վոքսոփոֆերը:

_____

17. Բացի դասարանի բլոգում քո վոքսոփոֆ-ն տեղադրելուց, արդյո՞ք դու այն տեղադրել ես նաև այլ կայքերում (անձնական բլոգ կամ ուղարկել քո ընկեր/ընկերների   Էլեկտրոնային հասցեներին):

_____

VOICETHREAD QUESTIONNAIRE

Age _____

Gender _____

Please respond to the following statements by either agreeing or disagreeing.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. VoiceThread is a useful tool for practicing speaking.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. The VoiceThread webpage was easy to use.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Registering on the VoiceThread website was a simple task.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Sharing my VoiceThread was a simple task.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I was reading from the script (a text written out in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

advance) when recording.

6. I used additional materials (printed or online) for completing my VoiceThread assignments. ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

7. I edited my VoiceThread after some time before posting it on our classroom blog. ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

8. Before and/or while creating my VoiceThread, I listened to my peers. ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

9. I showed my VoiceThread assignments to my parents/friends/classmates/etc. ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

10. I am planning to use VoiceThread outside school requirements. ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Please indicate your response to the following questions.

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
11. How often did you have problems with VoiceThread?	▢	▢	▢	▢	▢
12. How often did you have problems with recording your voice on VoiceThread?	▢	▢	▢	▢	▢

Please write down your answers to the following question.

13. How many times did you re-record yourself for completion of one assignment via VoiceThread?

_____

14. On average, how much time did you spend on completing every VoiceThread assignment?

_____

15. How many times did you go back to your own VoiceThread recording after posting it?

_____

16. How many times did you listened to your peers' VoiceThread?

_____

17. Apart from our classroom blog, did you publish your VoiceThread on other websites (such as personal blogs, website) or send it to your friends via email?

_____

Սեռ _____

Տարիք _____

Արտահայտեք ձեր կարծիքը հետևյալ պնդումների վերաբերյալ:

	Լիովին համաձայն եմ	Համաձայն եմ	Ոչ համաձայն եմ, ոչ էլ համաձայն չեմ	Համաձայն չեմ	Լիովին համաձայն չեմ
1. Վույթրեդը նպաստում է խոսակցական հմտությունների բարելավմանը:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Վույթրեդի վերկայքը հեշտ էր օգտագործել:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Վույթրեդի վերկայքում գրանցվելը հեշտ էր:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4.　　　Վոյսթերը
տարածելը հեշտ էր
(ձեր　　　ստեղծած □　　　　□　　　　　□　　　　　□　　　　　□
վոյսթեր -ի
հասցեն):

5.Վոյսթերի
առաջադրանքերը
կատարելիս　　ես □　　　　□　　　　　□　　　　　□　　　　　□
կարդում　　　Էի
տետրից:

6.Ես　օգտվում　Էի
լրացուցիչ
նյութերից
Վոյսթերի　　　　　　□　　　　□　　　　　□　　　　　□　　　　　□
առաջադրանքերը
կատարելիս :

7.Վոյսթերի
առաջադրանքը
իմբում
տեղադրելուց

որո շ ժամանակ անց
ես այն չն ջ ել եմ և
նորից ձայ ն ագր ել
որո շ ակ ի
փոփոխու թյ ու ննե ր
կատար ե լ ո վ :

8.Ես ցու յ ց եմ տվ ե լ
իմ   վ ո յ ս թր ե դ ի
առ ա ջ ադ ր ան ք ն ե ր ը
իմ   ծ ն ո ղ ն ե ր ին ,
ը ն կ ե ր ն ե ր ին ,
դ ա ս ը ն կ ե ր ն ե ր ին   և
այ լ ն :

9.Ես   պ ա տ ր ա ս տ վ ո ւ մ
եմ   օ գ տ ա գ ո ր ծ ե լ
վ ո յ ս թ ր ե դ ը   ն ա և
դ ա ս ի
շ ր ջ ա ն ա կ ն ե ր ի ց
դ ո ւ ր ս :

Պ ա տ ա ս խ ա ն ե ք   հ ե տ և յ ա լ   հ ա ր ց ե ր ին   ը ն տ ր ե լ ո վ
տ ա ր բ ե ր ա կ ն ե ր ի ց մ ե կ ը :

	Միշտ	Հաճախ	Երբեմն	
				Հազվադեպ/երբեք

11.Ինչ քա՞ն հաճախ եք խնդիրներ ունեցել վոյ ս թ ր ե դ ի հետ: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

12.Ինչ քա՞ն հաճախ եք խնդիրներ ունեցել ձեր ձայնը վոյ ս թ ե դ ո վ -ով ձայ ն ագ ր ե լ ի ս : ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Խնդրում եմ գրեք հետևյալ հարցերի պատասխանները:

13. Քա՞ նի անգամ ես ձայնագրել ինքդ քեզ վոյ ս թ ր ե դ ի մեկ առաջադրանքը կատարելու համար :

_____

14. Միջին հաշվարկով, ինչ քա՞ ն ժամանակ ես ծախսել վոյ ս թ ր ե դ ի յ ու ր աք ան չ յ ու ր առաջադրանքը կատարելու համար:

_____

85

15. Քա՞նի անգամ ես վերադիտել քո վոյսթրեդն այն վեջնականապես ավարտելուց հետո:

_____

16. Քա՞նի անգամ ես դու լսել քո ընկերների վոյսթրեդները:

_____

17. Բացի դասարանի բլոգում քո վոքսոփոփ -ն տեղադրելուց, արդյո՞ք դու այն տեղադրել ես նաև այլ կայքերում (անձնական բլոգ կամ ուղղարկել քո ընկեր/ընկերների Էլեկտրոնային հասցեներին):_____ _____

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

1. In terms of usability, can you rank Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread in the order of 1-3, which stand for "most to least" user-friendly technologies.

2**.** Why do you think these tools are useful for practicing speaking skills?

3. Why was it difficult to use the Voxopop webpage?

4. In terms of your engagement with language use, can you rank Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread in the order of 1-3, where number 1 is the technology in case of which you were mostly engaged with language use, number 2 is the technology that you were less engaged with language use as opposed to the first one, and number three is the one during which you were least engaged with the language use.

5. What was the reason of reading from the scripts?

6. Can reading from the scripts help students to improve their speaking skills?

7. What was the reason of using additional materials mainly in case of Voxpop?

8. What was the reason of not edit your recordings after some time before posting it?

9. What was the reason of editing yor recording after some time before editig it?

10. Whether one-minute talk limitation of Voki were enough for you to answer the questions?

11. What was the reason that you showed mainly your Voki and Voxopop assignments to your parents, relatives, friends, etc.?

12. In terms of social engagement, can you rank Voki, Voxopop and VoiceThread in the order of 1-3, where number 1 is the technology in case of which you were mostly socially engaged , number 2 is the technology that you were less socially engaged as opposed to the first one, and number three was the technology during

which you were least socially engaged.

13. What was the reason of listening or not listening to your peers' recordings?

14. Would you like to use any of these technologies during next semester and if yes, which one/ones?

15. What was the reason of not commenting on your peers' recordings?

16. What was the reason of not publishing your Vokis/Voxopops/VoiceThraeds on other websites?

APPENDIX C

TECHNOLOGY ASSIGNMENTS

Voki

Task 1. Do you love to laugh? Why? How often do you laugh? In what situations can you easily have a good laugh? Bring specific reasons and examples in order to support your opinion.

Task 2. Choose one of the pictures provided below and try to describe it. What can you see? What is happening ? Are the children having fun?

1.

2.

3.

4.

VOXOPOP

Task 1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word disaster? What do you think what's the worst disaster that your country has experienced? Why do you think it is the worst one?

Task 2. Choose one of the pictures provided below and describe it. What can you see? What's happening? How do the people feel?

1.

2.

3.

4.

VOICETHREAD

Task 1. Where do you usually go for a holiday and where do you stay? What was the most exciting holiday you have had experienced so far? Why it was the most exciting holiday?

Task 2. Choose one of the pictures provided below and describe it. What type of house it is? Would you like to live in it? Why?

1.

2.

3.

4.

APPENDIX D

STUDENTS' RECORDINGS

http://www.voki.com/pickup.php?scid=9273690&height=267&width=200

http://www.voki.com/pickup.php?scid=9276532&height=267&width=200

http://www.voki.com/pickup.php?scid=9267116&height=267&width=200

http://www.voki.com/pickup.php?scid=9318075&height=267&width=200

http://www.voki.com/pickup.php?scid=9319527&height=267&width=200

http://www.voki.com/pickup.php?scid=9323006&height=267&width=200

http://www.voxopop.com/topic/722018d7-01ef-476a-868b-4bbc9f2fc8f2

http://www.voxopop.com/topic/7faf29ed-8f4e-44fc-b305-eeb4b6e42703

http://voicethread.com/share/5470579/

http://voicethread.com/#q.b5513039.i28066726

https://voicethread.com/#q.b5507308.i28035382

https://voicethread.com/#q.b5504559.i28018611

http://voicethread.com/#q.b5503872.i28015408

http://voicethread.com/#q.b5503667.i28014482

http://voicethread.com/#q.b5503783