Enhancing Authenticity in College Level English Classrooms via Instructional Technology

Nur Gedik Bal
Social Sciences University of Ankara, Turkey
<nur.gedikbal@asbu.edu.tr>

Perihan Savas
Middle East Technical University, Turkey
<perihans@metu.edu.tr>

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners' perceptions on the use of technology integrated authentic tasks and determine whether there is a change in students' perceptions of the ability to use authentic tasks in real life before and after the implementation. Participants were 57 young adult learners at the tertiary level. The data collection process took place in two academic semesters in which there were three phases: pre-survey, task implementation, and post-survey. Pre-survey included questions regarding the competency in performing authentic tasks and technology use. In post-survey, pre-survey questions were included and tasks were assessed in terms of their contribution to language learning. Quantitative data were analysed via Descriptive Statistics, ANOVA Test, and Paired-Samples T-Test whereas the qualitative data were analysed via constant comparison method. The results indicated that learners regarded most of the tasks necessary and they appreciated their contribution to language learning. Learners also provided their suggestions for the improvement of certain tasks as well as the variety of the topics chosen and the overall procedure. This study might contribute to program and material developers, language teachers, and researchers in the use and study of instructional technology (IT) to promote authentic language learning tasks.

Keywords: instructional technology; language learning; authenticity; Web 2.0 tools; mixed method

English as a second language (ESL) environment can be considered more advantageous than an English as a foreign language (EFL) setting since ESL learners' exposure to the target language is not limited to the interaction in the classroom. ESL learners have a better chance to reach authentic use of language outside the classroom and interact with native people to practice English (Ozverir & Herrington, 2011).

Mishan and Strunz (2003) suggest that advertisements, newspaper articles, books, photographs, leaflets, etc. have been used to create authenticity, yet these texts have formed only "cosmetic authenticity" (p. 239). The reason for this inauthenticity may not be necessarily about the materials brought into the classroom but possibly because of the types of tasks utilized in the classroom. As learners read these authentic texts and answer comprehension questions with multiple-choice items or true false activities, learners' interaction with the text does not necessarily end in any real-world language competency. This results from the priority given to the comprehension of the authentic text rather than the appreciation of the communicative function of this authentic text. Communicative function is the relevance of the task to the purposes for which individuals read an article and listen to a lecture or online news. In real life, people read or listen to be informed about something or use that knowledge to create or perform another task. Mishan (2005) listed many communicative aims like informing, persuading, comparing, analysing, reporting, etc. That is, individuals use the language for such purposes in life not to answer comprehension questions. Therefore, language tasks might be designed considering those communicative purposes.

To have authentic learning environments where learners can use the knowledge and expertise they acquired and share with their peers, there are certain requirements listed by Herrington and Oliver (2000) in their fully-fledged review of literature in situated cognitive and authentic learning contexts. With the application of these characteristics of authentic learning environments, learners can be provided with a chance to proceed to the production step and connect their learning to their real-world through completing tasks that entail their use of multiple sources, creativity, collaboration, and reflection. Nonetheless, it should also be noted that much research needs to be carried out on how to use authentic learning environments effectively in classrooms although they are intuitively appealing (Herrington & Kervin, 2007).

From a sociocognitive perspective, integration of instructional technology (IT) in language classes is indispensable in terms of offering learners an authentic learning environment as technology provides learners with the authentic social interaction which is required not only for comprehensible input but also for the practice of communication that learners will encounter outside the classroom (Warschauer & Meskill, 2000). As Shetzer and Warschauer (2000) indicated, integration of technology in language classrooms will also equip learners with life-long learning strategies to become autonomous learners as they take responsibility for their learning, select their own materials and determine the pace of their learning. Moreover, learners can enjoy the use of technology in language learning in a digital age where everything is performed with a click on the button. As Prensky (2001) suggests, digital natives appreciate technology for being connected to the network and immediate access to the information besides multi-tasking.

On the other hand, Zhang and Zhu (2020) also found out that blended learning model is more effective than face-to-face and online mode in many aspects. Therefore, integrating IT in language classrooms with a blended learning approach provides 'maximum benefit from the technology affordances while retaining the best features of face-to-face teaching which makes it so ideal for supporting authentic activities within the learning designs' (Oliver, Herrington, & Reeves, 2006). However, IT and authenticity in EFL classrooms should be studied in detail in distinctive settings so that classroom practices can lead to the most productive and effective use of IT for a genuine language learning environment. In the same vein, learners' perceptions of their experiences with such learning environments and technological tools are also crucial to enlighten the effectiveness of the integration of technology and authenticity. To summarize, there must be some investigation into the use of authentic tasks with the technological tools and the Internet sources in EFL to assess the applicability and effectiveness of them and enhance some pedagogy for the integration of those tasks in the EFL context.

Furthermore, being in an EFL environment, students in Turkey have limited interactions with authentic language, materials and content. Majority of language teaching institutions provide English teaching and learning materials that are mainly geared towards EFL context, which can cause unnatural language production and demotivation among learners. In addition, the Internet has a great potential in providing EFL teachers in incorporating authentic language into their classes. However, in light of the literature that is carried out, the number of studies focusing on learners' perspectives in relation to CALL and authentic material/task use is scarce. Thus, as researchers we wanted to investigate whether making use of instructional technology, websites and Web 2.0 tools that are used by native speakers of English would make a difference in students' perceptions in learning English.

As a result, the study aimed to investigate 57 EFL learners' perceptions on the effectiveness of technologically supported EFL authentic tasks and determine whether there is a change in students' perceptions of ability to use EFL authentic tasks in real life before and after the implementation. In the light of these, the following research questions were formulated:

(1) How did the implementation of instructional technology supported authentic EFL tasks affect the learners' perceptions of their competency:

 a. in the use of English in real life settings?

 b. in technology use?

(2) What are the EFL learners':

 a. perceptions of importance and necessity of the instructional technology supported authentic tasks for language learning?

 b. perceptions of feeling of enjoyment during the completion of the instructional technology supported authentic tasks?

 c. perceptions of contribution of the instructional technology supported authentic tasks to language learning?

 d. suggestions for the new authentic tasks and technological tools for language learning?

Authenticity and instructional technology

In this digital age, people are gradually becoming more in contact with technological tools and online sources. Laptop computers, tablets, and smartphones facilitate access to information anywhere and anytime. Therefore, language teachers may also want to be equipped with certain skills so that they can utilize many ESL- EFL websites or programs for their learners, as there are a number of benefits of purpose-built language learning websites in online environments. As Savas (2019) acknowledged, in accordance with their teaching purposes, language teachers have been exploiting the social media and mobile applications more with the appearance of Web 2.0 tools. However, instead of using technology to transfer the information to the learners, it can also be used by the learners themselves as tools to analyse and synthesize the information and interpret their understanding (Herrington & Kervin, 2007). A technologically prospered learning context endorses students' performance of tasks, improves their learning outcomes, provides a source of language input, and invigorates the relationship between the real world and the classroom (Vaiciuniene & Uzpaliene, 2012). The overall contribution of IT to the language classes cannot be underestimated; nonetheless, the gains of the use of authentic materials and tasks can also be augmented through IT besides lessening the assumed drawbacks of authentic materials.

In the past, authentic materials were relatively scarce and expensive, therefore not so much

affordable for the use of language classes. However, nowadays it is easy to access many authentic written and spoken texts such as audio-video material, pictures, various links inviting interaction, and offering multiple input channels via the World Wide Web free of charge. Previously, learners might have been anxious or worried when they dealt with the authentic input as the texts and tasks might be too challenging for them; however, if these authentic materials are provided online, learners' anxiety level might decrease. They might have a chance to ease their engagement with the authentic input or the task by making use of online dictionaries or search engines or any kinds of forums when they are stuck during the process of completing a task. Furthermore, the use of online materials also enables learners to complete a task free of time and space at their own pace. Since learners do not have to complete the task during the limited class hour, they can create polished products as they wish. Carmean and Haefner (2002) suggested when learners have their ownership, deeper learning is realized and this can be leveraged via online sources. Therefore, integrating technology can provide a more learner centred approach to foreign language education since only the facilitation is incumbent on the teacher.

In addition, authentic projects contribute to the process of learning as discovery and assist learners to improve necessary critical thinking skills, as well as the skill of discovering the right information and enhancing collaboration (Windham, 2007). Learners can utilize online communities such as Facebook to communicate and share information with their friends, therefore, can engage in collaboration. As Carmean and Haefner (2012) stated, an online world is a social world in which learners can communicate with their peers and they can get a lifelong skill, i.e. teamwork. Besides, this collaboration in the social network might also provide inhibited or introverted learners with an opportunity to express their feelings and ideas easily as they have the chance to think before they speak in an asynchronous environment.

Finally, the integration of IT in language classrooms can make learning more enjoyable and captivating for digital natives. According to Prensky (2001), digital natives love getting information really fast, multi-tasking, and they work best when connected to the network. Carmean and Haefner (2002) also believe that some communication tools such as chat rooms, discussion boards, or any social network sites will make the learning environment more enjoyable for language learners.

As a result, both online and offline IT tools have the utmost prominence to increase the effectiveness of an authentic learning environment. They provide a variety of sources, decrease the anxiety and demotivation that the authentic texts can cause, and develop required critical thinking skills and captivate learners. Besides, they increase learner autonomy since learners take the responsibility of their learning.

Methods

Design

Embedded mixed-method design includes one or more forms of data (quantitative or/and qualitative) within a larger design. Qualitative data can be collected before an experiment starts, during the experiment, or after the experiment. This design is preferred when the researcher 'tests an intervention or program in an applied setting i.e. school' (Creswell, 2014, p. 228). In this study, the quantitative data were collected via pre-survey and post-survey. The qualitative data (open-ended questions) were embedded in post-survey to reach the underlying reasons for learners' perceptions regarding the implementation of ten authentic tasks.

Participants

The study took place in a preparatory school of foreign languages at a private university in Turkey in one academic year. In two different semesters, 57 EFL students in three different classes

participated in the study. Students signed a consent form and acknowledged that their data could be used for research purposes and they could leave the study at any time for any reason. Therefore, they knew that the data would be published without revealing their identities, which was stated in the consent form as well.

The instructor of the participants was the first author of this paper. She had three years of teaching experience and took courses like *'Instructional Technology in English Language Teaching'* in her post-graduate degree. In addition, she presented some instructional technology tools to other instructors in in-house workshops. She carried out research on the use of technology in language classrooms with her supervisor, who is the second author of this paper and had 20 years of experience in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), teacher training/education, and integration of technology into EFL classrooms.

In the first semester, the data were collected from Group 1 consisting of 24 students. To explore the impact of the tasks on a number of groups of language learners' perceptions, primarily for participant triangulation, two different groups of students to whom the instructor was teaching English were also included in the study in the following semester. Detailed information regarding the participants and the semesters can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Information about the Participants of the Study

Level	Gender		Age			Semester Details
	Male	Female	18	19	20	2 academic semesters
Group 1	14	10	14	9	1	1st
Group 2	5	16	10	10	1	2nd
Group 3	3	9	4	7	1	2nd
Total	22	35	28	26	3	

As can be seen in Table 1, learners' age ranged from 18 to 20 and there were 35 female learners whereas 22 of the participants were males.

Data collection tools and procedure

The approval to conduct the study was taken from the institute that the study was conducted. After the tentative authentic tasks were prepared, detailed task descriptions and the criteria with a checklist for authentic activities created by Herrington, Reeves, Oliver, and Woo (2002) were given to the seven native English speaking teachers through a task evaluation form. All these teachers were either graduates of MA programs or they were doing their MA degrees during the conduct of the study. Their ages ranged between 22 and 48. Their English teaching experiences ranged from one year to 12 years. The average was 4.3. Teachers were asked to assess the tasks according to the criteria given in the form. The form included the characteristics (criteria), their brief explanations, and some questions to check each characteristic. The list of the characteristics can be found in Appendix A. Considering the findings of the task evaluation form and feedback coming from these instructors, the necessary editing was done and more ideal tasks in terms of authenticity were created.

Ten authentic tasks included watching TV series and acting out, watching talk shows, poster preparation, reading online news, choosing a movie or reviewing a movie, online shopping, choosing a book, interview with native speakers of English, doing simple research with a

questionnaire and holiday planning. The details regarding each authentic task used in the study can be examined in Appendix B.

The tools used by the learners to complete ten tasks included certain search engines such as Google and Yandex, a social network, Edmodo and websites for newspaper (i.e. BBC, Boston.com, The New York Times), shopping (i.e. J.Crew, Harvey Nichols), bookshops (i.e. Amazon, Alibris, Books-A-Million), movies (i.e. IMDB), TV series (i.e. YouTube) and TV Talk shows (i.e. TedTalks, The Real). Some applications such as Glogster, an interactive poster preparation app, and SurveyMonkey, which is an online questionnaire tool, were also exploited in the study. The list of the technological tools used in each task and their website links can also be examined for further exploration in Appendix C.

The procedure of the data collection mainly consisted of three phases: pre-survey, task implementation, and post-survey. Both pre-survey and post-survey were implemented in Turkish, which is the mother tongue of the learners so that language difficulty does not inhibit learners from revealing their feelings and perceptions about the implementation. Both pre-survey and post-survey questionnaire items were designed considering the learning outcomes that students were expected to have upon the implementation of the technology integrated EFL tasks. Since there are certain arguments against authentic texts and tasks such as their being challenging for language learners (Berardo, 2006; Mishan, 2005; Rogers & Medley, 1988), and causing some affective issues like anxiety, demotivation, and frustration on low proficiency level learners (Bacon & Finnemann, 1990; Guariento & Morley, 2001; Kılıçkaya, 2004; McNeill, 1994), the necessity and significance of authentic tasks in language learning and the level of enjoyment during the completion of the tasks was asked in the post-survey. The level of contribution of the tasks to language learning was also asked in the post-survey. Open-ended questions were created to reveal learners' reasons for their perceptions and improve the quality of tasks for further implementations.

Pre-survey

Pre-survey included parts that seek information about the background of the learners, participants' use of the Internet, and computers and whether learners have access to the Internet when they need it. It also included questions regarding competency in the use of authentic tasks in real life and competency in technology use (31 items). Participants were asked to respond to statements with a four-point Likert Scale in which '1' refers to 'strongly disagree', '2' refers to 'disagree', '3' means 'agree', and '4' means 'strongly agree. Before implementation, the survey was piloted with a few students in order to detect any problems in the comprehension of the questions and necessary changes were done. The pre-survey had internal consistency and the reliability estimate was .88 for the overall competency scale.

Task Implementation

The implementation of the tasks lasted one semester comprising of 13 weeks. After the pre-survey had been implemented in the first week of the semester, the tasks were assigned to the students at one-or-two week intervals. Some of the tasks such as watching TV series and acting out lasted longer than the others as the pre-task stage, where students had a discussion on popular TV series, was realized in the class and students watched TV series at home and then as a post-task activity acting out was realized in the classroom. When certain tasks such as reading newspapers and reflecting on the news did not require students to be in the classroom, students were provided with more flexibility in terms of the due dates as the purpose was to enable learners to share their polish products and have a critical evaluation of each other's work in a platform called Edmodo. To summarize, some tasks lasted more than two weeks to complete whereas others lasted a few hours based on the learners' engagement with the task at home.

During the task implementation, the instructor was the facilitator and helped learners whenever they needed help. She shared tutorials for the Glogster presentation tool and had a session on how to use the Survey Monkey tool. Furthermore, she gave feedback to students' interview questions to avoid any misunderstanding that might result from cultural differences. Besides, she kept track of learners' written responses to the posts on the platform and she sometimes even showed her presence by sharing her own comments for the students' posts.

Post-survey

In the first section of the post-survey, the same questions in the pre-survey regarding competency in the use of authentic tasks in real-life tasks and competency in technology use (31 items) were asked in order to identify the possible change in the perceptions of learners. In the second part, learners were asked to evaluate each task in a given continuum from '0' to '10' (0 being 'not important at all' and 10 being 'very important) to find out:

- to what extent the learners considered the task necessary or significant
- the level of enjoyment learners felt during the implementation of tasks
- learners' perceptions on the level of contribution of the tasks to language learning

Post-survey had internal consistency and the reliability estimate was .88 for the overall competency scale. The last section of the post-survey included open-ended questions to discover learners' reasons why they considered the tasks necessary or redundant. In this section learners' suggestions for the improvement of the tasks were also asked.

Data analysis

Pre-survey and post-survey quantitative data were analysed using SPSS. For research question 1, to detect any possible significant difference among the three groups, the ANOVA test was run as a preliminary test. However, since there was not any significant difference among the three groups, participants were considered as a whole group in the comparison of pre-survey and post-survey data in relation to competency in the use of authentic tasks and competency in technology use. Paired-Samples T-test was run to detect the differences between pre-survey and post-survey. For research question 2, Descriptive Statistics were used to identify the mean scores for each task in each group as the second section of the survey included evaluation of the tasks based on a continuum. The open-ended data collected through surveys were compiled in a word document and the constant comparison method based on grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was administered. The analysis started with a close reading of the written statements and keywords were identified in the data. The steps mentioned in Strauss and Corbin (2008) were followed. In open coding, an initial list of codes and categories were identified. In axial coding, the list was refined with the merging of some categories and making connections between the categories and their subcategories. With the selective coding, core themes were identified. All codes, categories, and themes were revisited several times by comparing and contrasting; the procedure was not linear.

Findings of the study

The effect of the implementation of ten instructional technology supported authentic EFL tasks on the students' perceptions of their competency in performing authentic tasks in English in real life

According to the One-way ANOVA results, there was not a significant difference among the results of the three classes in post-survey. Mean scores for each item in pre-survey and post-survey are demonstrated in total in Table 2.

Table 2. Competency in Performing Authentic Tasks in English in Real Life

	Pre Mean (4.00)	Post Mean (4.00)	Sig. P <.05)
1. I can understand an authentic talk in English in a talk show easily.	2.30	2.63	.000
2. I can comment on a current subject that I hear in a talk show in English.	2.16	2.67	.000
3. I can comprehend a real speech on a TV series in English easily.	2.49	2.72	.011
4. I can create my own similar dialogues in English for a TV series.	2.37	2.67	.003
5. I can present and defend my argument in English.	2.42	2.77	.001
6. I can collaborate in English with my friends to create a product.	2.53	3.05	.000
7. I can explore issues from different points of view by searching in English.	2.42	2.95	.000
8. I can understand online news in English easily.	2.25	2.81	.000
9. I can think critically on a real issue in English.	2.25	2.68	.000
10. I can articulate about current issues happening all around the world in English.	2.00	2.46	.000
11. I can use different sources in English to get information.	2.33	3.00	.000
12. I can scan in an English movie website and find the necessary information.	3.05	3.32	.000
13. I can think critically and share my ideas in English in a network before choosing a movie.	2.37	2.96	.000
14. I can easily use a shopping website in English to get some presents.	3.12	3.25	.196
15. I can use some online bookshop websites in English to get some books.	3.04	3.26	.018
16. I can interact with a native speaker of English on any topic I like.	2.23	2.56	.000
17. I can communicate with a foreigner in English without any help in a natural setting.	2.54	2.68	.118
18. I can prepare a presentation in English.	2.37	3.05	.000
19. I can talk about current problems happening in my real life in English.	2.30	2.79	.000
20. I can plan a trip in English in real life.	2.63	2.98	.002
Valid N (listwise)	57	57	

Paired-Samples T-Test results illustrated that except for Item 14: 'I can easily use a shopping website in English to get some presents' (t (56) = -1.308, p = 0.196) and Item 17: 'I can communicate with a foreigner in English without any help in a natural setting' (t (56) = -1.590, p = 0.118), the difference between the mean scores of the pre-survey and post-survey items was significant.

Item 14 had a high mean score in pre-survey, which meant learners felt competent in using online English shopping websites even before the online shopping task, and in Item 17 'without any help' expression may have affected their perception as they generally worked in groups. These might be the reasons for not having a significant difference for these two items.

The effect of the implementation of ten instructional technology-supported authentic EFL tasks on the students' perceptions of their competency in using technological tools for language learning.

When pre-survey and post-survey findings were compared through Paired-Samples T- Test, it was found out that except for Item 9, all of the items had a significant mean score difference as can be examined in Table 3.

Table 3. Competency in Using Technological Tools for Language Learning

	Pre Mean (4.00)	Post Mean (4.00)	Sig. P <.05)
1. I can watch TALK SHOWS online in English using some SEARCH ENGINES	2.95	3.32	.000
2. I can watch TV SERIES in English using some search engines	3.30	3.53	.018
3. I can use GLOGSTER to create my interactive poster and share it in a social network like Edmodo	2.39	3.46	.000
4. I can use EDMODO to contact with my friends online	2.74	3.37	.000
5. I can visit NEWS WEBSITES in English using some search engines.	3.02	3.51	.000
6. I can visit IMDB online movie review website in English to decide on a movie reading movie reviews in English.	3.05	3.49	.001
7. I can visit English ONLINE SHOPPING WEBSITES to get something.	3.23	3.49	.008
8. I can use some online BOOKSHOP WEBSITES to search and get a book	3.07	3.42	.010
9. I can use SKYPE to communicate with native speakers of English.	2.84	3.04	.094
10. I can use SURVEY MONKEY to prepare and apply a survey for a small research project in English.	2.02	3.23	.000
11. I can prepare a POWERPOINT PRESENTATION to present the findings of a project in English.	2.81	3.42	.000

This finding indicated that students' perceptions of their ability to use most of the technological tools enhanced and students acknowledged that they could make use of some search engines, Edmodo, Glogster, Survey Monkey, and PowerPoint Presentation for the sake of learning English. Nevertheless, Item 9: 'I can use SKYPE to communicate with native speakers of English.' did not show a significant difference from pre-survey to post-survey (t (56) = -1.705 p= 0.94) since all the students preferred having an interview with the natives in a face-to-face meeting to using Skype.

Students' perceptions of importance and necessity of the instructional technology-supported authentic tasks for language learning.

Statistical findings of the post-survey illustrated the mean scores of each task in recognition of the significance of the tasks.

Table 4. Importance of the Tasks for Language Learning

	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	Mean Group 3	Mean total
TASK1- Watching TV series and acting out	8.17	6.67	6.50	7.26
TASK2- Watching TV talk shows like Ted Talks	7.79	8.14	7.92	7.95
TASK3- Preparing a poster using Glogster	7.13	6.00	6.42	6.56
TASK4- Reading and watching online news	8.29	8.52	8.08	8.33
TASK5- Choosing a movie using IMDb	8.33	7.86	6.83	7.84
TASK6- Online shopping	7.79	8.00	6.42	7.58
TASK7- Choosing a book	8.17	7.14	7.58	7.67
TASK8- Interview with native speakers	8.63	8.38	8.83	8.58
TASK9- Doing a research using Survey Monkey	8.29	6.95	6.42	7.40
TASK10- Holiday planning	7.88	7.52	7.75	7.72
Valid N (listwise)	24	21	12	57

As can be seen from Table 4, all three groups considered Task 8 (M= 8.58) and Task 4 (M=8.33) crucial for learning English whereas Task 3 was the least significant task.

Considering the students' written explanations, 37 students over 51 explicitly stated that they found the tasks necessary and they also provided the reasons for their perceptions.

Eighteen students in total specifically mentioned *the contribution of the tasks to language learning* as one of the reasons. For instance, P1 and P13 in Group 1 directly indicated that the tasks had a great contribution to language learning. Besides, P5, P14 and P15 in Group 1 also appreciated the tasks since they were able to have a chance to use the language, thereby practiced and enhanced their language learning. P17 also supported that with the tasks they consolidated what they had learned. P19 also mentioned the language skills and contents in the post-survey when asked about the reason why she considered the tasks essential for language education in the excerpt below.

> *In these tasks, especially when writing was required, trying to find the correct grammar structure and using a variety of vocabulary were quite significant in terms of the development of our vocabulary and grammar. (Group 1, Participant 19)*

P22 in Group 1 admitted that the tasks were significant since they provided practice for listening, reading, and writing in English. P7 in Group 2 also mentioned that they were critical for developing their speaking in English. P11 believed that Task 4- Reading and watching online news was necessary

> *I found Task 4- Reading and watching online news activity quite necessary. We were able to not only improve our English but also be aware of current issues. (Group 1, Participant 11)*

P3 in Group 2 also found the same task both fun and updated. Another student also emphasized the noteworthiness of Task 8 as it was a spontaneous task.

Along with the contribution of the tasks, 21 students also referred to the *real-life relevance* of the tasks when they were asked why they regarded the tasks necessary for language education. First of all, P14, P16, P18, and P24 in Group 1, P20 in Group 2 and P1 and P10 in Group 3 appreciated the

use of real-life related activities. P14 believed that the real life was the source of the language and the closer they were to the language the more successful they would be. P16 also thought that since they would not use English just in their academic and work life, it was necessary for them to use the language in real life and see how proficient they were in the use of English in daily issues. P24 found the tasks very crucial since the best way to learn was to link the language to real life. In addition, P10 in Group 2 also mentioned that it would make learning easier and take students' attention if the activities were related to real life. P18 in Group 1 summarized the points regarding real life relevance in the excerpt below.

They are significant because there will be no meaning of learning if we do not associate the language with real life. Doing the tasks related to real-life is more informative. Besides doing the things that work is more beneficial. (Group 1 Participant 18)

In terms of the transfer of the English to real life, P1 and P3 in Group 1 and P4 and P16 in Group 2 highly esteemed the activities. For instance, P1 and P3 considered the tasks quite beneficial for language learning since the tasks gave a chance to know more about the language and transfer it into daily life. P4 admitted that she was happier when she used English in real life. P16 also suggested that English ought to be integrated in real life and indicated that they learned and enjoyed thanks to these tasks.

Moreover, some participants (P9, P15 and P27 in Group 1, P8 and P20 in Group 3, and P1, P14 and P15 in Group 2) believed that the tasks would have a place in their real life. They appreciated the tasks as they taught the things that students could come across in real life and made the use of English in their lives easier. P1 indicated that thanks to those tasks, learners got ready for the same situations before they had been abroad. P20 in Group 3 also reported a similar view as exemplified in the excerpt below.

I can do shopping thanks to those Edmodo Tasks (ten authentic tasks). I can keep up with the news and I can watch English videos and comment on them. I find the tasks significant. Thanks to Edmodo Tasks, now I can do the things that I have not done because of shyness before. For example, I have ordered a pair of shoes from England. (Group 3, Participant 20)

P14 in Group 2 also referred to similar points and indicated that she considered them quite necessary, which can be seen in the excerpt below.

I consider most of these activities necessary, for example, I will go to Germany this year, but the working language of the camp is English and I need to prepare a program in English. Thanks to these activities, I prepared this program very easily. So, that was very useful. (Group 2, Participant 14)

There were also three students, P5 and P26 in Group 1 and P8 in Group 3, who believed that the tasks taught the real-life conversational language much better and contributed to their use of English in real life as exemplified in the excerpts below.

I consider them (the tasks) important and necessary. These are essential activities for us to have a better grasp of everyday spoken English. They allow us to practice and progress (in English). (Group 1, Participant 5)

I consider them necessary because they are beneficial to the spoken language. (Group 1, Participant 26)

I consider them (the tasks) important. Their connection with real life contributes to our daily conversations. (Group 3, Participant 8)

In addition to the *contribution of the tasks to language learning* and *real-life relevance,* a few

students also referred to the use of technological tools and programs to explain why they considered these tasks essential. P9 in Group 2 acknowledged that they learned how to use the updated websites and programs. Moreover, another student appreciated the tasks since they offered easy and permanent learning and a feeling of enjoyment.

Nonetheless, there were also a few students who mentioned that there was *no need for some tasks*. For instance, P11 mentioned the redundancy of shopping activity since everybody could do it without any difficulty. P19 also stated that some tasks did not contribute to language learning since they wrote simple comments. Another student claimed that some tasks took too much time. P9 and P20 in Group 1 indicated that they found only Task 9 unnecessary since some of their friends did not respond to the surveys, which meant that they prepared just the questions. Therefore, they believed that doing a survey did not have any benefit to them. P14 in Group 2 also found Task 2 as unnecessary since it took a lot of time. He believed that there should be more spontaneous activities just like 'Task 8- Interview with native speakers'.

All in all, the reasons why the students considered the tasks necessary and significant for language education were mainly related to the benefits of tasks to the development in language learning and the link between the real-life experiences and the language. Few students mentioned certain tasks such as Task 9 and Task 2 as unnecessary primarily because of the reasons related to the problems in the procedure of the tasks and the timing.

Students' perceptions of feeling of enjoyment during the completion of the instructional technology-supported authentic tasks

As it can be observed from Table 5, students in three classes, especially Group 3, maintained that they enjoyed a lot during Task 8 in general. The reason of their enjoyment might be the feeling of excitement and achievement as they might have realized their ability to use the language for a real purpose.

Table 5. Feeling of Enjoyment During the Tasks

	Mean Group 1	*Mean Group 2*	*Mean Group 3*	*Mean total*
TASK1- Watching TV series and acting out	8.29	6.19	6.33	7.11
TASK2- Watching TV talk shows like Ted Talks	7.83	6.52	6.08	6.98
TASK3- Preparing a poster using Glogster	7.38	5.81	5.08	6.32
TASK4- Reading and watching online news	7.71	7.48	7.08	7.49
TASK5- Choosing a movie using IMDb	8.38	8.29	7.33	8.12
TASK6- Online shopping	7.50	7.90	6.17	7.37
TASK7- Choosing a book	8.13	7.05	7.08	7.51
TASK8- Interview with native speakers	8.25	7.86	9.17	8.30
TASK9- Doing a research using Survey Monkey	7.71	6.19	5.17	6.61
TASK10- Holiday planning	8.04	7.38	7.67	7.72
Valid N (listwise)	24	21	12	57

However, Group 1 and Group 2 students enjoyed most in Task 5 where students are asked to search for the movies to choose one to watch. This might result from the fact that the task itself is

intrinsically motivating and relevant to the learners' interests or habits in real life as well. Concerning the least enjoyable activity, participants agreed on Task 3 as the least enjoyable task.

Students' perceptions of contribution of the instructional technology supported authentic tasks to language learning

Having completed ten authentic tasks, students were asked to grade the level of contribution of the tasks to their language development at the end of the semester. In Table 6, post-survey findings illustrated that participants perceived Task 8 contributing to language learning most (M= 8.63). Task 4 and Task 5 were regarded as quite beneficial for language learning, as well. The least useful task was Task 3.

Table 6. Students' Perceptions of Contribution of the Tasks to Language Learning

	Mean Group 1	*Mean Group 2*	*Mean Group 3*	*Mean total*
TASK1- Watching TV series and acting out	8.29	6.57	7.17	7.42
TASK2- Watching TV talk shows like Ted Talks	7.46	7.52	7.17	7.42
TASK3- Preparing a poster using Glogster	7.75	6.29	5.67	6.77
TASK4- Reading and watching online news	8.54	8.05	8.42	8.33
TASK5- Choosing a movie using IMDb	8.33	8.14	7.83	8.16
TASK6- Online shopping	7.67	7.76	7.42	7.65
TASK7- Choosing a book	7.96	6.67	7.33	7.35
TASK8- Interview with native speakers	8.79	8.62	8.33	8.63
TASK9- Doing a research using Survey Monkey	8.50	6.71	6.25	7.37
TASK10- Holiday planning	8.29	7.19	7.42	7.70
Valid N (listwise)	24	21	12	57

Students' suggestions to increase the benefits of the authentic tasks

The suggestions as to the procedures and content of the authentic tasks included a variety of issues. P9 in Group 1 thought that if the ideas for the tasks came from the students, the participation in the tasks and learning would increase. P20 required for the increase in the variety of technological programs like Ted Talks. P17 in Group 1 and P4 in Group 3 proposed they could use the activities more frequently and in a more serious manner. P19 also claimed the task would be more useful if the members participating in the activity provided more comments, created more severe debates and did not cut off the communication among them. Furthermore, P23 advocated that the students could be provided with more freedom. He gave both an explanation and an example in the excerpt below.

> *Students can be more independent. For example, you can let the students create their own fictions. I would have studied more freely and with enjoyment in the holiday planning activity since I would identify the fiction of the task as guiding the group coming to Amasra or Samsun (city names in Turkey). Consequently, I could have done a more detailed plan. (G1, P23)*

Considering the excerpt above, authenticity for some students meant the local culture rather than the target culture. This student believed it would be better when he had a different scenario where he chooses the cities in Turkey instead of planning a holiday abroad. P8 in Group 3 also agreed that

everybody can do an activity based on their interests. In addition, P27 suggested an increase in the number of authentic tasks and recommended having certain topics that would be more informative and thought-provoking. Lastly, there were also three students who mentioned that the tasks should be more enjoyable and varied. On the other hand, there were two students who believed that the tasks did not need any improvement as they were quite successful.

Regarding the speaking activities, P3, P5, P12, and P26 in Group 1, P19 in Group 3, and P8 and P14 in Group 2 emphasized the need for their improvement in speaking skills and they asked for more speaking activities in language classes. Specifically, Participant 5 claimed that the biggest problem for students was not using what they had learned in their speech and not having an environment to do that frequently. P14 in Group 2, P19 in Group 3 and P8 in Group 2 also indicated that there should be more speaking and listening activities since they believed that those were the most effective ways to learn a language. To illustrate, P19 admitted Ted Talks activity and interview with native speakers of English were really good in that aspect. As an alternative for speaking activities, P13 and P16 in Group 1 advised being in contact with the native speakers and spending more time with them. In addition, P15 and P16 in Group 2 also ensured that the most beneficial activity was the interview with the native speakers and the movie and book-related tasks, therefore, the number of these types of activities should be increased.

For the new tasks, P1 in Group 1 suggested that everybody can present a country or a culture with the help of an online poster so that they can illustrate their abilities to research and present in English in front of the public. P14 also advised searching more and more since the more search the more knowledge and learning they would have. All these suggestions might be taken into consideration for classroom practices.

Students' suggestions for the new tasks and technological tools for language learning

With respect to the suggestions on the use of technological tools, four participants in total found the tools in ten authentic tasks satisfactory. Cell phones were the most common tool that was mentioned in the students' responses. Three students suggested online games and two students recommended the use of TV channels and programs more. Besides, video-chat with natives and the use of WhatsApp was mentioned by one of the students

Moreover, students provided a variety of different tasks which can be considered very authentic, indeed. For instance, P5 in Group 1 thought one of the tasks could be keeping diaries and another might be doing karaoke in class. P12 in Group 1 suggested some different activities as it was illustrated in the excerpt below.

> *There might be some activities involving emergent and challenging situations. For instance, giving directions to the people who try to find a place or helping a person who is injured. There might be such kinds of fiction. Since these situations are rather updated, they might improve our learning more. (G1, P12)*

P14 in Group 1 introduced certain tasks such as playing games and using English frequently, talking to the people who know English for twenty minutes, and writing a story. Moreover, in Group 1 P17 proposed listening to the radio programs regularly. In Group 3, P3 suggested watching movies in class. Along with all those suggestions, one student also stated that for the book and movie tasks, students could have written some objective reviews like summaries rather than writing their own opinions about the books or movies. Moreover, two participants acknowledged that the activities were quite successful and effective. All in all, students both suggested new tasks and technological tools that can be implemented in language classes, which can be of some insight for researchers and instructors in the EFL context.

Discussion

The present study revealed that ten IT-supported authentic tasks altered learners' perceptions of their ability to implement authentic tasks in English real life and use certain technological tools to facilitate language learning. In addition, the study found that learners considered tasks as necessary for language learning and the reasons included the contribution of the tasks to language learning, real-life relevance, and benefit to daily life.

When the contribution of authentic tasks was considered, in the open-ended parts of the survey, students primarily mentioned the room for the practice of all the language skills and contents in the given authentic tasks and their consolidation of what they had learned. Additionally, the contribution of authentic tasks was acknowledged when the students were asked to rate the contribution of the tasks in another item in the survey. Almost all of the tasks were appreciated in terms of their benefits to language learning and the overall score for all tasks was 7.68 over 10. As it was concluded in Lira's (2012) dissertation, authentic materials were found to be useful to improve language proficiency more than inauthentic materials. Even though the study presented here did not rest on the scores obtained from any proficiency exam, learners' perceptions regarding their language learning supported the findings of the studies conducted by Mousavi and Iravani (2012), Thanajaro's (2000), Ghaderpanahi's (2012), Herron and Seay (1991), Barekat and Nobakhti (2014), and Mahsefat (2012) over the effect of authentic materials on listening skills. Furthermore, Namaziandost et al.'s (2021) study recently demonstrated positive impact of the authentic texts on learners' reading motivation and comprehension skills. This study also concluded that Task 2 (watching talk shows), and Task 4 (reading and watching news online) had the potential to develop students' listening and reading skills. Moreover, Task 8 (interviews with native speakers), and Task 1 (watching TV series and acting out) contributed to students' speaking skills. Moreover, Task 5 (reviewing a movie), Task 7 (choosing a book), and Task 9 (doing survey) had some impact on students' writing and research skills besides vocabulary and grammar.

Penamaria & Benavent (2012) asserted that the authentic materials create an environment like an immersion model which supplies a realistic context for the activities that are concerned with the learners' needs and experiences. Language learners in the present study considered these tasks crucial for language learning since authentic tasks taught the things that students could come across in real life such as doing online shopping, reviewing a movie, watching TV series, carrying out a survey, interacting with a native speaker, and choosing a book based on a real situation. Regarding the impact of each technological tool to promote this authenticity in the tasks, the use of real online shopping websites like BBC rather than the created materials, use of real movie review websites such as IMDB rather than a simplified version in the textbooks, and watching TV series not created for pedagogical purposes but for real audience all contributed to the authenticity of each task. Even the use of a social networking site like Edmodo for communication and interaction and having comments on the shared posts just like in the real world made students more interested in the tasks. As Emmerson (2019) indicated such situated and meaningful learning activities help to equip learners with skills for future contexts where their language needs will differ based on the goals available.

Furthermore, students felt more confident in terms of using the target language for real life purposes. That view was also mentioned in Al- Musallam (2009) and Breen's (1985) claim that students could handle the situations in real life providing that they were exposed to the substantial authentic use of language. Therefore, making students deal with something from their immediate environment can have substantial effects on students' language learning. This was evident in the students' evaluation of the tasks in the present study. They appreciated the authenticity or real-life relevance

of the tasks.

Students' suggestions to increase the benefits of the authentic tasks included the need for more speaking activities in language classes, an increase in the number of authentic tasks, the variety of the topics, and integration of other technological tools such as computers, cellphones, and WhatsApp, etc. As Golonka, Bowles, Frank, Richardson, and Freynik (2014) stated, enhanced options for self-selecting activities might result in more on-task behavior and deeper engagement with language. In view of students' recommendations, the quantity and quality of the tasks can be improved and other online or offline tools can be used. As Ulla, Perales, and Tarrayo (2020) indicated, integration of internet-based tools augment learners' active participation and motivation besides promoting independence and autonomy.

Students also suggested games to learn vocabulary and acquisition of new vocabulary was the most frequently uttered result of gamification and many gamification studies revealed positive outcomes regarding learners' engagement, motivation, and satisfaction as it was concluded in Dehghanzadeh et al.(2019)'s review of gamification studies. Therefore, gamification can be benefited in the design of authentic language tasks. On the other hand, it should be noted that technological tools or the quality design of the tasks might not be adequate enough to promote language learning. The variety of the topics, themes, activities for the major tasks, their match with the technological tools, the time, and technological opportunities students have should all be considered. As Gonzalez-Lloret (2020) indicated a need analysis may inform us about the appropriate amount of content, technology and digital literacy and the support needed from the institutions as well.

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to reveal EFL learners' perceptions on the use of technologically supported EFL authentic tasks and determine whether there is a change in students' perceptions of ability to use EFL authentic tasks in real life before and after the implementation. The study required participants to complete ten technology-supported authentic tasks that were designed considering the characteristics of authentic learning environments suggested by Herrington et al. (2002) in the 13-week period. The results indicated that students' perceptions regarding their competence in authentic tasks and technology use have changed in a positive way. Moreover, they regarded the tasks as necessary and appreciated their contribution to language learning. There were also certain tasks that need improvement and students provided their suggestions for the variety of the topics chosen for the tasks and the procedure.

In the design of curriculum, teachers need to be able to identify the potentials and restrictions of technology so that technological affordances, how technology is useful and meaningful for its users, can be realized (Tseng, 2018). Therefore, this study might guide program and material developers, and language teachers while designing their lesson plans, preparing in-class materials, and assignments in many ways. Firstly, even though many websites and tools that can be used to learn and practice English exist, most of these tools are not necessarily different from the coursebook activities. Therefore, using websites such as online newspapers, shopping websites, movie review websites and social networks that are not primarily created for pedagogical purposes might be more relevant to what learners do with English outside the classroom. In this particular study, students engaged in the activities both in the classroom and outside the classroom, and the use of technological tools such as the Edmodo platform helped them articulate their opinions and learn from each other's work and ideas. They were provided with flexibility in time and they had control of their learning. Secondly, program and material developers should not only prefer authentic websites as input but also consider characteristics of authentic tasks and create tasks that are relevant to learners' real life. In addition, they should prepare tasks learners are expected to do in

daily life since the participants in this study particularly appreciated the relevance of the tasks to the real-life issues and considered them beneficial for their language learning. Furthermore, designing tasks in which learners collaborate, share their perspectives, reflect on the task they are doing are critical. Therefore, while designing the tasks developers might consider all these as criteria and include as many characteristics of an authentic learning environment as possible in their task design.

There were several limitations to the present study. For instance, students exploited online and offline web tools as IT, and they mainly used their computers to do the tasks. Therefore, further research might consider how to use mobile or ubiquitous technology to facilitate authentic EFL learning. In addition, the results reflected solely learners' perceptions regarding the tasks implemented. Thus, further research can be carried out by implementing pre and post achievement tests or exams on language learning or technology use competencies so that the relationship between students' perceptions and their learning achievement can be discovered. Moreover, further research might investigate emotions aroused during the completion of the tasks more in depth via surveys as the post-survey in the study only focused on feeling of enjoyment. Besides, in similar case studies teachers' and program developers' perspectives on the issue might also be consulted through focus group interviews. Further studies on authenticity can also investigate the problem-solving aspect of authenticity in detail.

About the authors

Nur Gedik Bal is an instructor at Social Sciences University of Ankara. She has received her BA, MA, and Ph.D. in English Language Teaching (ELT) at Middle East Technical University (METU). Her scholarly interests include integrating technology into foreign language classrooms, the intercultural competence of language learners and teachers, and teachers' professional development.

Perihan Savas is an associate professor at Middle East Technical University in Turkey. She has been working as a teacher educator/trainer in the field of English as a Foreign Language pre-service education and in-service teacher training since 1998. Her scholarly interests include integrating technology into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum, mobile assisted language learning (MALL), teacher training/faculty support in online education, and computer-mediated communication.

Acknowledgement

To cite this article:

Gedik Bal, N. & Savas, P. (2021). Enhancing authenticity in college level English classrooms via instructional technology. *Teaching English as a Second Language Electronic Journal (TESL-EJ), 25*(3). https://tesl-ej.org/pdf/ej99/a11.pdf

References

Al-Musallam, E.I. (2009). *College instructors' and learners' attitudes to authentic EFL reading materials in Saudi Arabia* (Unpublished master's thesis). King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Bacon, S., & Finnemann, M. (1990). A study of attitudes, motives, and strategies of university foreign language students and their disposition to authentic oral and written input. *Modern Language Journal, 74*(4), 459-73. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1990.tb05338.x

Berardo, S. A. (2006). The use of authentic materials in the teaching of reading. *The Reading Matrix, 6*(2), 60-69.Retrieved from http://www.readingmatrix.com/articles/berardo/article.pdf

Breen, M. (1985). Authenticity in the language classroom. *Applied Linguistics, 6,* 60-70.

Carmean, C., & Haefner, J. (2002). Mind over matter: Transforming course management systems into effective learning environment. *EDUCAUSE Review, 37*(6), 27-34.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.

Dehghanzadeh, H., Fardanesh, H., Hatami, J.,Talaee, E., & Noroozi, O. (2019): Using gamification to support learning English as a second language: a systematic review, *Computer Assisted Language Learning,* 1-24. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1648298

Emmerson, D. (2019). The use of synchronous and asynchronous technological tools for socioconstructivist language learning. *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning, 9*(2), 1-6. Retrieved from https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/jltl/issue/46605/555908

Glaser, B.G. & Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Aldine Publishing Company.

González-Lloret M. (2020). Collaborative tasks for online language teaching. *Foreign Language Annals*, 53, 260-269. https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12466

Golonka, E.M., Bowles, A.R., Frank V.M., Richardson, D.R., & Freynik, S. (2014). Technologies for foreign language learning: A review of technology types and their effectiveness. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 27(*1), 70-105. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2012.700315

Guariento, W. & Morley, J. (2001). Text and task authenticity in the EFL classroom. *ELT Journal, 55*(4), 347-353. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/55.4.347

Herrington, J., & Oliver, R. (2000). An instructional design framework for authentic learning environments. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 48*(3), 23-48. https://doi.org/10.1007/bf02319856

Herrington, J. & Kervin, L. (2007). Authentic learning supported by technology: Ten suggestions and cases of integration in classrooms. *Educational Media International, 44*(3), 219-236.

Herrington, J., Oliver, R., Reeves, T.C., & Woo, Y. (2004). Designing authentic activities in web-based courses. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 16*(1), 3-29. https://doi.org/10.1007/bf02960280

Mishan, F., & Strunz, B. (2003). An application of XML to the creation of an interactive resource for authentic language learning tasks. *ReCALL*, *15*(2), 237-250. https://doi.org/10.1017/s095834400300082x

Mishan, F. (2005). *Designing authenticity into language learning materials.* Intelect Books.

Namaziandost, E. Razmi, M. H., Tilwani, S.A. & Gilakjani, A.P. (2021): The impact of authentic materials on reading comprehension, motivation, and anxiety among Iranian male EFL learners, *Reading & Writing Quarterly,* https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2021.1892001

Oliver, R., Herrington, J. A. & Reeves, T. C. (2006). Creating authentic learning environments through blended-learning approaches. In C. Bonk & C. R. Graham (Eds.), The Handbook of Blended Learning: Global Perspectives, Local Designs (pp. 502-515). Jossey-Bass.

Ozverir, I. and Herrington, J. (2011). *Authentic activities in language learning: Bringing real world relevance to classroom activities.* In: *World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications (EDMEDIA)*, Lisbon, Portugal, 1423-1428.

Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants. *On the Horizon, MCB University Press, 9*(5), 1-6.

Savas, P. (2019). CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) specialists preparation. *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching*, 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118784235.eelt0425

Shetzer, H., & Warschauer, M. (2000). An electronic literacy approach to networkbased language teaching. In M. Warschauer & R. Kern (Eds.), Network-based language teaching: Concepts and practice (pp. 171-185). Cambridge University Press.

Tseng, J. (2018) Exploring TPACK-SLA interface: Insights from the computer-enhanced classroom. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 31*(4), 390-412. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2017.1412324

Ulla, M. B., Perales, W. F., & Tarrayo, V. N. (2020). Integrating internet-based applications in English language teaching: Teacher practices in a Thai university. *Issues in Educational Research, 30*(1), 365–378.

Vaiciuniene, V. & Uzpaliene, D. (2012). Authenticity in the context of technologically enriched ESP. *Social Technologies*, *2*(1), 189-201.

Warschauer, M. & Meskill, C. (2000). Technology and second language learning. In J. Rosenthal (Ed.), Handbook of undergraduate second language education (pp. 303-318). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Windham, C. (2007). Why today's students value authentic learning. *EDUCAUSE.*

Zhang, W., & Zhu, C. (2020). Blended learning as a good practice in ESL courses compared to F2F learning and online learning. *International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning, 12*(1), 64–81. https://doi.org/10.4018/ijmbl.2020010105

Appendix A. Characteristics of authentic activities

1. Have real-world relevance

2. Provide authentic activities and tasks. Ill-defined tasks

3. Provide access to expert performances and the modelling of processes

4. Provide multiple roles and perspectives

5. Provide the opportunity to collaborate

6. Provide the opportunity to reflect

7. Promote articulation to encourage students to verbalize their knowledge and thinking

8. Tasks are seamlessly integrated with assessment

9. Create polished products

10. Provide coaching and scaffolding at critical times

[back to article]

Appendix B. Descriptions of ten authentic tasks implemented in the study

TEN AUTHENTIC TASKS IMPLEMENTED IN THE STUDY	
1. Watching TV series and acting out	**6. Online shopping**
-Watching TV series -Preparing the dialogues -Acting the dialogues -Choosing the best act Sources: TV series such as Supernatural, Wikings, How I Met Your Mother etc. www.YouTube.com	-Discussing the situation provided in the task -Getting some suggestions from their friends -Choosing the best present on an online shopping website -Sharing the item and the reasons why they preferred this particular item in Edmodo Sources: http://www.jcrew.com/index.jsp,http://www.ebay.com/, http://www.harveynichols.com/
2. Watching talk shows and sharing in Edmodo	**7. Choosing a book using online book shopping websites**
-Watching the videos -Sharing the videos in Edmodo -Commenting on other students' videos -Follow up discussions about the videos in class Sources:https://www.ted.com/,http://blip.tv/talk-and-interview-shows-videos, http://thereal.com/episodes	-Discussing different types of books in the classroom -Understanding the situation provided -Visiting the websites and deciding on a book for their friends -Sharing this book and the reason of their choice in Edmodo Sources: http://www.alibris.com/, http://www.booksamillion.com/, http://www.amazon.com/
3. Preparing a presentation using Glogster	**8. Interview with native speakers of English**
-Watching the tutorials about Glogster -Researching about the university facilities and departments -Preparing a presentation about the school -Sharing their presentations in Edmodo -Commenting on each other's presentation -Choosing the best one that can be used to promote university Source: http://edu.glogster.com/signup	-Deciding on a topic to discuss with the native speakers -Preparing certain questions -Sharing the questions in Edmodo -Getting feedback for the questions and the content by the instructor -Doing the interview and recording -Sharing the interviews with their classmates in Edmodo Source: Skype, recorder
4. Reading and watching news in BBC, Boston.com and New York Times	**9. Doing research using Survey Monkey**
-Reading or watching the news -Reflecting on the news -Sharing the news, their reflections and comments in Edmodo -Commenting on each other's posts Sources:(http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/) (http://www.washingtonpost.com/) (http://www.nytimes.com/) (http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/)	-Discussing certain research topics that are relevant to students' real life context -Deciding on a topic -Preparing questions -Watching tutorials about SurveyMonkey -Transferring the questions in SurveyMonkey and sharing it in Edmodo -Sharing the results in the class with other students Sources: (https://www.surveymonkey.com/)
5. Choosing or reviewing a movie using IMDB	**10. Holiday planning**
Two different scenarios: 1. Choosing a movie to watch with their friends -Going through the website -Sharing their choices -Discussing in Edmodo -Deciding on a film 2. Reviewing a favorite movie they watched before / -Sharing the favorite movie and their own review of the movie in Edmodo -Commenting on each other's post Source: (http://www.imdb.com/)	-Discussing the given situation with group members -Deciding on the places where they want to see -Searching on the Internet to learn about the places, hotels tickets etc. -Sharing their plans with classmates in Edmodo Sources: Search engines such as Google

[back to article]

Appendix C. Instructional technology tools used in the study

Task 1: TV series websites	• https://www.youtube.com/
Task 2:TV talk shows	• Ted Talks (https://www.ted.com) • The Real (http://thereal.com/episodes)
Task 3:Poster preparation tool	• Glogster (http://edu.glogster.com/signup)
Task 4: Online news websites	• BBC (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news) • Boston.com (http://www.boston.com/bigpicture) • The New York Times (http://www.nytimes.com)
Task 5: Movie website	• IMDB (http://www.imdb.com)
Task 6: Online shopping websites	• J.Crew (http://www.jcrew.com/index.jsp) • Harvey Nichols (http://harveynichols.com.tr)
Task 7: Book shopping websites	• Amazon (http://www.amazon.com) • Alibris (http://www.alibris.com), • Books-A-Million: (http://www.booksamillion.com)
Task 8: interview tools	• Audio recorder/ smartphones
Task 9: Survey tool	• SurveyMonkey (https://www.surveymonkey.com)
Task 10: Search engines	• Google • Yandex

[back to article]