

# **SPEAKING ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

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## **Abstract**

In teaching a foreign language, it is essential to provide students with the opportunity of communicating orally. In contact sessions there is often not enough time for educators to interact individually with learners, so it is important to provide opportunities for students to produce their own skills and knowledge. The answer may lie in the use of ICT tools.

This paper presents examples of how technology has been used at a university in Lisbon, Portugal, to enhance students' learning experiences and communication skills. The teaching of a language, or any other skill, cannot be centred on the teacher. Production and awareness towards the learning process is of pivotal importance for students. Unfortunately, the majority of language classroom delivery is still based on unilateral ways of teaching. With the introduction of ICT in the classroom, it is our concern that the same scenario is not replicated to the virtual learning environment. Today, many course facilitators are using elearning platforms as mere repositories for additional resources. It has been our intention in the past years to introduce as many 2.0. web tools as possible to make learning through ICT an interactive process in which students take on full accountability for their learning. Through the use of podcasts and video/audio tools, students at our institution were able to produce material integrating text, image and voice in their individual or group projects. Interestingly, and although they were studying different languages (some groups were learning English and others Portuguese), all students perceived these tools as essential for their progress, as evidenced in a survey carried out at the end of each course.

**Keywords:** Speaking activities, ICT tools, podcasts, audiovisual presentation tools.