



Real World Uses of Technology to Enrich Language Learning

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Abstract

This paper is intended to contribute to the increasingly interesting and useful literature on application of technologies in teaching and learning languages. Enabling students to construct knowledge in active-learning environments is vital, as is enriching their total experience in the language they are learning

It is important that real-world examples be given by those advocating the use of new technologies. With that in mind, this presentation gives an account of some uses of technology being made, by students and faculty, in the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures & Cultures at Butler University.

An excellent example of technology's creating space for student initiative is one senior French major's independent creation of Skype sessions with English students at a French high school. Beginning as an exchange of help with pronunciation issues in both French and English, these sessions have become a forum for discussion, in both languages, of cultural and academic differences between the US and France. Panopto is being used extensively to enable students to produce much more language and to listen to and critique their own production. Also, oral exams are being given on Panopto, and instructors can listen to and annotate oral "drafts" of student oral presentations. An error code is used, just as is done in annotating written productions, with patterns of error marked by time indicators. Some faculty have expanded their availability to students with virtual office hours and recorded supplemental explanations of difficult concepts and structures. Rich language production by students, and student-faculty interaction have increased despite inevitable limits on institutional investment in mediated classrooms and other instructional resources. Many more examples will be given in the completed paper.