

# Social Networks Usage in a Portuguese High School Learning Context

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## Abstract

Formative assessment gives information about the current degree of knowledge acquisition within learning activities made by students. Although being an important mechanism for learning adjustments, it isn't very often used in high school classes. In this paper we present a Web 2.0 tool usage in a Portuguese high school context in order to increase the formative assessment levels in those courses. The approach method consists in developing a gadget, to incorporate formative assessment in Hi5, a social network site, which will enable teachers to perform continuous assessment without excessive efforts and costs. The Hi5 platform was chosen because of the student's familiarity and the possibility to use OpenSocial, a common API for social applications across multiple websites. This API is supported by Hi5, which is a member of the Google's platform. Before deciding to use social networks, as a learning space, some questions were raised. What are the advantages in using such platform compared to other learning systems? What are the privacy consequences of moving learning into spaces traditionally used for leisure by our young learners? What are the trends in social network web sites? These issues are later on developed in order to support our approach.