



# The Future is Now: an Innovative E-learning Teaching Design

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## Abstract

We will present an innovative approach to teaching and learning developed by the School of Education of Windesheim University of Applied Sciences (Zwolle, the Netherlands). This approach shows an excellent example for innovation in teaching methodologies in secondary and higher education. We are creating a didactic approach to learning, in which modern technology opens up all kinds of learning opportunities. The approach of our innovative teaching is applied to learning Mandarin Chinese, new at our language department. There are three target groups for this innovation; all teacher education departments, the teacher students and the schools where they will work as trainees and future employees.

Our model is innovative for distance learning and classroom teaching alike. The instructions on the E-learning platform are clear and short. Practice is only one click away! Various types of tools and links give access to direct and active learning. By means of self-assessment students monitor their own learning process. In the virtual world, in Second Life, students meet natives, practice their language skills and acquire cultural knowledge. By means of innovative assignments students produce work in which they apply the acquired knowledge. Assignments are connected to real life. Learning becomes more meaningful. Both students and teachers learn of this technology. We will illustrate our model with practical examples from the pilots 'Mandarin Chinese language learning' we are currently running at Windesheim.

This innovative didactic method will help to change the future of education in Europe. It educates teachers and students at universities and schools alike. It is a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning, for multiple purposes. This innovative methodology links to other initiatives in this field like Life Long Learning projects such as Telecollaboration for Intercultural Language Acquisition (TILA). By means of this innovation teaching and learning methodology further developments in the area of education will be stimulated.