

INTEGRATING SECOND LIFE INTO AN EFL CLASSROOM: A NEW DIMENSION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

The use of multi-user virtual environments (MUVes) as a learning platform has been one of the new trends in distance education recently. Second Life (SL) has gained popularity in the field of foreign language learning and teaching because of its immersive and interactive environments. This paper aims at emphasizing the prominence of SL in foreign language learning and teaching. It provides a brief history of SL use in foreign language education, defines SL as an online 3D virtual learning environment and explains how to design language learning experiences in SL. Moreover, it summarizes the benefits and drawbacks of teaching English to EFL learners in SL. It also expounds the language teacher's role in SL as well as the description of available ESL/EFL sites for learning and teaching English in SL. Lastly, it makes some recommendations for language teachers regarding the powerful use of SL as an instructional device in the classroom.

Key Words: Second life, multi-user virtual environment, language learning, language teaching.