

# Tailor-made Language Education for Beginners in Dutch as a Second Language

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*Seminar on the linguistic integration of adult  
migrants*

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# A standard situation in beginners' courses for DSL



*During the break, a participant asks the trainer to help him with a letter one of his children brought home from school.*

## Migrants (want to) take on different roles:

- Be a parent
- Study
- Start own business
- Seek employment
- Be a consumer



→ confronted with different demands on linguistic abilities

not met by introductory courses (general skills)

# Customization: a trend

BUT: often limited to grouping learners on basis of pace and language level



BUT: restricted to advanced levels  
usually assumed unnecessary to offer goal-oriented courses at basic level

# Tailor-made Language Education for Beginners DSL

- Goal: instruments that make it possible to respond to the individual needs of newcomers from the start of DSL-courses
- Funded by: Nederlandse Taalunie
- Carried out by:
  - Centre for Language and Education (Louvain)
  - Institute for language research and language education for non-native speakers (Amsterdam)

## Guiding principles

- Shaping instruction to needs
- Learner indicates own objectives



## Benefits

More efficient language training:

- more relevant, immediately useable → motivation
- Lower threshold to use Dutch in day-to-day life
- Learners are better prepared to enter more specialized follow-up courses

= positive learning experience → higher probability that learning process continues

# Central device: website

Information and instruments that aim to stimulate a more needs-centered fashion of second language teaching



[www.nt2-beginnersdoelen.org](http://www.nt2-beginnersdoelen.org)

# First instrument: catalogue of learning goals

## Organized on basis roles

- Functional domains are identified
- illustrated by practical situations that learners can encounter
- concretized in actions and tasks

Leerdoelenselectie Maatwerk organiseren

u bent hier: [nt2-beginnersdoelen](#) » [start leerdoelenselectie](#) » [catalogus vlaanderen](#) » [cursist/student](#)

## Cursist/Student

U bent in de Vlaamse versie van de catalogus.

- Klik op de [+] en [-] icoontjes om de boomstructuur open of dicht te klappen.
- U kunt deze pagina printen via de printfunctie van uw internet-browser.

### Cursist/Student

- [-] **Cursus of opleiding**
  - [-] Een cursus of opleiding kiezen en volgen
    - [-] Zich oriënteren op cursus- en opleidingsaanbod
      - [-] specifieke handelingen
        - De cursist kan eenvoudig foldermateriaal over cursus- en opleidingsaanbod lezen en begrijpen.
        - De cursist kan (telefonisch) inlichtingen inwinnen over cursus- en opleidingsaanbod.
      - [+] voorbeelden
    - [-] Inschrijven voor cursus of opleiding
      - [-] specifieke handelingen
        - De cursist kan zich (telefonisch) aanmelden voor een cursus of opleiding.
        - De cursist kan een aanmeldingsformulier van een cursus of opleiding invullen.
      - [+] voorbeelden
    - [-] Deelnemen aan cursus of opleiding
      - [-] specifieke handelingen
      - [+] voorbeelden
  - [+] Bekijk een overzicht van lesactiviteiten die aansluiten bij deze subrol
- [-] **Hoger onderwijs**
  - [+] zie o.a. Een cursus of opleiding

ROLE	FUNCTIONAL DOMAIN
Household/family administrator	Contact with official agencies - Housing - Monetary transactions and insurance
Consumer	Contact in stores Health Mobility
Student	Course or educational programme Higher education
Allocator of leisure time	Social contacts and relationships with neighbors Allocation of leisure time Media and current events
Parent/caregiver	Parenting/caregiving Healthcare Education
Jobseeker	Looking for a job
Employee	At the workplace, general or specific (technology, trade and services, health and welfare) Running an independent business Volunteering

# Conditions for successful implementation

Overview of learning goals is not enough

- Intake procedures
- Management of learning paths
- Teaching materials
- Instructional skills

= often, conditions are not met



THEREFORE: 2nd fase

pilot projects to solve problems that arise in the realization of customization

# 1. Intake

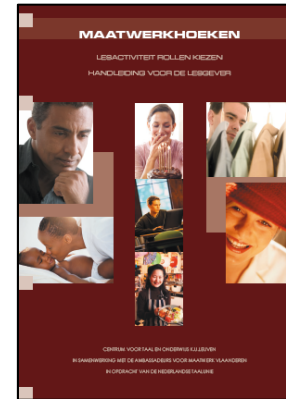
- Intake-form
  - to identify learners profiles
- Pilot on intake
  - Working with interpreters of migrant community
  - Repeated intake
- Extra documentation
  - Experiences with intake
  - Documentation on procedure
  - Recommendations



## 2. Organization of groups

Case: groups not based on roles

Orienting activity  
to help participants select  
relevant roles



Video fragments to illustrate  
this is possible with beginners



If participants take on different roles:  
teaching method: 'custom corners' approach

Part of weekly programme  
Addition to curriculum



- Participants work in pairs/groups
- Instructor offers help
- Fixed corner, or 'shopping around'

## 3. Developing teaching skills

- Documentation of necessary skills
- training modules for instructors to work on their skills (practice what you preach: instructors work on competencies of their choice)
- Background literature



## 4. Inventory of role-based materials

- + Model to organize and manage materials
- + Model to adapt activities to a role-based approach
- + Exemplary activities for reading skills at level (A1)



# 5. Help with benchmarking courses

(using the CEFR)

Aim:



1. Tuning courses to language proficiency of participants
2. Identifying what participants are capable of

# 6. Possible implementations

Descriptions of 41 different projects that implement role-based approach

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Levanto creëert de nodige ruimte opdat mensen met minder kansen hun werk-, woon- en leefsituatie zelf in handen mogen, willen en kunnen nemen.

Welkom op onze website, waar we u graag vertellen wie we zijn, wat we doen, hoe we dat doen en wat we willen bereiken. Zo kunt u ontdekken dat Levanto werkt!

Meer over onze [missie, waarden en werkmethode](#).  
Download hier onze [brochure](#) (5MB).

**Gelukkig op je werk?**

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[Klik voor meer info](#)

**Energiesnoeiers**

De Energiesnoeiers van Levanto voeren de energiescans uit voor de bewoners van de stad en het OCMW van Antwerpen

[Meer](#)

**In de kijker: Levanto milieu**

Levanto-milieu biedt een reeks opleidings- en tewerkstellingskansen in de milieusector.

[meer info](#)

Levanto kan haar missie realiseren dankzij de steun van en/of partnerschap met Europa (ESF, Urban en Efr), de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, de Stad Antwerpen, OCMW Antwerpen, Provincie Antwerpen, de Federale Overheidsdienst Sociale Economie, Migrantenimpulsfonds, VDAB, ovba de Schoring en vele anderen.

# Conclusion

working on customization in beginners' courses bring a new dynamics in classroom



- More chances for interaction
- More chances for autonomous learning
- Learner can guide own learning process
- Learner gains more insight in own problems
- Different role for instructor

## Door to outside world:

- Learners bring in own real-life experiences
- Learners help each other in situations they recognise
- Easily linked with apprenticeship or real-life tasks



# Future



new initiatives to supplement, refine and implement the existing instruments

Examples:

- Collection of extra teaching materials
- The Netherlands: government-funded initiatives focus on language actions intended to support learners who wish to start their own businesses
- Taskforce for follow-up