



School of Humanities

Masters in Education

The Teaching of English as a Foreign/International Language

Postgraduate Dissertation

The use of visual literacy in digital escape rooms, as a game-based learning process, to enhance young EFL learners' speaking skills.

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Abstract

Visual literacy in the digital era manifests in diverse contexts while navigating the multiliteracies mirrored in 21st century multimodal texts, instigating thus a paradigm shift in learning and teaching practices. In the present research, visual literacy is utilized through Digital Escape Rooms (DERs), as a game-based learning process, with the aim of cultivating speaking for CEFR B1 level young learners of English as a Foreign Language.

The purpose of this Action Research (AR) was to examine the relationship between visual literacy in DERs and speaking, with an emphasis on strategic competence and communication strategies, by exploring simultaneously the development of the 4 Cs, i.e. communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. To this end, a mixed method approach was applied in three AR cycles, combining quantitative and qualitative data retrieved from learners' pre- and post-research questionnaires, group tasksheets, DERs, and teacher's observation checklists. The research took place in a state junior high school in Athens, Greece and involved eighteen second graders.

The participating learners reported that they enjoyed the speaking lessons and would like to use DERs again, an attitudinal change noted both in learners' questionnaires and observed behaviours. Secondly, whilst the development of visual literacy strategies was increasing with the use of DERs and group tasksheets, the learners became more strategic users of English during speaking interactions. A third finding was that through group work in both DERs and tasksheets, the learners developed into better communicators and collaborators, practicing their critical thinking and creativity in multiple ways.

Eventually, DERs were found to contribute to the enhancement of early teens' speaking strategies. Nevertheless, a more extensive research would provide further insights into the integration of visual literacy with speaking. Given their popularity, DERs could be used for different language levels and ages, to practice intensive reading, creative writing and listening.

Keywords

visual literacy, digital escape rooms, speaking, young learners, 4 Cs, AIED ChatGPT

Περίληψη

Ο οπτικός γραμματισμός στην ψηφιακή εποχή εκδηλώνεται σε ποικίλα πλαίσια κατά την πλοήγηση στους πολυγραμματισμούς πολυτροπικών κειμένων του 21^{ου} αιώνα, υποκινώντας τη ριζική αλλαγή πρακτικών μάθησης και διδασκαλίας. Στην παρούσα έρευνα, ο οπτικός γραμματισμός χρησιμοποιείται μέσω των Ψηφιακών Δωματίων Απόδρασης (DERs), ως διαδικασία μάθησης βασισμένη στο παιχνίδι, με στόχο την καλλιέργεια παραγωγής προφορικού λόγου για μαθητές γυμνασίου επιπέδου CEFR B1 της Αγγλικής ως Ξένης/Διεθνούς Γλώσσας.

Ο σκοπός της Έρευνας Δράσης ήταν να εξετάσει τη σχέση μεταξύ οπτικού γραμματισμού στα DERs και παραγωγής προφορικού λόγου, με έμφαση στη στρατηγική ικανότητα και στις στρατηγικές επικοινωνίας, διερευνώντας ταυτόχρονα την ανάπτυξη δεξιοτήτων του 21^{ου} αιώνα (4Cs), δηλαδή της επικοινωνίας, συνεργασίας, κριτικής σκέψης, και δημιουργικότητας. Για τον σκοπό αυτό, εφαρμόστηκε μεικτή μεθοδολογική προσέγγιση σε τρεις κύκλους έρευνας δράσης, συνδυάζοντας ποσοτικά και ποιοτικά δεδομένα που προέκυψαν από ερωτηματολόγια μαθητών πριν και μετά την έρευνα, ομαδικά φύλλα εργασίας, DERs και λίστες καταγραφών παρατήρησης του εκπαιδευτικού. Η έρευνα πραγματοποιήθηκε σε δημόσιο γυμνάσιο της Αθήνας, και συμμετείχαν δεκαοκτώ μαθητές δευτέρας τάξης.

Οι συμμετέχοντες ανέφεραν ότι τους άρεσαν τα μαθήματα προφορικών και θα ήθελαν να χρησιμοποιήσουν ξανά DERs, μια αλλαγή συμπεριφοράς που αποτυπώθηκε στα ερωτηματολόγια των μαθητών και τις παρατηρούμενες συμπεριφορές. Δεύτερον, ενώ η ανάπτυξη στρατηγικών οπτικού γραμματισμού αυξανόταν με τη χρήση των DERs και των ομαδικών φύλλων εργασίας, οι μαθητές γίνονταν στρατηγικοί χρήστες της Αγγλικής κατά τη διάρκεια των συνομιλιών. Τρίτον, μέσω ομαδικής εργασίας στα DERs και με τα φύλλα εργασίας, οι μαθητές εξελίχθηκαν σε καλύτερους συνομιλητές και συνεργάτες, ασκώντας την κριτική σκέψη και τη δημιουργικότητά τους.

Τελικά, τα DERs συνέβαλλαν στην ενίσχυση στρατηγικών συνομιλίας των προ-εφήβων. Ωστόσο, μια πιο εκτεταμένη έρευνα θα παρείχε περαιτέρω πληροφορίες για την ενσωμάτωση του οπτικού γραμματισμού στον προφορικό λόγο. Δεδομένης της

δημοτικότητάς τους, τα DERs θα μπορούσαν να χρησιμοποιηθούν για διαφορετικά επίπεδα και ηλικίες, ώστε οι μαθητές να εξασκηθούν στην κατανόηση γραπτού λόγου, στη δημιουργική γραφή και στην κατανόηση προφορικού λόγου.

Λέξεις – Κλειδιά

οπτικός γραμματισμός, ψηφιακά δωμάτια απόδρασης, προφορικά, μαθητές γυμνασίου, δεξιότητες 21^{ου} αιώνα (4 Cs), τεχνητή νοημοσύνη στην εκπαίδευση (ChatGPT)

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