The use hypermedia as a bibliotherapeutic tool to enhance self-image of children / Talia Friedman

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to present a structure of a modern tool of hypermedia in bibliotherapy. The structure will contain elements from the research literature, which increase the effectiveness of the bibliotherapeutic tool in enhancing the self image of children.

This is an interdisciplinary research based on combining studies from the discipline of education, e.g. research regarding computer applications in education, with studies from the disciplines of psychology and librarianship - research regarding bibliotherapy as a counseling tool, and of course processing the findings of these researches in order to suggest a new hypothesis. In this study I shall base my arguments on previous researches regarding the effectiveness of bibliotherapy

and the effectiveness of hypermedia and I shall make an induction based on the combination of these researches' findings, claiming that bibliotherapy combined with hypermedia is more effective as a bibliotherapeutic tool to enhance the self image of children. I shall suggest a model of an hypermedia tool, which will serve for bibliotherapeutic purposes, including specifications of the theoretical demands from this system and literary representations to be used in this tool. I shall detail the structure of screens and keys that will be part of the hypermedia system.

I will use qualitative research techniques of in dept examination of the subject based on case studies, as Kraus (1978) suggested that the clinical psychologist does in his research.

The research findings show that there is a correlation between the way material is presented to children in bibliotherapeutic treatment and the amount of motivation to continue the treatment and finish it that they show. Children resist dealing with any issue that they feel is "boring" (Hynes, 1986). Children also are discouraged by literature that make them deal directly with an issue which is problematic for them. The treatment of children by using hypermedia systems solves these two problems together. The video component in hypermedia may make the events described in the story become alive in a way that no written text can. as well, the video can break the text barrier that many of the children with reading disabilities encounter. The hypermedia enables to present the material in a way so interesting and captivating for the children of today, who are accustomed to computer games, that they become focused on the computer instead of the therapist, and then the conversation seems to them less threatening.

Based on Dede's (1992) claims, it seems that the hypermedia will increase the motivation of the patients in bibliotherapy. Wissick (1996) claims that

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hypermedia has the qualities of individual compatibility to the user, it solves problems of lack of concentration, maintains the to keep the attention and interest of the user, stimulates understanding and illustrates the contents or facts, enables the user to feel in control over his progress in the application and enhances his self image by his being considered an expert for the issue.

Conclusions

The results point to the effectiveness of the intervention. The findings when combined, indicate growing mutual confidence and improved communication between the children and their therapists. The results point to a significant and meaningful impact of the program on the children.

Due to these results, I humbly think that hypermedia is effective as a bibliotherapeutic tool to enhance the self-image of children. The Internet is also appropriate for bibliotherapeutic applications for the following factors: this is a network of computers that became a non linear and non sequential system. Surfing it from subject to subject is possible through clicking keywords, that are used as links between different screens. The Internet enables its users the freedom to determine the rate of their progress and provides them with updated information about any issue they choose. The Internet is used also as media for electronic mail and it is possible to participate in discussion groups regarding different issues. The low cost of search and the quick response of the network may encourage patients to search through the Internet in sites built by the stations for mental health, which will contain bibliotherapeutic materials, instead of coming to the station for a session with their therapist. The ability of the different sites to monitor and record the entries of users to them, may provide the therapist with diagnostical information regarding the problem of the patient.

The social scientist will enrich the variety of tools which are at the disposal of the psychologists in the stations for mental health and will assist them in transforming these stations to far aid stations through computers communications. The hypermedia and the Internet will serve as future bibliotherapeutic tools in these aid centers, thanks to their effectiveness in the bibliothrapeutic treatment, illustrated in this study, in the use of hypermedia systems to enhance the self image of children.

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