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Vlachopoulos, P

Title	Developing self-regulated readers in online distance education: The case of educational reading groups
Authors	Vlachopoulos, P
Publication title	
Publisher	
Type	Conference or Workshop Item
USIR URL	This version is available at: http://usir.salford.ac.uk/id/eprint/16956/
Published Date	2011

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Paper 126 – Poster

Developing self-regulated readers in online distance education: the case of educational reading groups

Dr Panos Vlachopoulos

Centre for Learning Innovation and Professional Practice, Aston University,
p.vlachopoulos@aston.ac.uk

Abstract

Engaged, self-regulated readers are those who set realistic goals, select effective reading strategies, monitor their understanding of the text, and evaluate progress towards their goals (Zimmerman, 1986). This poster reports the findings of a small scale study, which explored the value of running educational reading groups in distance education as a mechanism for developing engaged self-regulated readers. The purpose of the research was to understand how students who study at a distance, and who often lack the motivation to engage with core reading texts, self-regulate while engaging with collective reading activities (Bandura, 1994) in two different reading settings: an asynchronous reading group using an online discussion forum in a virtual learning environment and a synchronous reading group using a web-conferencing tool. Participants (no=16) in these reading groups were distance learners from four countries that took a postgraduate course in education in a New Zealand higher education institution. A qualitative research approach was adopted to capture and analyse their interactions as well as their perceptions of the value of educational reading groups to support their learning and development at a distance. The findings clearly illustrated that despite the preference of the participants towards synchronous discussion, their engagement with the asynchronous reading groups helped them set more realistic goals, select more effective reading strategies and monitor their understanding of the text and self-evaluate their progress. The poster also discusses the implications of this research in relation to the selection of creative reading tasks for distance learners, such as discovery readings, guided readings and podcast reading summaries.

References

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