

DigiTAAL – Games-based Learning in Speech and Language Therapy

Ter Harmsel, M., Schulting, J., Zwitserlood, R., & Gerrits, E.

Research group Speech and Language Therapy, HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht

Background

In recent years, tablet computers have become popular in family homes and schools. Children like to play tablet games and speech and language therapists (SLTs) increasingly use tablet games in intervention with children with DLD. However, many questions concerning the use of tablet games in intervention still exist. For instance, is the use of tablet games really feasible and effective? On the one hand there are concerns about children becoming too distracted while gaming, eye contact and interaction being more difficult to maintain and three-dimensional toys enhancing language learning better than objects on a two-dimensional screen. On the other hand there are SLTs who think of apps as engaging and motivating tools for therapy to facilitate their intervention goals.

Project DigiTAAL

In three studies project DigiTAAL investigated the usability of tablet games in language therapy and its effects on language learning for preschool children with Developmental Language Disorders (DLD).

Study 1: game selection	Study 2: game use	Study 3: game effect
Development of a reliable checklist for rating of tablet games suitable for speech language therapy (SLT) Development of an open source review database for speech language therapists (SLTs)	Literature study on SLT techniques to facilitate interaction and communication Identifying differences and similarities regarding SLT with tablet games and SLT with concrete play materials Identifying best practices for gaming together during language therapy	Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT): SLT with tablet game 'My Playhome' versus SLT with concrete play materials (kitchen)
Dutch database <i>logoGames.nl</i>	Dutch practical guideline <i>Samen Gamem</i> (<i>Gaming together</i>)	Receptive vocabulary intervention for toddlers with DLD using tablet games & concrete play materials respectively, appear to be equally effective .

Contact

Website: husite.nl/digitaal/ (*in Dutch; includes the Dutch practical guideline*)

E-mail: m.harmsel@kentalis.nl
joschulting@gmail.com
ellen.gerrits@hu.nl

Links: LogoGames.nl (*in Dutch; database for reviewed tablet games*)