

International ELINET Symposium 2018
“Literacy in the 21st Century: Participation – Inclusion – Equity”.

July 23-24, 2018, Cologne, Germany



Section Ia: Language, literacy and professional development in preschool education

Chairs: Eufimia Tafa, University of Crete, Greece & Renate Valtin, Humboldt University, Germany

Monday, July 23, at 16.00–17.30 **Location:** Seminar Building / Room S 23

LITERACY CHANGES LIVES.

Narrative abilities of preschoolers from low-income families

Presenter:

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Abstract:

To tell a story requires integration of different language domains, including vocabulary, syntax, morphology and pragmatics (McCabe & Rollins, 1994) and organisation of human experiences into temporally and thematically meaningful episodes (Nelson, 1996). This raises greater demand on semantic clarity, planning and linguistic self-monitoring (Nicolopoulou et al., 2006; Nicolopoulou, 1997) and challenge children with building up a picture of a world only with words (Wells, 1985). Thus development of narrative abilities interweave with development of early literacy skills of children that are especially needed for reading for meaning and comprehension.

In our study narrative abilities of children before school entry were investigated to explore how particular aspects of storytelling skills differ depending on the economic status of children's home environment, as important component of home literacy environment. 53 children from low-income families (LIF) were asked to create a story using two wordless picture books (one with event-based and one with problem-based type of picture sequence) and asked follow-up comprehension questions. Four analyses – story productivity analyses, the global structure of narratives, analyses of story components (both basic and episodic) and story comprehension were performed. The performances of children from LIF were compared with the reference group (narratives by 100 children from families with middle and high socio-economic status).

Analyses performed on the collected data showed significant differences between stories produced depending on which type of picture sequence was used. After controlling for the story productivity and story complexity our findings suggest that the lexical complexity plays important role in the development of the story plot through implementation of episodic components into the narrative throughout the samples, although, this interaction between factors is more significant in narratives of children from LIF. The role of the type of picture sequences used to collect children's narratives will be discussed in the presentation.

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Bio note:

Zuzana Petrová, PhD. is Associate Professor of Education at the Trnava University, Trnava, Slovakia. She graduated in Primary Education at Comenius University in Bratislava (2001) where she also received her PhD. degree in Education (2005). In 2018 she received a degree in Philosophy at the Trnava University in Trnava. Main area of her expertise is interconnectedness between (written) language and learning in preschool age with particular focus on early literacy development within Vygotskian perspective on education and literacy. She is co-author (with O. Zápotočná) of the national early literacy curriculum for preschools in Slovakia (in force since 2016). Her latest works and research projects are aimed at the study of the influence of literacy rich environment in preschools on invented writing and the development of narrative abilities, specifically in relation to children from low socio-economical background. She also closely collaborates with Dr. Josef Raabe Publishing House Slovakia on disseminating early literacy practices in preschools where she regularly publishes methodical guidelines and teaching plans for teachers and worksheets for pre-school age children.