

**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.

**Kindergarten children’s story structure understanding through story retelling**

**Presenter:**

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**Abstract:**

Retelling is children’s ability to recall crucial information from a story read to them, to structurally organize this information and express it verbally in an understandable way (Morrow, 2005; Vretudaki & Tafa, 2017). It is a valuable cognitive and linguistic task to find out how children understand stories that they have listened to. Evidence have shown that engaging children in a dialogue before, after, or during read-aloud as well as in retelling, summarizing and discussing stories is the predominant teaching approach to foster young children’s story structure understanding (Pesco & Gagne, 2015). The purpose of the study presented here was the implementation of an intervention program to train kindergartner children in story retelling and to examine whether this training helped children to understand the story structure and retell the story structural elements in sequence. Thirty-five children aged 5-6 years from two kindergarten classrooms were trained in story retelling once a week for five months. During the program, 17 well-structured story books were read aloud to the children with practicing in story retellings at three levels. At the first level teachers read the book, presented to the children the story elements and served as a model in story retelling. At the second level the children received a training in story retelling with the use of pictures and visual aids, while at the third level the children were trained with the use of story map. All books had an enjoyable story plot appropriate for the children’s age, a clearly presented story structure and illustrations that corresponded to the story events. Results showed that the children understood almost all the story elements, were able to retell the story in sequence and justified and commented on the characters’ actions and reactions.

**References:**

Morrow, L. (2005). *Literacy Development in the Early Years: Helping children read and write* (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Pesco, D. & Gagné, A. (2015). Scaffolding narrative skills: A meta-analysis of instruction in early childhood settings. *Early education and development, 28*(7), 1-22.

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Vretudaki, E. & Tafa, E. (2017 July). *Strategies for developing kindergarten children’s narrative skills.*  
Paper presented at the 20<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Literacy. Madrid, Spain.

**Bio note:**

**Eufimia Tafa, Prof. Dr.,** is a professor of preschool education in the Department of Preschool Education of the University of Crete, Greece and Dean of the Faculty of Education. In 2014 she was inducted in the Reading Hall of Fame (USA). She is the author of five books, editor and co-editor in three books and she has been the author and co-author in more than fifty articles published in edited volumes and in major scholarly journals. She is the chief editor of the on-line open access scientific journal *Preschool and Primary Education* and member of the editorial advisory board of the *Reading Research Quarterly*.