

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

July 23-24, 2018, Cologne, Germany



**Section III Digital literacy policies and frameworks**

**Chairs:** Fabio Nascimbeni, Universidad Internacional de la Rioja (UNIR) and Jeroen Clemens, Windesheim University for Applied Sciences, Netherlands

Monday, July 23, at 16.00–17.30      **Location:** Seminar Building / Room S 26

LITERACY CHANGES LIVES.

**When theoretical, political and practical agendas collide. Digital literacy in pre-school education in Portugal**

**Presenters:**

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**Abstract:**

One of the most significant conclusions that can be drawn from the relatively scarce research developed on young children’s digital literacy within the Multiliteracies framework (The New London Group, 1996) is the strong potential that inheres digital meaning making to enhance conceptions of children as active learners. Another, is its potential to transform conceptions of emergent literacy. Research results such as Yelland and Gilbert’s (2014) have shown young children as engaged and effective digital, multimodal learners. In particular, they suggest that young children perform multimodal orchestrations and multimodal layering of meanings (Simpson and Walsh, 2017) in their explorations. The research trend therefore points out that: (i) language is but one among a plethora of multimodal resources for children’s active cognitive development (Flewitt, 2013); (ii) digital media are powerful tools in the enactment of young children’s multiliteracies; (iii) the concept of *emergent literacy* needs updating through the consideration of children’s meaning making with multiple semiotic resources beyond the mode of written language alone.

We use this theoretical background to discuss the most recent Portuguese curricular orientations for pre-school education in Portugal (Silva et al., 2016), in particular to argue that it not only collides with theory and research but also with some emergent, transformed pedagogical practice. On the one hand, the analysis of the official discourse reveals a restricted conception of children’s literacy development as focusing exclusively on print-related skills and practices, despite the acknowledgment, elsewhere, of the role of multiple modes in children’s expression as well as the potential of developing

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digital learning experiences. On the other, our research shows how pre-school teachers are beginning to enact transformed pedagogical understandings regarding multimodal, digital literacy, despite the restricted nature of the curricular orientations.

**References:**

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**Bio Notes:**

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