At the second COST meeting in Cyprus, Working Group3 discussed the importance of local oral language in children's digital reading materials. A comparative study (Bus et al., forthcoming) of apps from Turkey, Hungary and Holland found that the majority of children's apps are not in local languages (In Hungary 90% of oral language is in a foreign language, in Turkey it's 76% and Netherlands it's 50%). Considering the importance of oral language and cultural heritage in children's reading materials, these are alarming results. The working group is therefore interested in mapping more systematically the provision of apps/children's digital books in other European countries.

During the session, other WG members presented digital resources for literacy learning in their respective countries. Surveying e-reading content available in Flanders/The Netherlands Jan van Coillie composed a list of 440 titles of digital books and series for children aged 0-8 in Dutch. Trude Hoel and Iris Pereira presented examples of digital resources in Norway and Portugal. Discussing these results, the WG agreed to zoom in on the story reading apps available in selected European countries and their quality. Results of this preliminary analysis will be shared at the next COST meeting in Prague (autumn 2016).

Each WG member will deliver a description of the main organisations (and their websites) that review and recommend children's e-books and review this corpus to answer the following research questions (based on Van Coillie).

Research questions:

What is the provision of children's e-books for the different age groups?

Which percentage focuses on beginning readers as compared to emergent readers?

Which additional features are available in books for emergent and beginning readers (games, dictionary, animated pictures, music, and sound) and which are most popular?

Are the digital books available in local languages?

Which qualities (features, language) predict rankings (most downloaded, best sold) for these books thus indicating which selection criteria are used by children's parents/caregivers?

How many books have a good balance between play (games) and story reading thereby circumventing the negative effects of task switching? (see Bus, Takacs, & Kegel, 2015)

Do digital books include features that may support children's reading for pleasure? (see Kucirkova, Littleton & Cremin, 2016)

What is the provision of children's e-books in terms of different genres and which themes/topics are dealt with most often? Are the books part of a series? Do they include popular characters?

Which digitized storybooks belong to the top ten and does this set differ across countries?

What is the average price and does this relate to qualities (local language, additional practice of reading skills, interactive features)?

Procedure

- a format will be developed for coding the resources, enabling an answer to these research questions

- a draft will be circulated and if necessary amended by the members of the WG

- digitized storybooks (e-books) will be reviewed in Belgium/the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, UK, Ireland, Germany

- a Handbook proposal will be written by the chairs of WG3 with input from all participants.

- we consider the possibility of a meeting in Leiden in 2017

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