

## STSM Report

**STSM TITLE:** Understanding the potentials of children's book apps for early multilingual literacy practices: A multimodal methodological framework

**COST Action:** IS1410

**Reference:** ECOST-STSM-IS1410-130317-082675

**STSM dates:** 13-03-2017 to 24-03-2017

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**Location:** UCL Institute of Education  
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**Host:** Dr Natalia Kucirkova  
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## **Purpose of the visit**

The overall aim of this STSM was to explore the potentials of multilingual affordances in book apps for fostering early multiliteracies in a multilingual European context. Specifically, it aimed to

- 1) gain insights into how and to what extent multilingual affordances have been used in the design of (picture) book apps for young children in the European context;
- 2) develop a preliminary methodological framework for evaluating interactive design and linguistic qualities in book apps, which can be potentially beneficial to educators, parents and developers;
- 3) help me prepare for the fieldwork stage of my fellowship project at Odense International School, which will commence in April 2017. The fieldwork will involve a series of action research projects in which I, together with P1 (age 5-6) teacher will develop and test a series of strategies for incorporating mobile apps in multilingual literacy curriculum.

## **Description of the work carried out during the visit**

During my two-week STSM, I completed the following tasks

- I participated in two research events related to mobile applications and early literacy. In the first seminar, organized by Dr Natalia Kucirkova, I conducted a focus group discussion with practitioners from publishing and app design industry and gained insight into their perspectives on App development and personification. The second was a data session, organized by Dr Jeff Bezemer from the UCL Knowledge Lab, during which we discussed possible approaches to analyzing video data of young EFL children using apps for language

learning tasks.

- I completed a round of literature review of the roles of Apps in early (multi) literacy as well as a survey of popular and award-winning literacy/language and book apps.
- I attended four research meetings, two with Dr Natalia Kurcirkova and two with Dr Rosie Flewitt, during which we discussed possible research collaboration/publication.
- I visited and interviewed children's publishers in Oxford.
- I also paid visits to two Chinese families with pre-school aged children in South London.

## **STSM Major achievements**

There are three main outcomes from this STSM

### **1) Research funding**

The literature review and app survey carried out during the STSM provided the basis for a grant application titled "Supporting emergent readers and writers through mobile Apps in a multimodal and multilingual learning environment". The application was submitted to Fabrikant Mads Clausens Fond (Danfoss, DK) on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, with a total request of 43,388 Kr.

### **2) Research publication in preparation**

Dr Rosie Flewitt and I are currently developing a research publication, exploring how young children in the Chinese diaspora in England maintain heritage language and culture by using digital technologies for intergenerational distant communication (via apps such as WeChat), and exploring the potential of mobile digital devices for fostering early bi/multilingualism. A version of the paper will be presented in this year's EECERA.

### 3) Industry Connections

With Dr Natalia Kucirkova's assistance, I have managed to establish contacts with editors at the Oxford University Press, who have expressed interest in exploring the role social media plays in the spread and use of OUP early reading materials by EAL and EFL children. This new thread of research will be further explored in this year's UKLA conference in Glasgow.

### Financial Report

<b>Flight:</b>	865 DKK (approx 116 Euro)
<b>Accomodation:</b>	700 GBP (approx 830 Euro)
<b>Subsistence:</b>	479 DKK <sup>1</sup> per day X 10 days (approx 650 Euro)
<b>Actual Cost:</b>	Approx 1596 Euro
<b>Funding approved:</b>	1414 Euro

### Host Approval

Dr Natalia Kucirkova



**Signature:**

**Date: 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

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<sup>1</sup> The standard daily travel allowance rate at SDU.