SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION (STSM) – SCIENTIFIC REPORT

The STSM applicant submits this report for approval to the STSM coordinator

Action number: IS1410
STSM title: Digital literacies: in between languages and geographies
STSM start and end date: 02/01/2018 to 09/01/2018
Grantee name: Ana Jorge

PURPOSE OF THE STSM

This STSM had the purpose of promoting interdisciplinary collaboration with Vilmante Liubiniene, around Social Linguistics, and Political economy and social geography, to discuss the potentials and threats of the use of digital technologies by young children in their language and overall development. The STSM intended to help gather more theories and methods in diverse fields to help to conceptualize and analyze better the projects I am working on, namely and under DigiLitEY: Teachers' perceptions of digital technology for children 3-8, A Day in the life of children under 3, and Internet of Toys.

On the other hand, it also aimed to approach the topic and the different research we have been taking part relating to children and digital technologies from the perspective of small countries, with interesting geopolitical, historical and cultural differences, as our countries of origin (Lithuania and Portugal) are.

More specifically, the plan of this STSM included the following activities:

- presentation of current projects by Ana and by Vilmante;

- workshop and reading of essential Social linguistics literature on language, technology and early years;

- introduction to techniques for data collection and analysis (including software) in Social linguistics;

- analysis of results of Internet of Toys project and writing of accepted chapter "Global production and local consumption of smart toys" for collection by Giovanna Mascheroni and Donnell Holloway (2018, Palgrave McMillan);

- discussion of future lines of research, collaboration and scientific events.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK CARRIED OUT DURING THE STSMS

During the STSM different activities were carried out around the research on the use of digital media by young children:

- Ana presented her current projects under DigiLitEY besides Internet of Toys (where Vilmante takes part), and also her previous experience on EU Kids Online network and the 2016 project in Portugal "Among Electronic Screens (children 3-8)". Vilmante also presented her research on Lithuanian Families of children 0-8 in the comparative project under Stephane Chaudron's coordination. Interesting reflections on the methodological challenges of doing research with young children, and comparative, cross-national qualitative research arose.

- Vilmante presented some of the key and relevant concepts from Social linguistics to understand language, technology and early years;

- the task of introducing techniques of data collection and analysis was replaced by the discussion of a analytical model to encompass the cross-national comparison of digital literacy and the appropriation of digital technologies by young children and their families; this involved going through theorization to variables to indicators and searching for the availability of comparable secondary data for this. The aspects of language and culture, as well as socio-demographic at the macro and micro levels, and the digital technology and digital literacy education were taken into consideration into this tentative model;

- analysis of the results of Internet of Toys project for the accepted chapter "Global production and local consumption of smart toys" for the collection on Smart toys edited by Giovanna Mascheroni and Donnell Holloway (2018, Palgrave McMillan); this is continued work from the project and also with new data collection methods to further understand the relationship of children from different countries with technology by looking at the ways in which the markets and States create different opportunities for the access of children to these technologies;

- from the development of an analytical model and the discussion of results from the Internet of Toys project, we decided to submit an abstract to ECREA 2018 conference on 'smart toys for children as a cultural industry', with a focus on the case studies of Portugal and Lithuania. We also discussed further ideas to take part in an international workshop for Children, youth and digital technologies.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN RESULTS OBTAINED

The main results obtained during this STSM were the analytical model on cross-national of the appropriation of digital technologies in different countries, and the analysis of the results for the Smart toys chapter on the political economy of the industry of smart toys and how it precedes, constructs and affects the opportunities they can offer to young children in different countries. The former is a tool that we intend to use, directly or indirectly, in the ongoing research, on a comparative, cross-national scale, on the use of digital technologies by young children. The latter was the result of fruitful intellectual discussion with different theoretical traditions that allowed us to add to the perspectives on the emergent topic of Internet connected toys.

FUTURE COLLABORATIONS (if applicable)

An immediate collaboration is the continuation of this work into a conference presentation on 'smart toys for children as a cultural industry', with a focus on the case studies of Portugal and Lithuania, to be submitted until the end of February to ECREA 2018 conference (to take place in late October/early November). We will also continue to collaborate pursuing the interest on global/local aspects under the development Internet of Toys into its second round of data collection.