

STSM Final Report, Anat Ben Shabat

COST Action IS1410

Report

Digital Reading and Language Acquisition in the Early Years

STSM Researcher

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Host

Prof. Adriana Bus, Language Literature and Communication, Vrije Universiteit
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Duration

January 7th - January 14th, 2018

Aim

- ✓ meetings with researchers and PhD-students at the university.
- ✓ participating in activities related to the NRO project Innovation Centers.
- ✓ Visiting Dutch schools.
- ✓ Designing a new research, into the role of sounds and music in digital books.

Researchers Involved

During the STSM I have worked closely with Prof. Adriana Bus and with her colleagues: Prof. Roel van Steensel, Prof. Martine Coene, and Ph.D. students Merel de Bondt, Ilona Wildeman and Lisa van der Sande - and researcher Rosalie Anstadt.

Timetable and Work Carried Out During the STSM

January 8th, 2018

- ✓ Meeting in VU University with Prof. Adriana Bus and her colleagues.
- ✓ A presentation of the Dutch reading projects: Book Start By Merel de Bondt
- ✓ A presentation of a meta-analysis that tests which early interventions work best in order to promote book sharing in families.
- ✓ A conversation with Prof. Bus and Merel about screens, mediation and evaluation.
- ✓ A discussion with prof. Martine Coene about background music and sound effects. Martine explained us about different types of sounds and their different influence on text comprehension.

January 9th, 2018

- ✓ Visiting child centers in Dordrecht – with Prof. Bus, Karen, Rosalie and Linda, we visited 1 day-care and 3 play groups for children aged 2.5 - 4. We met 1-3 years old kids, most of them immigrants and second language speakers, and heard about their curriculum and pedagogical programs to promote language skills. We visited the classes that were newly furnished with book and research corners.

January 10th, 2018

- ✓ Discussing research at the Vrije Universiteit.

The 4 researchers and I presented our latest research and discussed main issues as reading habits, family literacy programs, reading apps, sound effects in digital books, the importance of school's library and digital tools than might foster reading in primary school.

- ✓ A research plan with Prof. Bus – We started to design our new research, based on all the information we shared these last days.

January 11th, 2018

- ✓ A visit to a Montessori school – We joined classes from pre-school to 6th grade. We heard about their approach to reading, we saw the teacher carrying out lessons and the kids working independently and completing their tasks. We had a chance to see a class for more talented children working on creative processes by "Habits of Mind" in order to foster researching, problems' solving and sharing information.

January 12th, 2018

- ✓ A meeting in Leiden with Prof. Bus - a working meeting for our research design. We wrote the research's questions, the variables, procedure and we planned the intervention.
- ✓ A visit to the BookStart corner in the Leiden Library to see parents and kids reading together, printed and digital books and mothers and babies having a warm welcome and getting instructions on how to start participating in BookStart.

- ✓ Reflections on the work carried out and planning for ongoing and future collaborations.

Outcomes from the STSM

- ✓ Our workshop provided the basis to develop a digital book for preschoolers, which contains multimedia components such as "white noise" and "ups and downs sounds", in order to investigate which sound promote comprehension.
- ✓ The STSM's major achievement is our intentional experimental, comparative study, designed as a randomized control trial, in The Netherlands and in Israel. The intervention will start as soon as the digital books, in Dutch language and in Hebrew, will be ready to use.
- ✓ Contact with researchers, which may lead to a future collaboration.

Reflections and Considerations

The STSM was an intensive and fruitful time with many new insights and opportunities. Further, the STSM provided the context to discuss relevant investigation topics, to work with Dutch VS Israeli day cares, play groups, preschools teachers and to deepen work collaboration.

I would like to thank the COST Action IS1410 for providing this opportunity, as well as Prof. Adriana Bus for the generosity, hospitality and support provided during the STSM.