## In and out the digital worlds.

### Hybrid-transition as a conceptual tool to explore new forms of children's agency

Federico Farini <u>federico.farini@northampton.ac.uk</u> Angela Scollan <u>a.scollan@mdx.ac.uk</u>

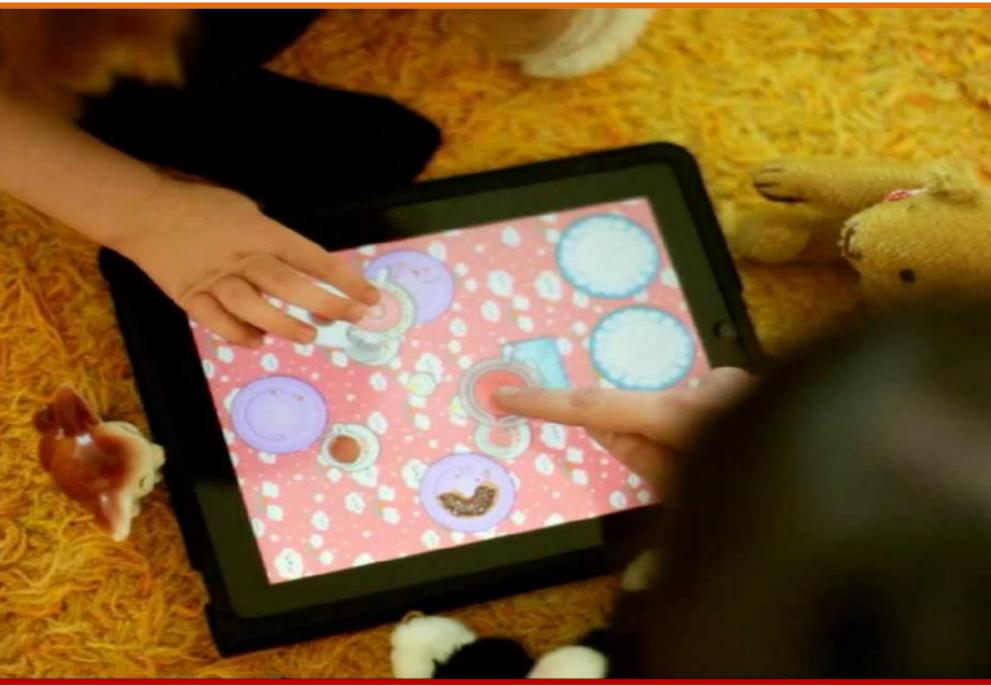
## **THE RESEARCH**

This posters presents the concept of hybrid-transitions as a theoretical tool to explore transitions between the digital the impact of technology on the and non-digital worlds as spaces at the intersection between young children's agency and the network of relationships and expectations constituting the context of children's action.

Hybrid-transitions refers to a child's movement from the immersion in

#### BACKGROUND

A rich tradition of pedagogical and psychological research has explored cognitive and social development of the child. However, little research has focused on the implications of the use of digital technologies in educational settings for children's agency.



#### **HYBRID-TRANSITION AND CHILDREN'S AGENCY**

Adults should be mindful of unforeseen but nevertheless important spaces of children's agency in the transition between digital and nondigital worlds. The observation discussed suggest that the use of digital technologies by a small group of young children may be the context for hybrid-transitions that open opportunities where personal memories and narratives can be produced and negotiated, possibly leading to the interactive coconstruction of small cultures, that is, cultures that characterise group identities and relationships. Hybrid-transitions will inevitably occur between digital and non-digital exploration, and it is here suggested that the observation of interactions and communication at the encounter of digital and non-digital worlds can be of the greatest importance to promote a culture of mutual trust and positive engagement in contexts where the use of digital resources impact on children's (and adults') experiences and learning. It is possible of course to romanticize about yesteryears' traditional play experiences but digital play has become the 'real play' and lived experiences of today. As Khalil Gibran famously wrote about our children of tomorrow, 'your children are not your children, you may house their bodies but not their souls, for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams'. So today, an invitation is

digitally-enhanced experiences generated by educational technologies to non-digitally mediated interactions with peers or adults.

Observations took place in two settings. In **Boston**, the observations concerned the use of a software for the development of communication skills for children age 4 to 5 with English as second language. Eight children were observed over two weeks. Two PC were provided with the software, allowing four children working at the same time, over a 30 minutes session in the early afternoon.

# RESULTS

Hybrid-transitions between digital worlds and non-digital worlds are dense social spaces, rather than mere temporal sequences Observations suggest that the experiences enhanced by digital technology becomes the pivot for children's production of interlaced narratives Individuals narratives are "interlaced" in co-constructed group narratives authored by the children through face to face interactions Interlaced narratives, and their interactive co-construction, represent a form of agency within the peergroups. Children's agency is observable as authorship of narratives based on digitallyenhanced experiences. However, data suggest that hybridtransitions and children's agency in the use of digital resources may rannoant a blind anat of the adult

In London, 5 children age 4 were observed for one month, using a software installed in the nursery's tablets, and design to support children in building their vocabulary, as for the curricula goals for their age. Children accessed software in group of 2 and sued in 15/20 minutes sessions. In both settings, the researcher observed children and their interaction during the use of digital learning technologies and in its aftermath when children re-joined the group. In both settings, the researcher (an experienced

Read more Inter	i, F., Scollan, A. 2019. In, out and ugh digital worlds. Hybrid-transitions space for children's agency. <i>national Journal of Early Years</i> cation, 28 (1): 36-49	
technologies and in its aftermath when children re-ioined the group.		reality of their everyday experience of their social worlds.
	agency and adults' curricula-driven agenda can generate a form of digital	to visit the digital and non-digital worlds they enter in which constitutes the
	The divergence between children's	alongside them whilst on their journey
oarly voare practitionar harcolf)	represent a blind spot of the adult.	offered to join children to learn