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***Digital Literacy: The Effect of Visual Elements
on Reading and Understanding Digital Contents***

As a result of technological innovations the way we think, the way we comprehend texts is constantly changing. The new forms of media have a strong effect on our cognitive processes. The visual elements, the pictures, gifs, icons, short videos and interactive adverts, significantly influence our ability to read and understand texts. This is the reason why so many researchers try to capture the essence and the effects of the recent changes of the digital environment.

In my presentation I focus on those fundamental questions of reading literacy which concern the visual elements of comprehension. How do we read and understand printed and digital texts with the help of visual effects? Do these kinds of graphic elements really help us to understand the written contents, or on the contrary, the colourful images and additional visual elements obstruct the comprehension processes? In my talk I argue that reading digital texts including visual elements is a non-linear kind of reading which is similar to reading comics. My case study is the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009 survey which was made by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) with the aim of getting a better understanding of digital literacy.

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