Internet use of Icelandic children 2001-3: A qualitative glimpse

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Overview

⌘ Why did we do the study?
⌘ Who collected data and were observed?
⌘ Where were they observed?
⌘ How did we do the study?
⌘ What were they doing on the net (web sites)? Examples
⌘ Some trends
⌘ Conclusions

The Why?

⌘ Examine how Icelandic children and adolescents are using the Internet
⌘ Provide graduate students that are in a diploma program on ICT in education at KHÍ research-related experience in data gathering and analysis.


Who collected data?

⌘ Grad. DE students in a course Teaching and Learning on the Internet in spring quarters 2001,2,3. Research participation evaluated as 1/2 credit (1 ects), managed by Sólveig Jakobsdóttir, associate professor KHÍ.
⌘ Most are practicing teachers, majority female
⌘ 2001: 15 making 58 obs.+ interviews
⌘ 2002: 22 making 102 obs.+ interviews
⌘ 2003: 29 making 117 obs. + interviews
⌘ Total so far: 86 making 277 obs. + interviews

Who were observed?

277 thereof 4 from US;
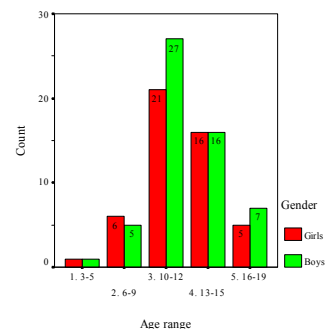29 20 years+
10+ not on Net!

234 (84%)
under 20 years of age
AND from Iceland on the Net(see Fig.)

The latter group
Mean age: 12,0
SD: 2,9

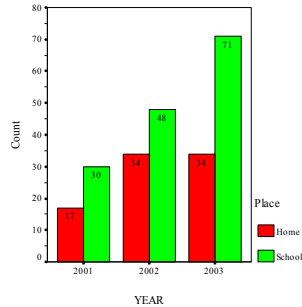---
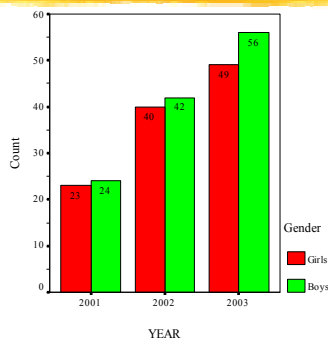
Who was observed in 2003 by age and gender?

In 2003
109: 56 M, 49 F

Where?

In schools: 64% (58-68)
In homes: 36% (42-32)

(tend to be younger at home

How?

❖ Selected individuals (2 boys and 2 girls) at school (randomly) or home
❖ Got permission to study them using the Internet
❖ ("Microcultural observation") Wrote down everything that each individual was doing - (movements, facial expressions, sounds, words, keyboarding skills, interaction with the screen and others, things going on on the screen).
❖ Average observation time = 14,1 min. (SD=7,2)
❖ Took a short interview about Internet use
❖ Coded the observations for certain behavior
❖ Entered data and coding on the project web site

The initial coding

⌘ "Open coding"
⌘ Also coded for:
⌘ Focus, concentration
⌘ Interaction
⌘ Experience
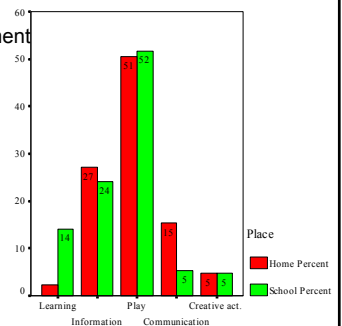⌘ Attitude
⌘ Fragmentation

What?

Mostly play or entertainment then searching for info

More use for learning at school

More communication at home

Popular websites?

2003: 93 individuals under 20
Visited 78 sites that were recorded plus a few unrecorded
0,84 named webs/individual (0,69 in 2002)
Most visited/used of the named:
⌘ MSN (17%; 23% of F , 12% M, mostly 13+)
⌘ www.miniclip.com (13%,11% of F,14% of M, 12&under)
⌘ www.blogger.com (10%, 14% of F, 6% of M, 13+)

⌘ School home page (14%, 28% of F, 6% of M, 10-15)
⌘ School/project pages (14%, 11% of F, 16% of M, 10-15)

Web sites: information

⌘ Up to 70% in 2003 visited (31% in 2002)
⌘ School webs or school project webs visited by 14% each type
⌘ Mostly 10-15 years old
⌘ "Girl" webs (10)
⌘ "Boy" webs (18)
⌘ "Mixed" webs (5)

Example

⌘ Boy 11, at school

⌘ When he gets to go anywhere he likes on the Net he visits websites he has already seen and says "Cool" when he finds a page with e-mail adresses and is called tony.hawk. Looks at the next person and asks: "Where is this game?" when he is in a soccer/ball game. Finds the game soon. Sees that his friend is now on a web side about cars and asks where that page is. Appears not to figure it out and goes to leit.is [Icelancid search engines] and types in the search word "cars". Searches but has difficulties finding pages. Finally, finds a sites, which the person sitting next to him asks him about. Has good control of mouse and moves it with short movements.

Websites: Entertainment – the girls!

Up to 41% visited such webs in 2003

⌘ Almost nobody under 10
⌘ Mostly girls (up to 61%, vs. 22%)
⌘ 14 girl sites
⌘ 6 boy sites
⌘ 2 mixed

Example

Girl 11, at school

⌘ Student turned on the computer and went straight to the Word program. Did this quickly, with confidence and without error. When she had done that she called the teacher and asked whether she could go on the Net. She typed in the Disney url and looked at many pictures. Asked the girl by her side how she should write Britney Spears. Then went to that web page and looked at pictures there and said: "This is a lot of fun."

Websites: Sports – the boys!

Up to 12% visited such webs in 2003

⌘ Mixed age range
⌘ Mostly boys (up to 20%, vs. 2%)
⌘ 6 "boy" sites
⌘ 1 "mixed" site

Web sites: Games

⌘ Up to 39 % of participants used in 2003 (52% in 2002)

⌘ www.miniclip.com by 13%

⌘ Most popular among 6-15 year olds
⌘ "Girl" games (7)
⌘ "Boy" games (4)
⌘ "Mixed" games (3)

Example

Boy 8, at school

⌘ Is in a game, talks a lot to himself. E.g., "beware dumbhead... I am the dog." Is always moving around, does not sit straight on the chair, talks to the game, has headphones, hits the keys hard on the keyboard, talks a lot to himself, tells what is happening in the game: "hey leave me ... I deserve to kill you. Focuses and does not let others in room disturb him. Person sitting beside him complains he is being noisy. Sits on his leg "go away, go away, stupid, stupid, stupid." Teacher scolds student for not being too noisy. Student scratches his neck "go away.. Go away... Go away you stupid." Talks constantly to the games (mixture of Icelandic and English). Uses arrows and mousekeys. Looks tired when he is done with the game, stretches, sits up in the chair, scratches neck. Starts another game, calls the teacher but still continues to find another game on Cartoon Networks.

(Web) sites: communications

- Up to 36% used those (vs. 22% in 2002), 39% of girls and 33% of boys

- 17% in MSN: 23% of girls and 12% of boys
- 5% in Hotmail: 9% of girls, 2% of boys

Example

- Girl 19, at home
- Goes to Yahoo and gets the e-mail, has very long password but types it in quickly. Knows the web environment she is working in well. Takes a test that a girl friend sent her. "Ahh.. where did this go, desktop, I cannot look at this. No went wrong." Goes to a page uconics.com and looks at jokes. Laughs. She taps her feet the whole time. Says "Oh I need to hurry am going out" Closes (disconnects?) stands up and leaves.

Web sites: search machines

- 2003: 18% of participants used those (19% in 2002)

- More girls 30% of the girls, 8% of the boys

Web site: Icelandic?

- Information sites: 89%
- Sports: 67%
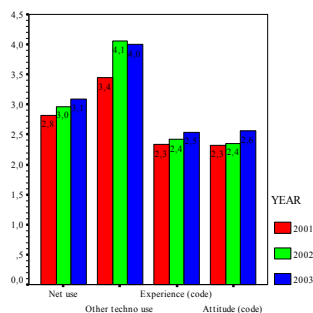- Entertainment: 50%
- Games: 43%
- Search engines: 33%
- Communications: 17%

All others but one in English

Trends from 2001-3

Obervation
Students' behavior tends to indicate a little more experience and Positive attitude

Interviews
Students report more Net and technology use

Some results/conclusions

- Most Icelandic children and adolescents have used the Internet at home and at school although use at schools appears limited among younger than 16 years old. However, many are acquiring experience in information search and use of the Net in various projects/subjects.
- Often the Internet appears to be used with or without the permission of the teacher for games mixed with or after other types of use (more work/project related). High use of games could have the effects, particularly on boys, to find other type of Internet use boring.
- Study not conclusive but provides a sort of a window, hints at trends and can provide ideas about further research regarding ever-changing technology environment and use of the Internet.
- Research on-going –see:http://soljak.khi.is/netnot

Project web (2)
http://soljak.khi.is/netnot

Project web - soon to be open