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INTERNET USE AND ADOLESCENTS' SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

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Context of research

Internet brought on overturnings as far as accession to knowledge and the statute of relationships are concerned. The socialization of teenagers seems to evolve into a style of almost continuous, short and frequent ties with others enabling them to establish a relational autonomy as well with regard to their family as to their group of peers towards whom the notion of commitment becomes relative. An important breaking exists between Internet practices at home and Internet ones at school.

Only a few studies of the numerical culture have been carried out up to now :

- Sociological works (Mediappro, European inquiry regarding education to media, 2005-2006 / Lardellier, P. inquiry about the numerical culture of teenagers, 2006) are questioning us about the cultural homogenization process.
- Pedagogical works (CEFRIO Quebec « CIT and Schools » Breuleux & al., 2005 / I.N.R.P « e-praxis » 2005-2007) foreshadow a change in the teacher's part and his relation with the pupil.

➤ What is Developmental Psychology going to enlighten ?

Theoretical frame

The social developmental approach of Vigotsky as well as the psycho-analytic approach of Bion and Winnicott set the importance of the adult's place in the developmental processes (Vygotski, 1933 : Learning Process and Developmental Proximal Zone ; Winnicott, 1972 : Transitional Area and Bion, 1982 : developmental process of the Thinking Ability).

The horizontal dimension in the communication of Knowledge (via Internet) leads to obliterate the vertical dimension of the transmission of Knowledge by the adults (parents and teacher) Lebrun, 2005.

The prevalence of the horizontal dimension emphasized by Internet seems to go with some risks regarding teenagers' socialization and school mobilization (Turkle, 1986 ; Breton, 1990 ; Bromberg & Trognon, 2004).

Question : Is the large place taken by the new technologies changing the understanding and the relation each one has go with Knowledge ?

Methodology

2 Exploratory studies

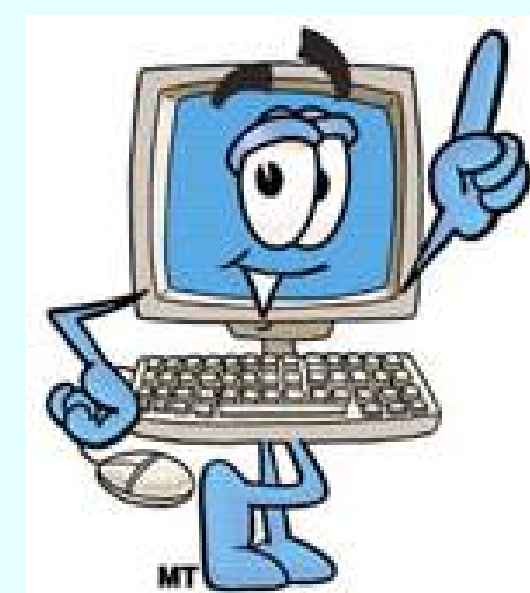
First stage : Focus group

11 pupils from first and second forms of grammar school (average age : 12.7)

Semi-structured interviews

Content analysis / Semantic analysis

- Internet home and school practices
- School guardianship
- School mobilization (meaning granted to school work)



« Our history teacher doesn't want us to read a paper about a topic any longer. He complains we don't create anything as we only come along with printed copies from Internet. »

« Before going to school, I always write up my blog »

« I talk with my friends at school about internet games ; then evenings, we try our tricks. »

« We can find everything on Internet but at school, we only learn a little about it. »

Results

• Home practices reveal a consumer behaviour rather than an active part taken by the teenager in the way he uses Internet. Low appropriation.

• Immediate access to the prejudice of effort is privileged.

• The teacher's attendance modify the way teenagers use Internet enabling them to benefit from a better appropriation and to invest cultural fields.

Second stage : Passing of questionnaire

58 pupils from second form of secondary school (average age : 13)

Questionnaire : 5 headings (31 items)

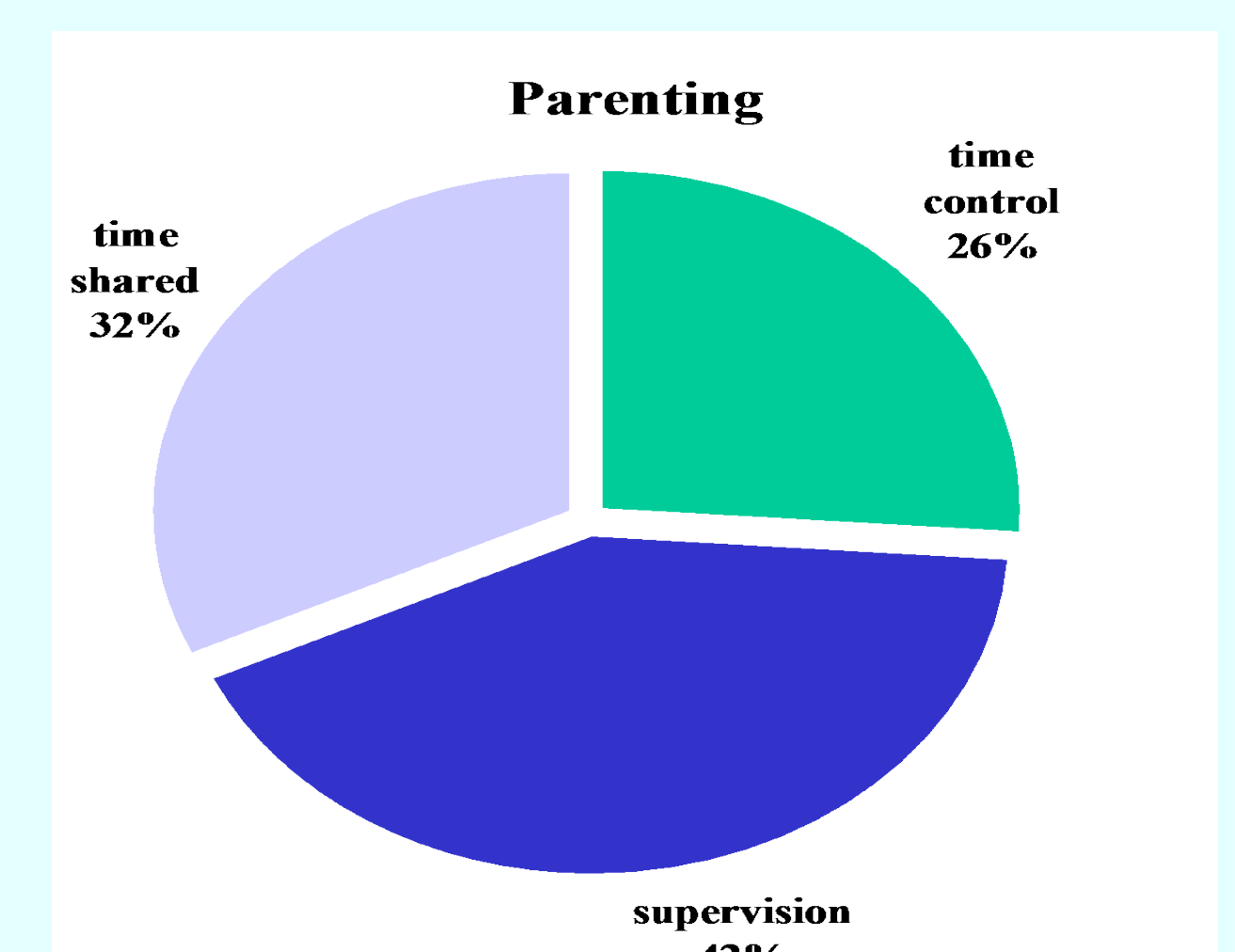
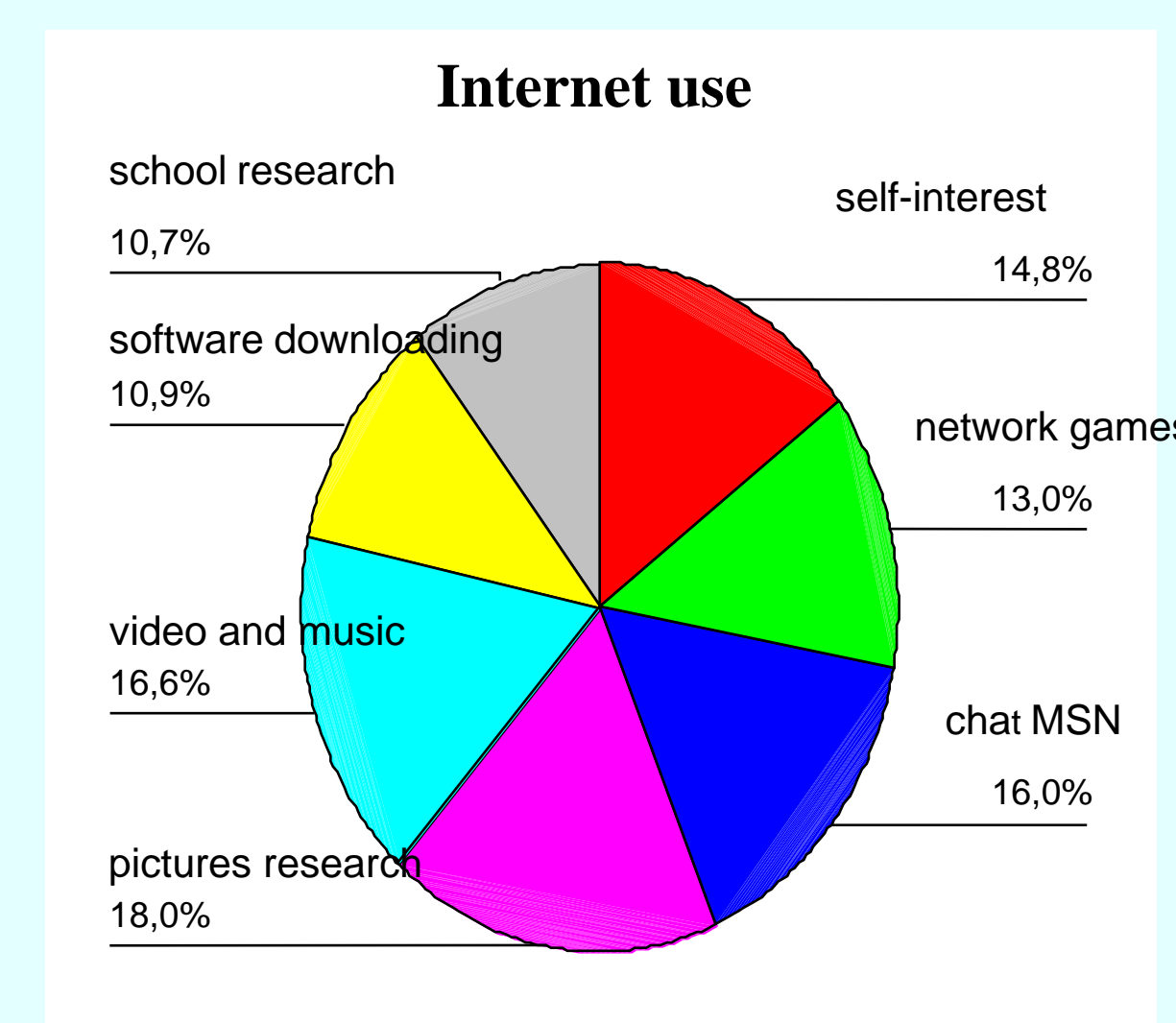
Socio-biographical characteristics

Home Internet use (place, days and connecting duration)

Parental monitoring (setting time limit, interested in knowing their children's practices, time spent beside them on Internet)

Description of teenagers' favourite activities on Internet (activities directed within the category of the school field and culture or within the category of leisure and communication)

Internet perception by teenagers (estimate on a 4 points Likert scale – 1 = entirely in disagreement with 4 = entirely in agreement with).



- Internet is first of all used for communication and leisure activities.
- Teenagers don't link spontaneously Internet with Knowledges.
- Parental attendance results to be nearer control than guardianship.

Discussion

This study suggest that we are taking part in a change of the social bond. Collective life was yesterday organised explicitly and implicitly by the presence of « a position of exception », a position of exteriority. It seems as if we let this model of society ; a new social bond is settling down coming from the individuals themselves and from their essentially horizontal interactions, leading the adult to find a new position.

In research and theorizing on school demobilization it would be important to examine unavailability (isolation in front of the screen) and lack of adults monitoring as consumption but no construction of Knowledge (in the meaning of Piaget).

Practical implications : To lead in secondary schools some actions of prevention of home Internet uses effecting school demobilization.

To emphasize the teacher's intermediary part as well as the family collaboration with school keeping with the various studies about educative contexts and school success (Deslandes, 2004 ; Deslandes & Cloutier, 2005 ; Lescarret, 2000; Safont-Mottay & Oubrayrie, 2007).