



**Intertechnological appropriation of  
ICTs by Quebec teenagers:  
challenging perceptions  
to better define trends**

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# Research overview

- 3 years long study (2003-2004 to 2006-2007)
- 3 phases : quantitative - qualitative – validation
- Behaviours of 13-17-year-old Quebec users of ICTs
- Context in which they appropriate them within and outside the family unit
- Teenage and parental roles in ICT knowledge acquisition and transfer

# Principal questions of research

## ➤ What?

In what ways do Quebec teenagers use the technologies available at home?

## ➤ How?

How do these teenagers appropriate all or part of the functionalities of diverse technologies?

## ➤ Why?

Why do young Quebecers appropriate some technologies and not others?

# Methodological reference points

- **Quantitative phase (January 2003 - June 2005)**
  - Questionnaires - 73 questions
  - Random and representative sample of Quebec youth
  - 60 public and private schools
  - 1,167 teenagers (13-17-year-old)
- **Qualitative phase (June 2005 - December 2006)**
  - 3-hour interviews with both adolescents and their parents
  - 28 households
- **Validation phase (January 2007 - May 2007)**
  - Focus groups of young adults - our original teenage subjects

# Adolescents freed from space and time?

## ➤ Major influence of space and time variables on usage

- Difference between places where they use ICTS and place where they prefer to use them
- Importance of privacy and discretion for the teenagers
- Location of ICTs at home plays a role in the setting of the rules of conduct
- Schedules contribute to the structuring of technological usages

# The impact of school and technical education?

- **Adolescents refuse to recognize the school as the place where ICTs were appropriated**
  - Core component in the school program
  - But young people engage in genuine experimentation at home
  - Clear distinction between types of uses in school (ex: information searches) and at home (communication, exploration and games)

# Young geniuses and incompetent parents?

## ➤ **Self-validation of the adolescent's skills and underestimation of their parent's**

- But in fact parents play a key role in introducing their children to the technologies
- ICTs as “power symbols” for boys
- Games develop young people's confidence in dealing with technology
- Innovative uses by the adolescents are marginal or even nonexistent

# ICTs: instruments of freedom?

## ➤ **Parental control that goes against their discourse of openness**

- Rules of conduct
- Restriction or monitoring of activities
- Access to equipment is concentrated in the rooms that are accessible to all
- Differing roles of the mother and father as far as control

# Conclusion: Emerging Trends?

- “Confidentiality – privacy – intimacy”
- High equipment rate does not mean unlimited access for teenagers
- Few adolescents go beyond the frameworks prescribed by the service providers: no innovative uses
- Technologies as “imposed by society”
- The Apple iPod exception