The 'Media Generation Gap' between Teachers and Students in Secondary Schools in Korea

Amie Kim

Institute of Education
University of London

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2013

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

Word count (exclusive of appendices and bibliography): 91,854 words

The data collected in this research are in Korean and the translation of the extracts used in the thesis is my work.

....

Amie Kim

Abstract

Many popular discourses describe today's young people as the 'digital generation', who are completely different from adults in their ways of thinking, working and living (Tapscott, 1998; Prensky, 2006). When it comes to teaching the 'digital generation', there have been growing concerns over the 'media generation gap' in the classroom (Green and Bigum, 1993). However, the concept of the 'digital generation' itself is questionable. It is a label used to refer to young people by outsiders, rather than a label agreed on by young people to represent themselves (Herring, 2008). Therefore, before calling young people the 'digital generation', we need to carefully explore young people's relationship with new media. In what ways and for what reasons do young people use new media? Is there really a 'media generation gap' between young people and adults, especially in a school setting? How are young people constructed, and how do they construct themselves, in terms of their generational identity?

To answer these questions, data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods. I conducted a survey in secondary schools in Korea to find out general trends in both teachers' and students' use of media and attitudes towards the media. After analysing data collected via the survey, interview questions and activities were planned to contextualise findings from the survey, and to explore the questions of generational identification. Based on the questionnaires and in-depth interviews, this thesis argues that the 'media generation gap' is more to do with attitudes towards media rather than the types of media that different generations mostly use. In addition, based on the qualitative data, this thesis suggests that young people tend to make use of the new media to manage and perform their identities as 'youth' and 'students'. The data also show that young people consciously pick and choose the media they use according to their lifestyles and generational identities. However, their lifestyles are also affected by the technological characteristics of the new media. Therefore, 'young people' and 'new media', both socially constructed, discursively co-construct each other.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank the young people and teachers in South Korea who took part in this study. Their interests in my study and enthusiasm for the topic have motivated me to complete the thesis. I truly hope that I have done justice to their accounts. I am also indebted to my colleagues, Min-jung Ji, Dong-woo Lee and Soo-bin Lee, who introduced me to the young people and teachers.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my supervisors David Buckingham and Andrew Burn. I am deeply grateful to David Buckingham not only for his enthusiasm and insights but also for his patient support and commitment throughout the research process. I am always thankful to Andrew Burn for his warm encouragement and constructive criticisms of the thesis.

I would also like to thank friends in London for their friendship and support. I am grateful to Tzu-bin Lin, Kostas Voros and Sun-young Choi for the chats and teas, and Joeun Kim, Min-jung Lee, Ji-yeon Lee and Joo-hyun Park for the laughs and drinks. Without them, my life in London would have been much more difficult. I would also like to thank my teachers in Korea, Hyeon-Seon Jeong, Jung-Im Ahn and Ki-Tae Kim whose studies and works in the media education field in Korea kept me inspired.

As ever, love and thanks to my family for supporting and inspiring me every day. My sister, Aram Kim, has always been supportive and cheered me up during my struggling times. My parents, Heon-Soo Kim and Eun-Sook Lee, have always been there for me through thick and thin. Their love and care have strengthened me and walked me through the long Ph.D journey. It is to them I dedicate this thesis.

Table of Content

Abstract....3

Introduction 11

Chapter 1: Construction of the 'Digital Generation' **19**

Introduction 19

1.1.Newspaper articles 22

1.2.Books 32

1.3.Limits of the discourses about the 'digital generation' 40

Conclusions 45

Chapter 2: Research on Young People and New Media: Literature review **50**

Introduction 50

2.1. Large-scale surveys: Surveys on computer and Internet usage 50

2.1.1. NIDA report 2004 52

2.1.2. Comparing 2004 and 2008: added and/or omitted themes 55

2.1.3. Strengths and weakness of the survey 57

2.2. Contextualized new media use of young people: peer culture, family and school 58

2.2.1. Peer culture 58

2.2.2. Young people's new media at home: intergenerational interactions between family members 66

2.2.3. Young people and new media in schools 73

2.2.4. Three contexts contributing to the construction of young people's new media culture 77

2.2.5. Young people' new media practices in the changing media environment 79

Conclusion 80

Chapter 3: Theories of Technology and Generation **81**

Introduction: Towards a more nuanced description of the digital generation 81

3.1. Theories of Technology 82

3.1.1. Sociology of technology and domestication theory 82

3.1.2. Cultural studies and the circuit of culture 93

3.1.3. Domestication theory and cultural circuits: combining the theories 106

3.2. Theories of Generation 109

3.2.1. Socio-cultural generation: Mannheim's theory of generation 110

3.2.2. Socio-structural generation: 'generationing' 116

3.2.3. Socio-cultural generation versus socio-structural generation 120

3.3. Theorising the 'digital generation' 123

Conclusion 127

Chapter 4: Methodology 129

Introduction 129

4.1. The research design 129

4.2. Collecting the data 137

4.2.1. Research context 137

4.2.2. Survey: pilot study, data collection and data analysis 138

4.2.3. Focus group interviews with young people 140

4.2.4. Interview with teachers 147

4.3. Data analysis and analytical approach 149

Conclusion 154

Chapter 5: Students' and Teachers' Media Environment 155

Introduction 155

5.1. Access and use of media 156

5.1.1. Young people's use and ownership of media 156

5.1.2. Teachers' access and use of media 158

5.2. Same media, different uses 165

5.2.1. Most frequently used media: the internet and computers 165

5.2.2. Teachers' and students' use of the internet 167

5.2.3. Students' and teachers' use of computes 171

5.2.4. Social context of media use 174

5.3. Media orientation 179

5.3.1. Orientations towards the media 180

Conclusion 189

Chapter 6: Young People's Construction of New Media Culture 193

Introduction 193

6.1. Construction of peer group culture based on new media 193

6.2. Construction of young people's new media culture within contexts 201
6.2.1. Economic constraints 201
6.2.2. Technological characteristics of different communicational media 209
6.3. Generationing: labelling the technology with generational markers 223
Conclusion 231

Chapter 7: Young People's Construction of a Generationally Exclusive Space on the Internet 234
Introduction 234
7.1. Constructing generational boundaries 234
7.1.1. Young people's interpretation of the medium: the image of BuddyBuddy 234
7.1.2. Texts and production of BuddyBuddy in comparison with MSN messenger 242
7.1.3. Generational boundaries in terms of the 'right' ways of using new media 246
7.2. Intergenerational relationships around new media 250
7.2.1. Students and teachers' interaction on BuddyBuddy 251
7.2.2. Risks teachers face when stepping into students' cultural realm 257
Conclusion 263

Chapter 8: New Economies: Young People's Economic Practice Online 265
Introduction 265
8.1. Young people's media management and consumption 266
8.2. Young people's accumulation and consumption of capitals on the 'free' internet 288
Conclusion 297

Chapter 9: Young People's 'Private' New Media Culture within 'Public' Spaces 299
Introduction 299
9.1. The gap between young people's and teachers' perceptions of the mobile phone 301
9.2. Symbolic meanings of young people's mobile phones in schools 314
9.3. Young people's practice of constructing a generationally exclusive space via the mobile phone 323

Conclusion 327

Chapter 10: Conclusion **330**

Introduction 330

1. Same media, different uses 331

2. Young people's participation in 'generationing' around new media technology 333

3. Teacher-student interactions around new media 338

Looking back to the digital generation of 2005 340

Historical specificity of the study and implications for further research 343

References **345**

Appendix 1. Translated version of the questionnaire **358**

Tables, Charts and Figures

Figure 3.1. Richard Johnson's 'circuit of culture' reproduced from Johnson (1996)..........95

Figure 3.2. Circuit of culture by Open University, reproduced from du Gay et al. (1997)..98

Figure 3.3. Triangular model of the cultural circuit drawn based on Buckingham (2008)..101

Figure 3.4. Three layers in Buckingham (2008)'s triangular model of the cultural circuit .104

Figure 6.1. Online guide to sending notes or opening a dialogue window in BuddyBuddy 221

Figure 7.1. Snapshots of MSN messenger (left) and BuddyBuddy messenger (right).........243

Figure 7.2. Structure and functions of BuddyBuddy messenger...245

Figure 8.1. Image of a mobile phone drawn by the young people of D middle school.... .306

Table 5.1. Young people's access to media (%)...156

Table 5.2. Teachers' access to radio, books and comics (%)..159

Table 5.3. Teachers' access to TV, VCR and game consoles (%)......................................160

Table 5.4. Teachers' access to computers, the internet and computer games (%)................161

Table 5.5. Teachers' access to TV and VCR (%)...161

Table 5.6. Teachers' access to digital cameras and mobile phones (%)..............................162

Chart 5.1. Media that students and teachers most frequently use (%).........................166

Chart 5.2. The service/functions of the internet that students and teachers use when they are online (%)..169

Chart 5.3. The service/functions of the internet that that teachers of different age groups use when they are online (%) 170

Chart 5.4. How long do you use the internet for once you have logged on?.......................171

Chart 5.5. The software/function of computers that students and teachers most frequently use (%)

....172

Chart 5.6. The software/function of computers that teachers of different age groups most frequently use (%)

....173

Chart 5.7. Media you mostly use with your friends ('colleagues' for teachers' questionnaire)(%) ...175

Chart 5.8. Media young people mostly use with siblings and family (%) 176

Chart 5.9. Media young people and teachers mostly use on their own (%) **177**

Chart 5.10. Media teachers think students would use when they are bored and media students actually use when they are bored (%) **184**

Chart 5.11. Media students think teachers would use when they are bored and media teachers actually use when they are bored (%) **186**

Introduction

The 'Digital Generation' in Korea

2002 was an eventful year for Korea. It saw people voluntarily organizing festivals to gather to celebrate and cheer on the national football team. It also saw people organizing candlelight vigils to offer condolences for two teenage girls who were killed by an American army military vehicle, an event which led to anti-US protests. Lastly, it witnessed the election of a young presidential candidate, Roh Moo-hyun, with the support of younger generations who encouraged each other to be politically active. All of these events had one thing in common: they were all partly enabled by the use of new media, such as the mobile phone or the internet. As a result, 2002 was a year when the media and the public started to focus on the idea of young people as a different, brand new, 'digital' generation (these popular discourses about the digital generation in Korea will be looked into in the following chapter). Adults felt they were uninformed about this brand new 'digital generation', a generation who were widely considered to be completely different from previous generations.

In addition, the first two events mentioned above drew positive attention to the social power of the internet in bringing people together based on their common interests. By contrast, the results of the presidential election not only apparently proved the political power of the internet, but also drew attention to its role in accelerating the growing gap and conflicts between younger and older generations. After the presidential election on 19th December 2002, the 'generation

---

[1] By 'new media' I mean the new media texts as well as new media productions young people use such as the internet (Instant Messenger, Social-Networking Services, etc.), mobile phones and computer games.

gap' or 'conflicts between generations' became key expressions defining Korean society. The 'media generation gap' here is considered as a conflict between two different cultures based on the media they mainly use. In other words, the younger generation and the new media associated with them are considered to be in conflict with the older generation and the old media (e.g. newspapers and television) they mainly use.

This social discourse defining young people as the 'digital generation' and emphasizing the 'generation gap' arising from their media associations influenced the school setting as well. Teachers had to deal with these 'unknown' young people's new media use in two different ways. Firstly, teachers found themselves in a position to regulate young people's new media use. Due to the mobility of new media, students' new media culture blends into schools, making the once private young people's culture both public and visible to teachers. Secondly, schools and teachers are expected to promote media literacy in young people. Young people are thought to be exposed to risks and dangers that adults are not totally aware of, when using new media. Media education has come to be regarded as a means of 'self-regulation' for young people, and the panacea for all problems that new media might cause. As mentioned before, the 'novelty' of young people's new media culture has seen some uneasiness from educationalists. Teachers' lack of confidence, backed up by the digital generation discourse, and their attempts to maintain their position as experts often result in teachers returning to a protectionist approach in media education, or sticking to their area of expertise.

However, young peoples' relationships with new media are not only relevant to media education classes, but to the school culture in general. As the digital generation discourse inevitably gives power to young people over adults, the natural hierarchy related to knowledge transfer and expertise is bound to be reversed – or so it is claimed. Also the 'generational' discourse or the concept of ‘generation’ itself emphasizes the intergenerational differences, accentuating the ‘gap’ between generations, in this case teachers and young people, rather than paying attention to their similarities or continuities. Young people themselves also take part in constructing their identity as the ‘digital generation’, often using it to negotiate their relationships with teachers.

Timescale of the study and research questions

The fieldwork for this thesis took place in 2004-5. This was the period when young people's new media usage and the alleged ‘media generation gap’ between teachers and students were put in the spotlight. Within this social context, I set out to study the construction of the young people’s digital identity both by teachers and students.

The overarching research question of this study is as follows:

How do young people take part in the construction of their generational identity in relation to new media within the context of their relationships with teachers and peers?

To answer this main research question following subsidiary questions will be explored:

1) Is there a ‘media generation gap’ between students and teachers?
2) To what extent and in what ways do young people construct themselves as a ‘digital generation’?
3) How is the ‘digital generation’ discourse played out in the school setting, by both students and teachers?

An overview of the thesis

Chapter 1 focuses on analyzing popular discourses about the 'digital generation'. I start by introducing the Korean context and looking at newspaper articles (published in 2001-2) that dealt with the 'digital generation' and young people's new media use. This chapter shows how the 'digital generation' discourse is used to define young people within the social, cultural and technological contexts of Korea. I then move on to analyzing the popular books and reports that describe and construct young people's generational identity in relation to the 'new' media environment in which they are growing up. Rather than being a data chapter on its own, this chapter functions as an introduction to the broader social context of the study and to the key issues. I aim to take an in-depth look at how young people are being framed as the digital generation, and think about the social functions of the 'digital generation' discourse.

Moving on from popular discourses, the second chapter reviews what the academic research says about young people and new media. Studies focusing on young people and their new media use can be categorized into two groups in terms of the data they use. Firstly, there are reports and surveys that measure young people's access to and use of new media quantitatively. In Korea, there are annual statistical reports surveying the computer and internet usage of the Korean population (details of this are discussed in chapter 2). I will not, however, pay much attention to the statistics that the surveys present (e.g. the percentage of internet use or appropriation rate of computers, etc.), but rather review the reports in terms of their topics of examination, and approaches towards new media and young people. Secondly, I will review qualitative research that puts young people's new media use in context. As there is an extensive array of topics related to young people and new media, in this chapter I will focus on reviewing studies that deal with young people's new media use in three specific social and spatial settings: peer group, home and school.

Chapter 3 deals with theory. In this chapter, I take a step back from the discussions about young people's new media culture to look at the theories underpinning the 'digital generation' discussions. The ‘digital generation’ is a unique generational category as it tends to identify young people with the technology they use. However, technology itself is not a neutral factor but is developed and appropriated within a given social context (Jasanoff, 1995). In the first part of this chapter, I will explore theories about the social construction of technology. These theories show how users’ interpretations of technologies contribute to the construction of the technology that in turn influences users' daily lives. In addition to theories derived from technology studies, I will also look at theories used in media and cultural studies that consider users as well as their interaction with media texts and media production when studying a cultural product or phenomenon. In the second part, I move on to theories of generation. 'Generation' is a theoretical concept that has various meanings according to the academic disciplines it is used within. In this chapter, I will focus on theories of 'generation' that are relevant to the 'digital generation' concept (i.e. socio-cultural generation and socio-structural generation). By studying theories explaining the characteristics and processes of the construction of a 'generation', I aim to pull out the elements that contribute to the generational identification and generational structuring of young people in relation to new media.

Based on these previous discussions, I then introduce my research questions that are investigated in the data chapters (chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9). Before going into the analysis of the data, in chapter 4, I discuss my research design and methodological standpoint, followed by detailed explanations and discussions of the methods I used to collect data.

Chapter 5 is the first data chapter. I discuss quantitative data collected via a large-scale survey I conducted with teachers and young people. The main aim of the survey is to explore the 'media generation gap' by looking at the media uses of young people and teachers, and also by investigating their perceptions about both young people's and adults' new media use. The following four chapters discuss the qualitative data I collected in the following year (the timeline of my research is detailed in the methodology chapter) by conducting group interviews with young people and individual interviews with teachers. While the survey data looked at both teachers' and young people's new media use, the focus of the interview data is on young people's new media practices and teachers' approaches to them.

Chapter 6 looks into young people's construction of their new media culture. Young people make use of new media mostly as a means of communication, but more importantly as a space to ‘hang out’ with their peers. As new media are mostly used as a place for peer culture, there are implicit rules which function as markers of generational membership, and which often become a source of stress for young people. At the same time, young people's new media use is always limited by technical and economic constraints. In this chapter, I discuss the factors that influence young people's ways of using new media including their efforts to establish cultural and often 'generational' boundaries in relation to media use. After discussing the construction of young people's new media culture in general, in the following chapters I focus on specific new media used by young people (i.e. instant messenger, peer-to-peer networks and mobile phones), and how young people make meanings of these media both amongst themselves and in relation with teachers (in the school setting).

In Chapter 7, I examine young people's use of BuddyBuddy, which is an instant messaging service that was used by Korean teenagers at the time of the interview. This chapter shows how young people actively put generational markers on internet spaces to keep their online peer group culture private. I discuss how young people build a private 'generational' space on the public platform of the internet, by using not only technical features (e.g. features of SNS sites enabling users to control the level of openness) but also cultural features (e.g. choice of brand; implicit rules in terms of the ‘right’ ways of using the new media) to keep their spaces exclusive to themselves.

Chapter 8 looks into the new economies of young people's new media culture. By focusing on young people's discussions of their peer-to-peer network use, I suggest that young people's new media practices are related to building up capital and buying authority within the virtual world. In this chapter, I examine (1) how economic factors limit or shape young people’s new media use; (2) new economies, described by young people, which function in online platforms; and (3) how young people’s identity as ‘economically independent students’ and/or the ‘digital generation’ contribute to these new economies on the internet.

Lastly, the final data chapter, chapter 9, brings the focus back to the school setting. When I conducted the interviews, a growing number of students owned mobile phones, bringing them to school for various reasons such as personal entertainment, communication or even 'safety'. Regulating young people's mobile phones at school became an issue involving teachers, school administrators, students and often parents. In this chapter, I discuss how teachers justify the regulation of young people's access and use of mobile phones in schools, and look into the negotiations between teachers and young people in relation to the mobile phone. By exploring the regulation practices of teachers and teachers’ and students’ negotiations of the presence of mobile phones in the school setting, I probe how young people's identity construction as the 'digital generation' plays out in school.

In chapter 10, which is the conclusion of this thesis, I summarize the research findings. By looking into young people's new media use and the ways in which both teachers and young people themselves interpret that use, I aim to show the process of 'generationing' that takes place around the technology. The examination of how young people, teachers and various contexts contribute to the 'generationing' process will help to demonstrate the complexity of the relations between young people and new media, without simply categorizing them as a 'digital generation' with innate abilities to use new media and natural preferences for the newest technology.

Chapter 1. Constructions of the 'digital generation'

Introduction

In South Korea, 'digital natives' are sprouting up at a fast pace to help cement the nation's global status as a high-tech pacesetter full of *technology gurus*. The term 'digital native' was coined to refer to the first generation who was born and grew up in the 21st century internet era surrounded by gadgets like computers and cell phones. "Some babies here appear to pick up a computer mouse and cell phone earlier than a spoon and chopsticks," said Park Jung-hyun, *a senior researcher at LG Economic Research Institute.* "They are genuinely *digital natives*, a totally different generation from their fathers and grandfathers, or *analogue natives*," Park said. Indeed, a majority of Korean children go online regularly, and they are accustomed to using mobile phones for games or wireless telephone services. A recent government survey found that 50.3 percent of three-to five-year-olds log onto the internet at least once a month. They were found to have first faced the Web at 3.2 years on average. Many Korean preschoolers are also casual users of handsets. KTF, the country's No. 2 wireless carrier, runs a charging system customized for four-year-old kids. "Digital natives are thinking, acting and reacting very differently from how we did, mainly because their childhoods are in large part shaped by technology," Park said. "Their lifestyle, formed in line with the newest technologies, can be a huge asset for this nation. They will grow up to become developers of futuristic techniques or consumers to help the related markets take root," he said.

Some regard digital natives as a potential blessing for Korea, but some experts voice concerns on the increasing number of young *techno geeks*. "Kids use computers and cell phones mostly to play games. It is just like when children indulged in TV and video in the past," said Hwang Jin-kyu, *a researcher at the state-backed Korea Institute for Youth Development*. "Children turning to computers and handsets are more prone to game addiction than those who depended on TV or video. We have to recognize the dark side of digital natives and prepare for proper measures," he said. With both the positive and negative aspects of digital natives, Korea is expected to become a target of benchmarking, according to Kim Kyung-mo, an economist at the local brokerage Mirae Asset. "Korea is leading the world as far as digital natives are concerned. As a result, foreign countries will try to keep a tab on things here to learn lessons in advance," Kim said. "In a sense, Korea will become a crystal ball displaying what happens when digital natives replace analogue natives," Kim said. "The nation would be an example to benchmark." (*my emphasis)*

<Kids become 'digital natives' (Tae-Gyu Kim), Korea Times, 29 Oct 2006>

The newspaper article cited above is a fine example of how popular discourse in Korea characterizes young people as a 'digital generation'. Firstly, it shows the two contradictory ways young people are approached in relation to the new media: one being the 'techno-guru' and the other being the 'techno-geek'. It celebrates young people as a new generation with different skills and abilities which adults, defined in this case as an 'analogue generation', lack. On the other hand, it introduces adults' worries about the negative sides of young people's new media use, such as computer or game addiction. The newspaper article also illustrates how experts who are considered as authority figures in defining the digital generation come from two different fields. The positive views are championed by experts related to electronic products or marketing, and the negative views are shown by experts working in youth-related institutions. It can be suggested that these backgrounds influence how they make sense of young people and their relations with new media.

Secondly, this news article reveals the specifics of the Korean context in approaching the digital generation. It shows Korea's national pride as a technologically advanced country where young people or even younger children have easy access to new media technology. In the beginning, the article declares that '"digital natives" are sprouting up at a fast pace to help cement the nation's global status as a high-tech pacesetter full of technology gurus'. It is followed by statistics and an expert's comment about the 'digital natives' in Korea to prove the point. In addition, it shows when putting a specific label on young people, terms such as 'digital natives', coined by American commentators, are commonly used in Korea. However, there are other titles invented to describe younger generations which reflect specific cultural or social contexts in Korea. For example, terms such as the 'P-generation' and 'W-generation'[5] were, albeit temporarily, used to describe the younger generation after the 2002 World Cup. Recently, the term 'post-digital generation'[6] has been suggested to describe teenagers who are used to Web 2.0 technology. However, in most cases Western-oriented generational concepts or labels are generally used in Korean popular discourses to define younger generations.

---

[5] P stands for Participation, and W stands for the World Cup. Both of these terms were suggested by a brand marketing research institute founded by Cheil Communications (http://www.cheil.com/index.jsp)

As seen in the example above, examination of the popular discourse about the 'digital generation' helps in understanding the social contexts and expectations young people are placed under as members of a generation. This chapter consists of further analysis of these kinds of popular discourse. Generally the purpose of examining social discourse of this kind is to reveal concepts that are taken for granted, and examine the ways in which those concepts are constructed (for example, who are the actors involved in the construction of the concept; how and why they take part in it; what the concept includes or excludes from consideration). Various books and newspaper articles, that target adults or teachers as their main readership, attempt to describe young people as the 'digital generation' and define their characteristics. By exploring this popular discourse and these texts, I attempt to reveal the standpoints that adults take and aspects they focus on when approaching young people's relationships with media technology.

Rather than being a data chapter on its own, this chapter functions as an introduction to the social contexts in which young people are being constructed as the 'digital generation'. This analysis makes use of two main sources: newspaper articles published in Korea about the 'digital generation', followed by popular books that deal with the same area. By starting with Korean newspaper articles, I aim to map out the general approach to young people as a 'digital generation', and also to aid understanding of the Korean context. Then I look behind the newspapers to the discourses that circulate in popular books. Whereas newspaper articles are often snapshots of what is happening at a certain time, books tend to look behind the current issues and try to make sense of phenomena. The books analyzed in this chapter are mostly written by American commentators, and they were chosen because they tend to be concerned with general arguments. One of the books discussed in this chapter ('Growing Up Digital' by Don Tapscott) was translated and published in Korea. At the same time, as seen in the news article above, terminology and definitions of the 'digital generation' made by American commentators are largely taken on by Korean discourses.

---

[6] This definition of the younger generation was also suggested by a report from Cheil Communications.

1. 1. Newspaper articles

The newspaper articles analyzed in this section were collected between 2001 and January 2003, using keywords and key phrases such as 'digital generation', '(inter)net generation', and 'young people and new media'. I chose to analyze the newspapers from this period because the year 2002, as mentioned in the introduction, was an important year in the evolution of the concept of the 'digital generation' in Korea. It was a year when commentators started to pay close attention to young people and their use of the internet as a source of social power. A series of events involving young people's new media use made the potential power of the internet and online communities visible even to those who were not interested in the medium (see page 15-16 for detailed explanations).

To search the newspaper articles, I used an internet database named 'KINDS'[7], which is an acronym for the 'Korean Integrated News Database System'. 'KINDS' was built by the Korean Press Foundation and includes 10 major daily newspapers based in Seoul, 32 local daily newspapers, 7 business newspapers and other weekly magazines published since 1990. I have loosely divided the discourses in play into 'positive' and 'negative', although (as in the example above) these discourses frequently co-exist and overlap.

Positive representations

Positive discourses about the 'digital generation' in newspaper articles usually describe young people as 'media-literate consumers'. Quoting comments from media producers, they provide pictures of young people with abilities which adults usually lack, and with tendencies that are different from those of adults. These articles are often introductory pieces about new media products or services, featured in the IT section, economic section or society section. They make a link between new media technology and the 'digital generation', implying that new media products have strong appeal to young people and are actively used by them.

For example, an article in the Dong-A Daily claims that young people prefer sending electronic versions of Christmas cards via their mobile phone. It explains the reason by quoting a media producer: 'An expert from company S, which provides a picture messaging service, said that, "the *N-generation*[8] always goes after *fast* and *simple* things."' (Dong-A Daily 25 December

---

[7] www.kinds.or.kr

[8] 'N-generation' of 'net-generation' is a term describing young people who grew up surrounded by the digital media. This term, coined by Don Tapscott, will be discussed further in the

2001, Society section, <Send your Christmas e-card with your mobile phone: mobile e-cards are getting more popular than web e-cards>, *my emphasis*).

As seen in the short example above, when an article introduces a new media service, it tends to emphasize young people's preference for it, and it identifies tendencies of the 'digital generation' with the technical characteristics of new media. Young people, and the technology that appeals to them, are described as 'fast' and 'simple' (as in easy to use), although their preference for 'fast' media is seen to reflect an ability which adults do not have.

In a special report on the young people in Korea, the Chosun Daily compares young people with adults by describing young people as the 'speed tribe'. It says:

> The speed of young people's feelings and reactions to everything is ultra-fast compared to the older generation. They are a new humankind. They are a *speed tribe*...Young people consume *fast culture*...they even watch television zipping through various channels in the same way they surf the net. Mr. Lee *from an advertising company* that made a series of ads for the TTL mobile campaign said that, "Their patterns can be summarized in these words, '*fast*', '*easy*', and '*as I wish*'".
>
> Chosun Daily, 14 Jan 2002, Special Report <20s in Korea: Ultrahigh speed generation>(*my emphasis)*

---

second part of this chapter.

This article emphasizes the 'fast' reactions of young people. It does not limit young people's fast interactions to new media, but explains it as their general tendency, mentioning that they 'zip through various television channels' as they do when they 'surf the net'. When trying to make sense of young people, it also refers to a comment made by a marketer who launched a successful advertising campaign for a mobile phone service that exclusively targeted young people in their late teens and early twenties.

Being 'fast' or being used to instant feedback, as Marc Prensky (2006) points out (Prensky's explanation of young people as 'digital natives' will be discussed in section 1.2.), has been seen as one of the main characteristics of the 'digital generation'. However, young people themselves also respond to these ascribed characteristics of themselves as the 'digital generation'. Their preferences for 'fast' and 'simple/easy' things were proclaimed by the young people I interviewed as part of their generational constructions of media (this issue will be discussed in detail in chapter 6).

Another characteristic of the 'digital generation' in relation to new media products is seen to be their affinity to 'novelty' or their desire to be trendsetters. Following is a quote from a newspaper article talking about the growing variety of designs and colours of mobile phones. It quotes a media producer from an electronics company who explains that they produce mobile phones with diverse designs to satisfy the 'N generation': 'an expert from Samsung electronics said that the "*N-generation* wants to be *different* from others, and they are always looking for *new* things."'(Joong-Ang Daily, 03 September 2001, IT section, <Colour Mobile Phones are selling well>, *my emphasis*). Young people, especially as the main target audience for media products, are seen as keen on trying new things and as valuing individuality. Prensky (2006) also emphasizes these characteristics, arguing that young people innately and consistently look for new technologies which differentiate them from adults.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, the newspaper articles that take this positive approach to young people as the 'digital generation' mainly focus on them as active consumers of new media. These articles talk about new media products being designed or developed in accordance with young people's preferences and furthermore with their general characteristics. However, the experts, often marketers, quoted in these articles rarely support their arguments with evidence from actual market research, but rather with their abstract perceptions of young people's tendencies. This shows how media commentary that gives voice to these market discourses contributes to the construction of the concept of the 'digital generation'.

Negative representations

Newspaper articles portraying young people's new media use, especially of the internet, in a negative light are mostly in the society section. These articles mainly quote statistics and comments released by the police (e.g. the Cyber Crime Investigation division) or youth-related institutions (e.g. Korea Youth Counselling Institute), and they focus on the risks young people encounter when using the internet, such as harmful content, safety issues ('stranger-danger') and addiction (mostly in relation to computer games).

Firstly, there are newspaper articles expressing concerns about young people accessing inappropriate and potentially harmful material via the internet and committing crime under its influence. For example, an article in the Kook-Min Daily discussed young people being exposed to dangerous information which would not be available to them if they were not users of the internet. It describes how harmful content is available to very young users even though they do not actively seek it out, saying:

> ...an officer from the CCI[9] (Cyber Crime Investigation division) asked people to inform the centre via the web page or by phone call, whenever they receive porn-spam mails. He said, ‘Porn-spams are sent to everyone. The receivers even include primary school students and young teenagers. It is causing young people to have distorted sexual ideas and causes trouble to our society...’
>
> Kook-Min Daily, 20/02/03, Society section, <Web sites suggesting hiring murderers and selling drugs are on the internet>

Another article in the Kook-Min Daily suggests that pornographic material on the Web is causing sexual crimes amongst young people:

> There were a series of misconduct incidents by young people caused by porn material on the internet. Last December, a junior-high student Kim (16yrs) was arrested for sexually harassing a girl after watching a pornographic film on the internet.
>
> Kook-Min Daily, 22 Jan 2003, Society section, <School Web Sites ‘contaminated’ by Porn in their bulletin boards>

---

[9] The Cyber Crime Investigation division of the Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency (http://www.cybercrime.go.kr/english/eng 01.htm)

These articles reflect adults' fear of not being able to regulate the material young people access when using the internet. They tend to put the blame on the internet for the (apparently) increasing rate of sexual crimes involving young people.

On the other hand, there are also concerns about young people at risk of being the victim of crimes while they use the internet, especially internet chat rooms where their identity can be revealed to strangers. In January 2003, there was a major report from the Seoul Prosecutors Office based on statistics about illegal prostitution from July 2001 to 2002. The report said that there were 128 cases of illegal prostitution involving teenagers, and 78% of adults and teenagers involved in those cases met in internet chat rooms. Many papers presented this report in their society section, alarming adults about the dangers of internet use. (Hankyoreh, 27 Jan 2003 society section, Dae-Han Daily 27 Jan 2003 society section, etc.)

Finally, there were articles expressing concern about young people being addicted to the internet and online gaming. The Dae-Han Daily reported on the issue of young people being addicted to the computer. It featured a report by the Korea Youth Counselling Institute which is a government-funded organisation:

> Several days ago, the Korea Youth Counselling Institute[10] reported the result of one survey conducted with 2,600 students in primary schools and secondary schools. The research shows us that 29% of the students are addicted to the computer. When they were not able to access the internet, they showed withdrawal symptoms such as feeling anxious, depressed, impatient and empty. They didn't want to meet their friends or talk with their families. When their symptoms got worse, they became extremely rebellious

---

[10] http://www.kyci.or.kr/eng_youth/e-kyci.html

> and physically weak. It could even lead to a mental disorder. To young students who are at the stage of life where they have to concentrate on studying, these ill effects will remain as irrecoverable wounds.
>
> Dae-Han Daily, 10 Feb 2003, society section <Most of the computer addicts are young people>

As seen in the article, these commentators are concerned about young students using the computer too much, as it will isolate them from family, friends and community, furthermore depriving them of the chance to go through the necessary stages of development. Also, when the newspapers report about young people's addiction to online games, they claim that young people lose a sense of reality when they are immersed too deeply into the gaming world. For example, when introducing a television documentary about young people's use of online gaming, the Joong-Ang Daily makes a comment about online game addiction as follows:

> There are more young people disconnected from the real world. Many students come to hospital not being able to distinguish between the game and the real world.
>
> Joong-Ang Daily, 11 Jan 2003, culture section, <Introducing a documentary aired on MBC titled 'Soundless War, Game'>

Concerns about the negative impact of new media on young people are expressed not only by journalists but also by some authors who focus on the area of childhood. As will be discussed in the following section (1.2.), some academics from the field of child development also argue that young people, or more specifically children, are being deprived of a proper childhood in part because of the new media environment. They are concerned that young people can become detached from the real world through their immersion in new media. They express their concerns about today's culture in general; however, they emphasize the negative impacts of new media, especially 'electronic media' as they put it, on children's mental and physical development.

It can be said that these newspaper articles, mainly in the society section, are (re)presenting concern on one level about young people's risks in using the internet, and on another level about the negative impact of the media on young people, and by extension on society itself. Historically, of course, there have been long-standing concerns about young people being affected by the media and committing crime under its influence. This can be seen as a form of 'moral panic' about young people and their use of new media. As Stanley Cohen suggests 'there is a long history of moral panic about the alleged harmful effects of cinema, rock music, video nasties, computer games, internet porn... In these 'media panics', the spirals of reaction to any new medium are utterly repetitive and predictable' (Cohen, 2002:xvii).

However, the 'digital generation' discourse differs from previous 'media panics' as there is also a strong positive discourse about the good aspects. There are not only negative depictions of young people and new media, but also positive depictions focusing on young people's skills and abilities in using new media. Looking into both positive and negative depictions of young people and new media, it can be said that representations of the younger generation in newspapers alternate between a view of them as active consumers of digital culture and as vulnerable computer addicts.

On the one hand, articles in either IT or economic sections of newspapers depict young people of the 'N generation' as media-savvy consumers with strong interests in cutting-edge new-media products/services, often quoting comments from media producers and marketing experts. Young people's affinities towards new media are explained as natural due to the similarity of the characteristics between themselves and new media. As will be discussed in the next section, these celebratory discourses about the digital generation argue that young people have distinct characteristics different from adults precisely *because of* the new media environment they experienced in their formative years. However, in many newspaper articles, the digital generation is seen to have characteristics similar to new media without further explanations or justifications.

Meanwhile, in the society sections, newspaper articles typically focus on the danger young people are in, as well as representing young people themselves as a dangerous group due to their use of new media. By quoting comments or statistics from youth institutions or the police regarding crimes related to new media, they express their concerns over the harmful content young people are exposed to and the risks of young people committing crime as a result of media influence. They also discuss whether new media are harmful to young people in relation to health and safety. In this case, new media are approached more in terms of the media *content* or the content of media practices, rather than the technical affordances they provide. This tendency towards positive representations focusing on the technical aspects of new media, and negative representations focusing on cultural aspects is also shown in books, which will be analyzed in the following sections.

1.2. Books

In the following two sections, I look at a section of popular books and reports that focus on young people and their new media environment[11]. As was the case with newspaper articles, there are two opposing views in approaching young people as the 'digital generation'. At one end of the spectrum, there are authors like Don Tapscott and Marc Prensky, who celebrate young people as a new kind of human with new ways of thinking, learning and working. At the other end of the spectrum, I consider a book by Sue Palmer and a report written by the Alliance for Childhood that present negative views of the 'digital generation', focusing on the dangers young people are exposed to in the new media environment.

Positive representations

In this section, I will look at two books, *Growing Up Digital* (1998) by Don Tapscott and *Don't Bother Me Mom, I'm Learning* (2006) by Marc Prensky, and a report entitled *Growing Up Digital: How the Web Changes Work, Education, and the Ways People Learn* (2000) by John Seely Brown. Both Tapscott and Prensky played an important role in constructing digital generation discourses. In *Growing Up Digital* (1998), Tapscott defined young people born between 1977 and 1997 as the 'Net generation'. More recently journalists and commentators from the field of marketing have started to use the term 'digital natives', a term introduced by Marc Prensky in an article entitled 'Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants', which focuses on the new characteristics of young people who spent their formative years surrounded by digital media.

---

[11] Most of the argument in this section is centred on computers and the internet. At the time when the books discussed in this section were published, mobile phones were not widely appropriated amongst young people. However, discussions about the new digital generation or young people and new media in mobile age show similar tendencies.

The three authors whose works are examined in this section have common professional backgrounds. As in the case of the newspaper articles celebrating young people as the 'digital generation', these authors come from the fields of marketing or media production. Prensky founded an e-learning game development company that develops educational computer games for young people[12]. Tapscott is also introduced as a consultant and speaker on business strategy[13]. John Seely Brown was a chief scientist at the Xerox Company mainly focusing on organizational learning and individualized learning[14]. The common aim of their work is to help adults understand young people, mostly in terms of their media use and their attributes, thinking or behaviour patterns, which are seen to be different from those of adults when they were growing up. These differences are seen to arise from the new media young people use. The work of these three authors is based on anecdotal observation and interviews with a limited range of young people rather than on a sound empirical basis.

As briefly mentioned above, Tapscott was the first to name young people as the 'Net generation'. In his book *Growing Up Digital*, published in 1998, he associated young people with new media, especially the internet, and adults with older media, especially television, emphasizing the difference between the younger generation and their parents.

---

[12] http://www.marcprensky.com/experience/Prensky-Bio.pdf retrieved on 20th March 2007

[13] http://www.growingupdigital.com/Fwhois.html retrieved on 20th March 2007

[14] http://www.johnseelybrown.com/cv.pdf retrieved on 20th March 2007

The characteristics of young people as described by Tapscott (1998) can be categorized in three main areas. Firstly, he argued that young people are changed cognitively: they are used to actively retrieving information they want and need on the spot by using the internet. The experience of being an active learner leads them to be ‘smart’, ‘curious’, ‘analytical’, ‘creative’ and ‘contrarian’ and also ‘self-reliant’. Secondly, he argues that the Net generation is different from adults in terms of their attitudes. As they are used to networking with people from all around the world via the internet, they are social and global in orientation. Thirdly, he claims that young people prefer the internet to television: ‘they are media-savvy and bored with TV’(1998:30). Compared to the Net generation, ‘the boomers’ are ‘authoritarian, hierarchical, inflexible and centralized’(1998:26), just like the medium they mainly use: television.

Tapscott’s description of the Net generation shows parallels with broader claims about the promise of the internet in its early stage. The internet at the time of writing was more like an ‘empty canvas’, as one of his interviewees described it, in contrast to the consumer-centred internet that has emerged more recently. For that reason, young people are viewed as a generation who could find whatever they wanted using the tool of the Net. His descriptions of young people are more abstract than later comments made by Prensky. In addition, like the newspaper articles discussed above, he limits his focus to the possibilities promised by new media rather than paying attention to the content or features that were actually available to young people via new media and whether they preferred them, and why. However, it can be said that other commentators of this persuasion are similar in terms of not paying attention to the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of young people’s new media use.

Prensky (2006) focuses more on young people’s new skills and behavioural patterns, which are affected by the ‘new media environment’ they grew up in. He uses the terms ‘digital natives’ and 'digital immigrants' to emphasize the difference between young people and adults. Young people are 'digital natives' who are born into the 'new media environment' and are accustomed to relying on new media; whereas adults have to learn how to use new media and adapt them to their existing lifestyles. Prensky pushes his argument into the area of education saying that adults are not fit to teach young people, because they speak a different 'language'.

In *Don't Bother Me Mom, I'm Learning,* Prensky points out four distinct changes in the thinking patterns of the 'digital natives'. Firstly, the digital natives are used to 'fast speed' and 'instant feedback'. He argues that young people are used to getting information more quickly than adults are able to dispense it. Secondly, along the same line as Tapscott, Prensky claims that the digital natives are used to taking the initiative in learning, preferring a game-like environment and enjoying having fun while learning. Thirdly, they are 'multi-literate': in fact, Prensky argues that they prefer image to text. Lastly, the digital natives like to be 'always in touch' and work best when they cooperate. He also adds that the digital natives naturally know how to use new technology and have innate wants and needs to keep up with the new technology.

John Seely Brown (2000) tries to describe how young people are different from adults in order to help educators to change their ways of teaching in order to fit in with the younger generation. In his report, he proposes a set of skills that young people have. He approaches young people's new abilities in terms of skills that are gained by using new media or by being exposed to the abundant information provided by the internet. He identifies three skills young people have because of their media use. According to John Seely Brown, young people have the ability to 'multitask'; they are 'multi-literate'; and they are able to evaluate information and 'navigate' through complex information spaces with ease. Most of all, young people are media-savvy ‘bricoleurs’[15]. They need to take the initiative in gathering and evaluating the validity or credibility of the information they want.

Accumulating all these new attributes of young people, the picture of the new ‘digital generation’ drawn by these celebratory discourses can be summarized as follows. Firstly, the ‘digital generation’ have developed strong interpersonal skills. Thanks to the networked features of the internet and mobiles, they work ‘well in groups’, are ‘networked globally’, and want to ‘stay in constant touch with their friends’. Secondly, they have new sets of cognitive skills. They are used to ‘processing information at fast speed’ and ‘multi-tasking’. They are also media-savvy ‘bricoleurs’ who gather information independently and consistently make judgements on the information they gather. They are also motivated active learners, who are used to having fun while learning. Thirdly, they are multi-literate. They have new sets of tools to express themselves and their opinions. They express themselves actively using not only texts but also images and sounds. In addition, as they are provided with the tools of expression and media to get feedback from others, it is easier for them to be more politically involved than adults.

As we have seen, these discourses construct young people, the digital generation, as having unique abilities due to the media experience they had during their formative years. However, these discourses tend to romanticize the capabilities of both new media and young people by approaching new media as neutral technologies without limitations, and young people as having innate abilities to use new media. They do not pay attention to the wider social, economic and political contexts that influence both young people and their use of new media.

---

[15] Quoting Seymour Papert, John Seely Brown labels young people as ‘bricoleurs’ who pull information together which they’ve gathered ‘randomly’ ‘on their own’.

Negative representations

In contrast to these celebratory discourses, other commentators focus on the negative impacts of new media on young people. They argue that young people should be protected from new media, and depict young people as a passive audience who are trapped in the harmful environments of new media. The books and reports within this time frame concerning the unhealthy influence of new media on childhood are often written by authors whose key interest is not in technology but in childhood. In this section, I will firstly look at the book *Toxic Childhood* (2006) by Sue Palmer. Sue Palmer is 'a speaker on aspects of literacy, writer of textbooks and independent consultant on educational matters'[16]. I also study the report entitled *Tech Tonic: Towards a New Literacy of Technology* (2004) published by the Alliance for Childhood. The Alliance for Childhood is an organization whose mission statement claims that it 'promote[s] policies and practices that support children's healthy development, love of learning, and joy in living'.[17]

Sue Palmer's argument was placed in the spotlight when she co-wrote an open letter to the Daily Telegraph calling on the Government to develop policies that would support children's 'well-being'. The letter was printed with the title *Modern life leads to more depression among children* (12 September 2006)[18] and was signed by more than 100 educators, psychologists, children's authors and other experts in the area of childhood. It criticised the current media culture arguing that it deprives young people of 'real' experience and forces young people to become 'mini-adults'.

---

[16] Information retrieved from Sue Palmer's personal website on 20th March 2007 http://www.suepalmer.co.uk/suebio.php

[17] http://www.allianceforchildhood.net/ retrieved on 20th March 2007

[18] http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/1528639/Modern-life-leads-to-more-depression-among-children.html retrieved on 29th of Jan, 2010

Palmer (2006) develops the idea of 'toxic childhood' further in her book. She argues that 'children need to spend less time in virtual worlds and more time in the *real* world – eating *real* food, playing *real* games, and interacting with *real* people, including the important adults in their lives. If they don't, it compromises their development intellectually, emotionally and socially' (*my emphasis)*.

Also emphasizing the importance of 'real' experience for children, the report by the Alliance for Childhood expresses concerns about children's health. Firstly, they are worried that children are losing touch with the real world and real interaction with other real people, including their families; secondly, they are worried about children being harmed by too much use of electronic media, as a result showing aggressive behaviours or becoming unhealthy (e.g. 'Nintendo thumb'); lastly, they are worried about the content provided by the media (pornographic material, online hate sites, violent videogames etc.) and the consumerist culture around mass media that targets young people. The report suggests that we should think about 'healthier ways' to approach technology literacy. It proposes ten principles for developing a new technology literacy: for example, 'With adolescents, teach technology as social ethics in action, with technical skills in a supporting role', and make them understand that 'relationships with the real world come first' (Alliance for Childhood, 2004:4-5).

The underlying assumptions of these discourses are that young people's experiences with new media are 'unreal', arbitrary, and lacking in real human interaction, which is important for children's development. They oppose new media practices to other non-mediated offline activities, without considering the social activities that happen within new media culture; and they romanticize non-mediated activities by assuming they are always healthy. This understanding of new media as an isolated and detached space seems diametrically opposed to the approach taken by commentators celebrating the digital generation. While one side considers new media as a technology that enables young people to develop their interpersonal skills and actively collaborate with others, the other side considers the internet as a medium that isolates young people from the outside world.

Sue Palmer also discusses the risk of children being exposed to inappropriate materials via new media. She claims that use of new media exposes children to difficult levels of learning which they are not ready to achieve. She is concerned about young people, especially children, being forced to develop earlier than they are 'naturally' supposed to. However, the argument that children are deprived of a proper childhood because of their use of media already existed before the wider proliferation of interactive new media. In his book *The Disappearance of Childhood* published in 1983, Neil Postman claims that children grow up too fast due to their early exposure to material that was only previously available to adults. For example, he argues that, because of the easy accessibility of television, children can easily access sexual content, which was previously filtered by adults.

The positive discourses emphasize that young people's access to information via new media leads them to be active learners. Ironically, in the negative discourses, young people's exposure to a broad range of information or media content becomes the centre of concern, also revealing adults' fear of losing their traditional role as information gate-keeper and thereby losing control over young people.

The main concerns of these works which take a negative approach to young people and new media are two-fold: that young people lack the opportunity for 'real' experience due to their increased use of new media, and that they are growing up too fast due to their exposure to adult material. In short, they consider new media as one of the factors that disturb the healthy development of young people. While the celebratory discourses, as discussed before, idealise the possibilities of new media, the negative discourses tend to romanticize a notion of childhood which is not influenced by new media.

1.3. Limits of the discourses about the 'digital generation'

As seen above, analysis of young people as the digital generation comes from two different standpoints. These discourses seem different from each other, but both perspectives have similar limitations, each illuminating the problems of the other.

Firstly, there are questions to do with definition. Celebratory discourses on the digital generation emphasize young people's novelty by opposing them to adults. Young people are defined as a 'Net generation', or 'digital natives', whereas adults are defined as the 'TV generation' or as 'digital immigrants'. These discourses emphasize the 'innate' abilities of young people and the skills they acquire as a result of growing up with new media. Adults are considered to lack these skills and abilities. Focusing on the abilities related to new media, these discourses put young people at a higher rank in terms of skills and knowledge, implying that adults should learn from young people in order to survive in the future society.

In the case of negative discourses, the binary approach opposing young people to adults is less clear. However, commentaries lamenting the loss of childhood imply that the childhood that contemporary adults experienced was safer or healthier compared to childhood today. It romanticizes the childhood that adults grew up in, putting adults at a higher rank in terms of safety, human values or the soundness of society. It implies that we should go back to the past, or we should learn from past society.

As, in most cases, the authors are speaking to adults as their target audience and seeking to help them understand young people, it might be inevitable that they describe young people by comparing them with adults. At the same time, by placing young people in opposition to adults, it is easier to accentuate young people's characteristics either positively or negatively. By taking this binary approach, these arguments, especially the celebratory ones, provide an essentialized concept of a 'generation'. They do not pay attention to the differences within each generational group, and do not acknowledge the variety of contexts in which both young people and adults are placed. They also tend to turn a blind eye to the continuity and similarity between the two generations (this issue is further discussed in chapter 5).

Looking at the terms used to label young people, it can be suggested that in many cases young people are described through their association with the new media of the moment. For example, recently young people have been defined as the 'Net generation' (Tapscott), 'digital natives' (Prensky) or the 'Post-digital generation' (Cheil). Analogies between young people and new media result in technologically deterministic claims. They also entail changes in young people's claimed attributes, as new media and the technological features enabled by them tend to change over time. Additionally, to emphasize the novelty of the digital generation, celebratory discourses centre on young people's 'innovative' use of new media. Thus it is inevitable for these approaches to draw attention to cutting-edge technology and, at the same time, to the potential target market of the new technology, which is mostly assumed to be young people.

Yet these celebratory discourses about the digital generation tend to operate with a rather vague system of age categorization, and of labelling 'generations'. Amongst the various ways of defining a generation, there are for example, the concept of the cohort (based on dates of birth, or alternatively on major historical events), concepts based on familial structure (i.e. parents, siblings), and also concepts based on certain cultural trends that dominated at a certain period of time (e.g. the 'beat generation'). However, the notion of a 'digital generation' refers to a vague subject group. Tapscott defines them as a group of young people who were born after 1977, which is the year when an internet service for the general public started. Prensky in his article published in 2001 entitled *Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants* defines 'digital natives' as 'today's students – K-12 through college – who are the first generation to grow up with new digital technology'.

The ambiguity of the age range of the 'digital generation' becomes clear when people of the same age fall under contradictory categories. For example, in 2002, a marketing company in Korea ('Cheil Worldwide') published a report entitled '*the Lifestyle and Characters of the P generation*'. It introduces the concept of the 'P generation' which stands for the 'post-digital generation'. Produced by marketers, the report is more rigorous in categorizing young people, or rather their potential target market, by age groups . It defines the 'post-digital generation' as young people between the ages of 13 and 24 who grew up with digital media. Young adults, who are in their mid 20s to early 30s and who had to learn how to use digital media and adapt them to their lives, are named the 'digital generation'. Adults from their late 30s onwards, who apparently tend to be indifferent to the digital media, are the 'analogue generation'. Following the generational categories of this report, the 'digital generation' is closer to the 'digital immigrants' as defined by Prensky.

However, in most cases, as in the newspaper stories quoted in this chapter, the 'digital generation' is a term used to represent young people, especially teenagers, who are still students. For this reason, understanding of the 'digital generation' in some ways resembles the discourse describing young people in general, even though it emphasizes their media use. Discourses about the 'digital generation' are in fact attempts to understand young people more broadly. Nevertheless, as this technologically deterministic approach focuses on media rather than young people themselves, young people seldom have their voices heard in these discourses.

Secondly, there are methodological issues. Arguments made in popular discourses are mostly based on observations of or interviews with limited groups of young people. For example, Tapscott built a website to ask sets of questions to young people who visited it and quotes their comments to support his arguments. In the case of the anecdotes used in *Toxic Childhood*, it is not even clear if these refer to incidents that have really happened: in fact, Palmer admits that she made up some of the anecdotes she used in the book in order to illustrate her points. It could be argued that claims made in popular books or in popular discourses such as newspaper articles do not require the same rigour in presenting evidence as academic works. As it is characteristic of popular books to assume a certain level of simplicity, their claims cannot be dismissed for the lack of thoroughness in the evidence, although some degree of reliability is to be expected. Furthermore, arguments based on observations are often contradictory. Different authors make different observations and different interpretations while examining supposedly the same subject group. An example can be shown by comparing John Seely Brown and Marc Prensky's approach towards the digital generation's 'attention span'. Prensky dismisses the social concern about the short attention span of young people. He suggests that their seemingly short attention span is the 'suitable' way for them to function in today's media environment. Moreover, he argues that short attention spans are the way future workers might function. However, John Seely Brown argues that young people do not always have a short attention span. He suggests that young people don't pay attention to things they are not interested in. He interprets a short attention span as an indication of young people's lack of interest rather than a general attribute of the younger generation.

Lastly, there is limited attention here to the contexts in which young people's new media use takes place. As mentioned above, the characteristics of the digital generation are often defined in terms of the new media they grow up with. Frequently, new media, which are supposed to have a close correspondence to young people's attributes as a digital generation, are treated as neutral technologies. However, when new media are put into context, the simplistic explanation of young people as the digital generation who are transformed by their use of new media technologies can be challenged.

First of all, in real life old media and new media coexist, and affect each other in terms of the function or content they provide. For example, since the proliferation of instantaneous internet news provided by portal websites, news delivered by newspapers or television has tended to concentrate more on depth than immediacy. There is also a convergence of old and new media. Some viewers watch a television programme and then move onto the internet to get more information on the show or share information with other viewers. It is clear that new media do not exist in isolation.

Second, as many research studies point out, new media and technology are socially constructed (this issue will be examined further in chapter 3). Technology goes through processes such as design, appropriation and diffusion. Each step is affected by social factors, such as the intentions of designers or producers, and the social and cultural needs of the time. Social contexts and commercial forces often put limits on the possibilities of technology available to the 'digital generation'. New media are not neutral technologies with which young people can do whatever they want.

At the same time, young people's everyday uses of digital technology need to be considered in context. Media use is part of young people's daily lives, thus influenced by their life patterns, and by the economic, social, cultural constraints they are placed in. Popular discourses about the digital generation tend to overlook these boundaries. In addition, people do different things with the same media, according to their preference and expectation. Being involved in online chat is considered as a risky behaviour in negative discourses, but it can be understood as a means for young people to pursue a sense of belonging or explore their chances of meeting someone new.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have looked at Korean newspapers dealing with young people and new media, and articles that describe young people as the 'digital generation'. The newspaper articles provide a snapshot of the social context and expectations young people experience in this field. Following the analysis of the newspaper articles, I examined a number of popular books and reports that claim to explore young people and their relations to new media. My aim here has not been to produce a systematic survey, but merely to set the scene for my own research by providing an indication of the ways in which these discourses play out in the wider public arena. To analyze these popular discourses, I focused on the content, themes and issues raised, and also looked at where the producers of such discourses come from by studying their main area of interest and professional backgrounds.

To sum up, it seems that in popular discourses, young people are approached as either techno-savvy consumers with an innate ability to use new media and a natural affinity towards new technology, or as vulnerable and gullible users at risk of being targeted by criminals or of committing crimes under the influence of the new media. Celebratory accounts of the 'digital generation' mainly come from commentators or marketers related to the media industry, whereas negative concerns are generated by youth-related institutions and child development experts. This shows that the way in which young people are depicted as a digital generation is strongly influenced by the background and areas of interest of the agents who generate the arguments.

In addition, the arguments made about the 'digital generation' often show shortcomings, both methodologically and rhetorically. As discussed above, methodologically, popular discourses lack the empirical data to support their arguments, and the interpretations of cases are often subjective and contradictory; and rhetorically, they tend to take a technologically deterministic view, and essentialize young people and new media.

My aim in this chapter has not been to disprove the arguments, but to look into the construction of these discourses. By analyzing the digital generation discourse, I also attempted to pull out the underlying concepts of 'generation' and furthermore to think about the social function of these discourses. Underlying the ‘digital generation’ notion are concepts such as ‘young people’, ‘new media’ and ‘generation’. As mentioned above, in the 'digital generation' discourse, young people's generational identity is constructed in different ways, depending on the differing approaches taken to 'young people' and 'new media technology'.

For instance, the ways in which both celebratory and negative views define the 'digital generation’ are related to how they view 'young people'. It is clear that negative views, that focus on the risks young people face due to the new media environment, consider young people as vulnerable and a group that needs to be protected by adults. The celebratory discourse seems to take the opposite view, describing young people as a group with innate ability to use new media. However, when examined closely, it can be said that the celebratory views also put limits on the digital generation as 'young people' who are not yet able to *produce* media. The celebratory discourse concerning the 'digital generation' frames young people as media-savvy *consumers*, but does not pay attention to the possibility of young people contributing to the development of media/technology. This could be seen to reflect how society views 'young people', and assumes limits on what they are able to do.

In the same vein, the characteristics of the 'digital generation’ are affected by how new media technology is viewed. In most cases, new media technology is considered as a neutral factor, yet technology is developed within complicated contexts including social, cultural, economic and legal circumstances. This decontextualized approach to new media contributes to the essentialized and contradictory approach to the 'digital generation’. Furthermore, by using the category 'generation' the emphasis on the gap between young people and adults is explicitly emphasized, as is the difference between new and old media. When one comes across the recurring generational discourse that links ‘young people’ with ‘new media’ (whatever technology/medium is popular or in the spotlight at that moment can be placed here; e.g. the Facebook generation, M-generation), it is important to look into how these underlying concepts are addressed.

Whether young people and new media are approached positively or negatively, it is clear that the 'digital generation' discourse is more a reflection of adults' hopes and fears about young people and new media, than a realistic depiction of young people and their new media culture. The analysis of popular discourses about the digital generation shows adults' dual fear of not knowing how to use new media (for which young people are expected to have innate ability), and not knowing what is going on in young people's new media culture. It reflects adults' fears of not being able to easily regulate and control young people's media practices and access to information. As we shall see, this can have a strong influence in the school setting and the relations between teachers and students in terms of knowledge transfer. Therefore, the digital generation discourse can stir up moral panic concerning both young people (who are both at risk and risky due to the new media they use) and teachers in educational settings (seen as 'digital immigrants' who lag behind the new media based society; see Bennett et al., 2008).

By examining these popular discourses about the digital generation, I have attempted to describe the social context and social expectations that surround young people's relation to new media technology. In addition to that, I have suggested that popular discourses about the digital generation are constructed by adults without consideration of the various contexts in which young people's use of new media takes place, They also fail to address the ways in which young people understand or interpret this and identify themselves in relation to it (not least through forms of 'generationing'). Though young people's voices are not represented in the construction of the 'digital generation' discourse, the young people I interviewed often referred to these popular discourses when presenting themselves in relation to the new media and when responding to adults' concerns about their new media use. The way in which young people make meanings of and make use of the 'digital generation' discourse will be explored further in the qualitative data chapters.

Recognizing this lack of young people's voices, I will move onto reviewing what academic research says about the generational dimensions of young people's use of new media. I will look at large-scale surveys in this area, and move on to examine research that considers contextual factors when studying young people and their new media use.

Chapter 2. Research on young people and new media

: Literature review

Introduction

Moving on from the popular discourses about young people as the digital generation, it is important to look at what research studies about young people and new media actually say. In this chapter, I will review the literature in this area, especially in relation to the 'generational' dimension. The first part discusses some large-scale surveys that monitor mainly young people's access and use of new media. In the following part, I review some qualitative studies that pay attention to young people's new media use within social and spatial contexts (i.e. peer group, family and school), and how generational identities are established around it.

I inevitably had to draw a line when reviewing the literature in terms of its publication date. Increasing numbers of studies on young people and new media are being published every year. To keep the literature relevant to my study and data collected in 2004 and 2005, I limit the studies to be reviewed in the thesis to those published before 2010.

2.1. Large-scale surveys: Survey on computer and Internet usage, annual report by NIDA (2004 and 2008)

Large-scale surveys mainly use quantitative data to map out the general trends in new media use. Various surveys have been published with a focus on young people and new media. For example, in the UK Ofcom publishes Media Literacy Audits[19] reporting on children's 'media literacy', and the Pew Research Center in the US publishes diverse reports under the title of the Internet & American Life Project[20]. There are also studies focusing specifically on 'risk' or 'addiction' in relation to young people's new media use. For example, in Korea, reports published by the National Youth Policy Institute[21] have specific themes related to the risk issue.

In this part, I will focus on a Korean survey entitled 'Survey on computer and Internet usage' which is published annually by a non-profit organization named NIDA[22]. I chose to review this survey partly because it illuminates the technological context of Korea; although I will also raise some questions about how young people and new media are implicitly defined in the survey.

NIDA stands for the National Internet Development Agency of Korea. It is a non-profit organization supported by the Ministry of Information and Communication. NIDA publishes an annual report measuring the computer and internet usage of the Korean population. The purpose of the survey is 'to provide statistical information on Internet usage to be used as reference for the government to develop policies, companies to establish business strategies, and academia to do research' (2008: foreword). These large-scale surveys also contribute to the construction of popular discourses related to young people's new media culture. NIDA has been collecting data related to ICT since 1999, and the current form of the annual report was settled in 2003.

---

[19] http://www.ofcom.org.uk/advice/media_literacy/medlitpub/medlitpubrss/ (accessed on 31st March 2010)

[20] http://www.pewinternet.org/ (accessed on 31st March 2010)

[21] http://www.nypi.re.kr/eng/kiyd.np (accessed on 31st March 2010)

[22] http://www.nida.or.kr/english/aboutnida/organ.jsp?gubun=4&menu=2 (accessed on 31st March 2010)

I will look at the report published in 2004, which was the year I conducted my own survey on the media use of teachers and students in secondary schools in Korea (see chapter 5). Findings from the 2004 report will be briefly mentioned to put my survey data in context. However, in this review, I do not try to summarize statistical data provided by the report. Rather, my aim is to introduce the media environment and to identify the topics of interest at the time of the data collection. Then I will move on to the report published in 2008 (which was the most recent report at the time of conducting this literature review). Comparing the reports published in 2004 and 2008, I will examine if there is any change in the topics covered by the survey. By this comparison, I aim to look at how people's understanding of and attitudes towards new media culture have changed, and how in turn these changes influence the focus of such large-scale surveys.

2.1.1. NIDA report 2004

The main themes of the NIDA Report[23] are: 'Access to the Internet', 'Patterns of Internet use', and 'ICT and media equipment in households'. In short, its main aim is to examine how many people access the internet, what they mainly do using the internet and which levels of technology they own in order to access the internet. Recently, there have been various special themes added to these main themes every year. For example, in 2008 the theme titled 'online and offline media', which focuses on media convergence, was added to the main topics. The special theme often represents the interest of an institution which joins NIDA in conducting the survey.

---

[23] NIDA reports are usually divided into five sections as follows: 1) internet usage rates, 2) internet usage patterns, 3) ICT environment, 4) ICT and communication and 5) ICT and economic activities (this topic is not applicable to most young people, so it will not be reviewed in this section).

The NIDA report published in 2004 suggests that the increase in internet usage rates had started to slow down from 2002 onwards. In 2004, the internet usage rate of people under 30 was 95%. Already nearly all of the population who fell into the category of 'young people' were said to be internet users[24]. The internet usage rate for young people has not changed much since. The report published in 2008[25] also shows that nearly all the population who are under 40 can be categorized as internet users.

While the internet usage rate has effectively reached saturation point, the age range of the population who are considered as potential internet users has been expanding. The minimum age was seven-years-old in 2001 and six-years-old in 2002 (the age when children start going to elementary school). From 2005, the subject for the survey was settled as 'nationwide households and household members aged 3 and over'. In addition to the demographics of potential internet users, the possible platforms for internet use have also diversified: not only computers but also other wireless devices and domestic electronics were considered as media with internet connection from 2004 onwards.

Survey data in the early days of internet appropriation tended to focus on access, not considering the issue of actual use. Often physical access to the technology and knowing how to use the technology did not coincide. However, the NIDA reports on 'computer and Internet usage' started being published when the internet-using population was close to reaching saturation point. The topics studied in the NIDA reports are based on the understanding of the internet as an everyday medium. Therefore, the reports not only pay attention to the accessibility of the internet but also to the actual use of it.

---

[24] In the 2004 report, the internet user was defined as 'a person who has used the Internet at least once in the last month'.

[25] In 2008, 82% of people in their 40s, and 48.9% in their 50s used the internet

However, there are still invisible issues in the NIDA reports such as cultural factors that result in the existence of various inequalities or 'digital divides'. For example, generational culture/identity is often mentioned as an important cultural factor. In the report from the UK Children Go Online project, Livingstone and Bober argue that the internet has been 'a site for the display and contestation of generational differences' and 'the dynamic within families seems to maximize difference rather than to overcome it' (2006: 222). There is also a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center examining the internet use of different generations. Their report *Generations Online* (2006) suggests that unlike young people, internet users aged 29 to 69 are more likely to participate in online activities that require capital (e.g. online banking, travel booking).

In the NIDA report (2004), the section on 'Patterns of Internet use' displays data that show how different age groups use the internet in different ways. There is a clear age difference in terms of what they mainly use the internet for, especially between the younger generation and adults. For example, young people's (aged 6-19) top three choices in their purpose for using the internet were games (75.2%), information searches (57.6%) and IM (32.1%); whereas, for young adults in their 20s, the top three choices were information searches (78.2%) followed by games (49.7%) and email (39.3%). Also, in the NIDA survey, different places of access are shown. For instance, young people (aged 6-19) chose home (94.2%), school (43.9%) and PC room (internet café) (36%) as their main places for internet use (NIDA, 2004). However, there is no discussion of the reasons why young people chose different places for internet access, or if they used the internet differently according to these spatial contexts. Therefore, even though the survey data show different ways of using the internet related to age groups, or different places of internet use, it does not consider the various contexts (e.g. cultural, technical or economic contexts) that can influence these differences.

2.1.2. Comparing 2004 and 2008: added and/or omitted themes

It can be said that changes in themes in the NIDA reports over the years reflect changes in the media environment, general understandings of the media, and also changes in public interest related to the media. For example, their first annual report, published in 2003, focused mainly on rates of access to the internet and computers, and how people connected to the internet; whereas the most recent report indicates that the majority of the population have access to the internet and therefore focuses more on documenting the specific functions (e.g. communication, financial functions) for which it is used. Recent reports (2007, 2008) also attempt to focus on internet users' agency, even though the data is limited to examining individuals' orientation to the media[26].

When comparing the reports published in 2004 and 2008, several changes in themes can be seen. The changes in themes are mainly related to the changing media environment. Firstly, in 2004, computer use and internet use were approached separately, while the recent report focuses solely on the use of the internet[27]. This is partly due to the fact that in 2004 having a computer did not necessarily mean having access to the internet. The questionnaire I designed and used for data collection in 2004 also reflected this media environment. It asks separate sets of questions about computer use and internet use (see chapter 5). In the section focusing on computer use, the NIDA report shows 72.8% of the population aged six and over use the computer at least once a month, 83.1% of them use the computer to connect to the internet, followed by 45.5% using the computer to play computer games and 32.1% of them using it to manage data and information (NIDA, 2004). Also, in the 2008 report, a separate section entitled 'ICT and communication', which looks into the usage of email, IM, online communities and blogs, is added; whereas the 2004 report only briefly mentions people's use of email. This shows the change in media services with which users are provided.

---

[26] For example, in the 2008 report, there are questions asking the purpose of using IM (e.g. for intimate communication, to share files, to visit a linked blog, etc.). It tries to contextualize media use, by not only measuring how many people use IM but also examining the wants and needs of IM users.

[27] The 2008 report omits the section looking at the use of the computer and includes the examination of mobile phone use instead. This also shows the change in the new media environment.

Additionally, questions related to the digital divide, such as those asking about the point of access to the internet and the reasons for non-use, started to lose importance over time. In the 2008 report, when asking where respondents use the internet, the option of 'regardless of place' is added. The data in 2008 show that, for the whole population, 98.5% use the internet in the home, 39.4% in the workplace, followed by 'regardless of place' (18.7%) and school (17.1%). It shows the main place of use is still the home, but nevertheless the place itself does not mean as much as it did compared to the early years of internet use. In terms of the study of internet non-users, the 2004 report looked at the demographics of non-users and the reasons for non-usage in more detail compared to the report in 2008. In the 2008 report, questions and findings related to non-users are shortened, and it does not consider the age variable any more, only gender difference. As stated in the introduction, the 2004 report aimed to examine the number of non-users with the purpose of increasing the number of future internet users. However, recently, as shown in the 2008 report, the main reason for non-use was volition (e.g. 64.5% of non-users replied 'I don't need to use it', which is 18.4% higher than the previous year). The non-voluntary reasons for not using the internet, such as 'I don't know how to use it' or 'I don't have access to the resources', have decreased.

Also, the 2004 report focused on the issue of media displacement, while the 2008 report paid attention to media convergence. The 2004 report argued that internet users tend to use traditional media less. For example, the report said that 'internet users watched TV for 16.9 hours per week, compared to non-users watching TV for 23.9 hours per week'. It also suggested that 'internet users read a newspaper 4.6 hours per week, whereas non-users read it for 5.1 hours per week'. However, in 2008, the report had a special theme entitled 'online and offline media use'. This theme examines the patterns of media convergence by looking into how internet users make use of the internet as a platform to access other (traditional) media such as TV, newspapers, radio and magazines. This change of focus reflects not only the change in the media environment, but also the interest of the body that co-conducted the survey, which was the Korea Communications Commission. It can be said that the issues dealt with in the survey are often influenced by the interest of the body conducting or funding the research.

2.1.3. Strengths and weakness of the survey

Studies based on quantitative data, such as surveys, policy documents or national statistics, play a role in capturing a snapshot of the media environment during a certain period of time. As the technology changes rapidly, the data about young people's media access and use become obsolete very quickly. When comparing two reports published with a four-year gap, consistent changes can be found not only in the accessibility and usage pattern of the internet, but also in the understanding of the technological possibilities of the media. These data are meaningful in terms of tracking historical changes in the media environment and also providing the statistical basis for policy at that moment. More importantly, these reports reveal issues that both frame and reflect public concerns or interests. By examining the recurring visible and invisible themes of these reports, and exploring a specific theme for a specific time or cultural context, these studies can provide a meaningful frame for understanding the social context in which young people's media use takes place. However, in most survey reports, the attempt to contextualize media use is limited to the individual level, rather than looking at the social, cultural and economic contexts that are important factors at play in media use. The qualitative studies that I will review in the next part pay attention to these contextual aspects of media use.

2.2. Contextualized new media use of young people: peer culture, family and school

In the second part of this chapter, I move my focus on to qualitative studies of young people's new media use. Unlike the surveys reviewed above, qualitative studies explore young people and their new media use with consideration of the contexts (e.g. social, cultural and spatial) in which they are situated. These studies also tend to pay more attention to young people's agency in the construction of their new media culture. In this part of the chapter, I focus on reviewing studies that deal with the three most influential contexts in which young people use new media: peer group, family and school. I will be looking at studies from Korea but also from elsewhere – by contrast with previous part, which looked only at Korea. When reviewing the studies, I will pay attention to the ways in which these contexts influence young people's new media use; how young people perceive, understand and orientate themselves towards new media within these contexts; and lastly the 'generationing' (generational identification) of young people around new media technology within these three separate contexts.

2.2.1. Peer culture

Survey data show teenagers' tendency to use communicative media such as email or instant messaging with the people they are already acquainted with (Lenhart and Madden, 2007; Livingstone, 2006, Ling et al., 2012). Findings from qualitative studies respond to this point, illustrating that young people's new media culture is being developed based on their wants and needs to stay close with peers (Ito, 2009; Ling, 2008). Young people use communicative media to construct a social network that enables them to be co-present with their peer groups. They are in 'perpetual contact' with friends due to the technical affordances provided by new media such as mobile phones (Katz and Aakhus, 2002) and the internet. Danah Boyd points out that 'for most teens, friendship-driven practices play a more central role in structuring new media participation than interest-driven practices' (Boyd, 2009). Rich Ling (2008) also suggests that peer-oriented new media use is a general trend. Referring to the work of Kim et al. (2006) examining mobile communication in Korea, and other research with a similar theme from different countries, Ling makes a point that the 'mobile phone is largely used for the mundane interactions associated with intimacy and friendship' (2008:164).

On one hand, active use of communicative media gives young people a sense of social inclusion. Referring to his study of teens in Norway, Ling (2008) points out that teens feel they are socially included and 'popular among peers' if they frequently use mobile phones. On the other hand, young people feel anxious when they think they are disconnected from their peer group. For example, introducing the case of teenagers' use of Facebook, Boyd (2009) shows teenagers' anxieties about losing social access to their peer group or being socially disconnected.

Young people's preference for communicative new media and their wants and needs to construct peer-oriented spaces are also triggered by broader contexts. Boyd (2009) points out the factors that lead young people to favour peer group culture on new media platforms:

> For contemporary youth, the age-segregated institutions of school, after-school activities, and youth-oriented commercial culture continue to be strong structuring influences. Despite the perception that online media are enabling teens to reach out to a new set of social relations online, we have found that for the vast majority of teens, the relations fostered in school are by far the most dominant in how they define their peers and friendships.

Of course, young people's tendency to want to socialise together is not a unique phenomenon caused by new media. Young people have always gathered in public spaces to 'hang out' with each other (Skelton and Valentine, 1998). Though young people's affinity towards peer culture is nothing new, new media attribute new characteristics to it. For instance, young people's peer culture based on new media is extended in terms of time and space due to the possibility provided by media. Boyd (2009) suggests a term 'peer public' for the peer culture that is built upon new media platforms. As Boyd points out, 'peer publics' are maintained on the basis of various communicational new media. Young people add the social media that enables the realization of these broader peer publics to the media they use for private communication (e.g. SMS, phone calls etc).

New possibilities of the 'peer public': extended and exclusive peer-oriented spaces

Technical affordances of new media and perceptions of media/technology provide young people with new possibilities in relation to their peer culture. In this section, two possibilities will be discussed: one is an extended opportunity to engage with friends and another is the construction of a 'generational' peer public.

Firstly, using new media, young people attempt to construct a peer group which can be relatively free from adult monitoring and regulation. Teenagers' social network is extended, independent of physical presence, due to the technical affordances of communicative new media. In addition, due to the mobility, portability and convergence of new media, teenagers now can carry their social network with them (Livingstone, 2009). This mobility of social networks and young people's wants and needs for perpetual contact often bring about a blurring of traditional boundaries and raise issues of regulation.

Adults often consider young people's perpetual contact with their peer group as problematic. For instance, they are seen as 'physically present yet psychologically absent' when they are in a family situation (Gergen, 2002) or when they are at school. Adults also express their concerns about the commercialisation of young people's peer culture. On the one hand, they worry about children who are at risk of being commercially exploited (e.g. by leaking personal information) (Montgomery, 2001). On the other, they are concerned about the commercial nature of the websites on which young people build their peer culture. This is not only about advertisements being placed within social networking sites or instant messenger, but also about those media leading users to present their identities via their consumer preferences (Buckingham, 2007; Livingstone, 2009).

These concerns, in turn, are used to justify adults' attempts to monitor and regulate young people's new media use. However, adults' regulation of young people's peer group practices can prove problematic, as knowledge about new media use is considered to be more easily accessible to young people than to adults. Adults are faced with the situation where young people are experiencing a peer culture of which adults themselves typically know very little. Equally, young people often use technology, and the perception of technology, to escape adult regulation.

Describing young people's online communication, Livingstone discusses two aspects of children's attempt to gain privacy:

> The language of online communication both facilitates communication among peers and impedes the parental gaze. As Greenfield et al. (2006) note, adults are frequently floored in their attempt to follow the conversational flow in online interactions, the point being that children maintain their privacy not only by keeping their conversation away from physical scrutiny but also by rendering it symbolically inaccessible. (Livingstone, 2009:100)

Due to this generational digital divide (in terms of difference in knowledge of new media culture), it has become more difficult for adults to gain access to young people's peer culture. In the peer-oriented new media space, adults are given 'the role of provisioning or monitoring youth media ecologies rather than as co-participants' (Boyd, 2009).

Secondly, new media provide young people with extended possibilities of presence in peer groups. However, like a double-edged sword, an extended peer group also demands more 'work' from young people. Technical characteristics of social media (e.g. visible friends lists, the possibility of surveillance) put them under new types of pressure (Grinter and Palen, 2002).

The various forms of 'work' involved in managing peer social networks are often closely linked to the technical features provided by specific media.

Young people not only 'hang out' with their peers in the 'peer public', but also face the environment of 'always-on access to peer communication, new kinds of authoring of public identities, public display of connectedness, and access to information about others' (Boyd, 2009). There are also implied norms or rules in relation to young people's new media peer culture. Boyd and others illustrate the normative practices of high school teenagers when using social networking sites. For example, reciprocity and constant involvement are expected of young people when they interact in peer publics. Boyd (2009) explains that the rule of reciprocity strengthens young people's friendship, but at the same time 'it also plays into pressures toward conformity and participation in local, school-based peer networks'.

In addition to social networks demanding young people be part of the normalized culture, the extended possibility of constant co-presence amongst peers often results in 'surveillance' (see chapter 7 for students' discussion of how SNS or IM can function as a means of keeping an eye on each other). In his chapter in *Wireless World*, Green (2002) shows how mobile technology leads users to surveil themselves and each other in their everyday relations, and how it 'normalises the notion that individuals should be available and accountable to others, visibly and transparently, at any time and place' (Green, 2002:33).

Peer culture interacting with new media technology: co-construction of users and technology

As seen above, new technology brings about changes in young people's peer group culture. However, it is not the case that young people's peer culture is completely constrained by the technical affordances of new media. Young people often make use of the technology in unexpected ways, and in turn influence how the technology is developed. Livingstone (2009) observes that the development of social networking and other forms of online and mobile communication has been driven not only by producers' anticipations, but by young people's wants and needs for perpetual contact with their peers.

Though young people's wants and needs may eventually contribute to deciding how new media are developed, it is clear that their peer practices are constrained by technical features they use at the time. On one level, the technological affordances of each medium influence the degrees of exclusiveness of new media peer groups. Ling (2008) explains that teenagers he interviewed in Oslo distinguished the openness of peer social networks according to the media platforms used. Teenagers suggested that the mobile phone is for the close peer group, and IM or SNS for broader groups of friends. According to these teenagers, instant messenger or social networking sites provide the possibility of less known peers making contact or starting up a conversation (or joining in with the peer group).

On another level, teenagers' peer practices are influenced by the structural and technical features of the space in which they choose to hang out. For example, the main characteristic of online peer culture, which was not evident in offline peer culture, is that it requires users to articulate their understanding of friendship groups. Boyd (2009) discusses how Facebook's system of Top Friends can provoke 'social dramas' in teens' peer relationships. As seen in the example of young people's practice of adding and deleting friends on SNS sites, these new social media tend to involve technology that makes peer negotiation visible. This technological feature leads users to decide upon ‘friendship hierarchies’, showing others how they rank their peers. In addition, social networking sites construct young people’s management of ‘friends’ as part of their identity enactment. On social networking sites, ‘friends’ or other connections ‘serve as a public display of taste and identity’ (Donath and Boyd, 2004).

However, as Boyd illustrates, young people deal with the system (or technical features) of SNS in various ways. In the case of Facebook, young people’s practices range from erasing the ‘top friends’ feature to rotating their top friends regularly. This example shows the constraints that technology (as a cultural product) puts on young people’s new media culture, and how, in turn, users try to inscribe their own meanings to the technology. As this implies, media and media users’ culture always co-construct each other.

As discussed above, young people actively use communicative new media to construct ‘peer publics’. These peer publics provide young people with ‘exclusive’ (i.e. from parental gaze: Livingstone, 2009) generational spaces, in which young people experience identity construction and intimacy (Livingstone, 2009; Turkle, 2010). In the following two sections, I will look at studies which deal with young people’s new media use in different contexts (both spatial and social), such as family and school. I will pay attention to how these contexts influence young people’s new media culture, and how, in turn, the cultures of these spaces are influenced by young people’s new media culture.

2.2.2. Young people's new media use at home: intergenerational interactions between family members

In terms of young people's new media use, the family home becomes an important spatial, social and cultural context of use and access for new media. Most of the surveys concerning new media pay attention to the digital divide between households or between different age groups, but do not look into the gaps or conflicts amongst the household members. On the other hand, qualitative studies that take the 'domestication' approach (Silverstone and Hirsch, 1992; see chapter 3 for further discussion) explore the interactions amongst household members when appropriating new media into their daily life. For instance, there are studies that show how family members' orientations towards new media, such as the internet and computers, and the interactions amongst family members around the technology, influence how young people make use of them (Cranmer, 2006; Facer et al., 2001).

Amongst the research about young people's new media use at home, my primary interest is in studies that focus on intergenerational interactions and 'generational' approaches to family members' new media use. Family members influence each other in making choices such as what media to use and how to use them. Analyzing autobiographical essays written by college students, McMillan and Morrison (2006) describe how young adults not only describe other family members' influences on their first encounters with the media, but also differentiate their own new media use from that of their parents (as an older generation who are hesitant about new media technology) and from their younger siblings (often described as 'technology geniuses'). This generational approach to family members' orientation towards new media can be seen as based on their real-life experiences, but also as influenced by the generational self-perception of young people and their abilities in using new media.

As briefly mentioned in the previous section, it is often argued that adults are no longer able to claim expertise to regulate or teach young people, especially in relation to new media. Young people are recruited as 'experts' and often 'helpers' for adults to assist them with ICT issues. However, not many studies can be found that try to figure out the real difference in digital literacy between young people and adults, or even amongst different groups of young people. Some argue that the extent of young people's expertise tends to be overrated (Livingstone, 2003), while others suggest that, in some cases related to ICT use, 'adult-child relationships can have a different dimension to them, but it does not, in itself, necessarily realize change in the relationship beyond that particular instance' (Facer, 2003:166). It can be said that young people's expertise has more of a symbolic meaning within intergenerational relationships than a practical/functional one. Yet as such, new media may become 'a source of generational tensions' and a means of negotiation in relation to family dynamics.

In the following section, I will focus on two symptomatic studies that examine how family members make meanings around new media, and how they implement them into the existing power hierarchy of the household. One is a study of three Swedish families, looking into the intergenerational interactions around the computer game. The other is a study of three Israeli families, studying the intergenerational conflicts, especially between the father and son, within a family in relation to computer skills.

Case 1. Aarsand (2007): interactions between (grand)parents and children around the computer game

Survey data or policy documents approach the digital divide as a problem that needs to be solved. However, in his article, Aarsand (2007) argues that the digital divide between family members is often used as an 'interactional resource rather than a problem'. Aarsand introduces three cases of family members interacting around a computer game. The computer is looked at as a gathering point for the family (mainly in relation to 'leisure' activities). This approach is similar to studies that considered the television as the 'electronic hearth' (i.e. Tichi, 1991). However, it has a different dimension, as the 'computer' gives expertise, or in other words 'power', to children over parents. The underlying consensus, which enables the role reversal between parents and children, is that children's knowledge related to new media is important and valid.

Following is an extract from Aarsand's article that describes the interaction between a mother and two daughters while playing a computer game. He observes several interesting interactions amongst the family members, showing the power dynamic in relation to new media.

> Like a teacher in a classroom, Felicia (elder sister) takes the initiative for the next move, while Sara (younger sister) does the move, positioning herself as a pupil. Ultimately, Felicia positions herself as a teacher, in that she evaluates Sara's move. When the mother asks what is going on in the game, Felicia answers that they are playing King, and the mother goes on to ask questions about the game. These question and answer sequences show that she confirms her subordinated position in relation to Sara. The fact that Felicia is the one who answers the mother's questions and the one that the mother orientates herself to when she follows up her questions, strengthens Felicia's position as the one in the know. In this example, the knowledge-relation is asymmetrical, not only between Felicia and her mother, but also between Felicia and Sara. (Aarsand, 2007:241)

Firstly, Aarsand describes how the mother purposefully puts herself in the position of a novice in order to become part of the communication while children play the computer game. Cases of two other families also show how adults (parents, grandparents) position themselves as less knowledgeable than children in order to be part of children's leisure activities. In these interactions, children gain authority and the position of the teacher, which enables them to control the situation. It is not easy for parents to enforce their usual parenting roles of monitoring and regulating.

Secondly, children also claim the position of experts, especially in relation to adults. Aarsand also describes an incident where the mother asked the daughters what they were doing. The daughters answered that they were playing a 'computer game', though as Aarsand observes, the game was just a digital version of a card game which the mother was likely to be familiar with. This example shows how young people attempt to reframe the known into the unknown (or only known to young people) as a means to sustain the generational digital divide. By maintaining the digital divide, children can draw boundaries allowing parents to be involved in their leisure activities only to a certain degree.

However, as seen in the extract from the article above, there are differences in knowledge amongst children themselves. When the two sisters are playing the computer game (King), the elder sister is positioned as a teacher checking if the move made by the younger sister is correct. If there is a difference between the status of the younger sister and the mother, it is that whereas the sister is allowed to be, and is willing to become, a participant in the game, the mother is 'kept on the ringside' just using the game as a means to enter the on-going communication.

Aarsand's study shows how family members' intergenerational relationships change with the implementation of new media (such as computer games) within the household. However, it does not mean that parent-child relations are completely changed. In the cases introduced in this study, the role reversal between parents and children only happened in relation to the computer game. When (grand)parents brought in the issue of eating or sleeping, parents regained control of the conversation, albeit with attempts on the part of children to switch it again using new media dialogue. In addition, as recognized by Aarsand himself, the change in hierarchy between parents and children also reflects the broader social trend that puts children at the centre of attention. Especially, the family relationships looked at in this article were those between a mother and daughters, grandparents and grandson. These relationships might be thought of as less hierarchical in comparison to others (for example, involving fathers). Therefore, it can be argued that the change in intergenerational relationships in a family is not entirely unique to computer games. With this question in mind, I will move onto another article looking into the power negotiation between family members in relation to new media. This study by Ribak (2001) focuses on the relationship between father and son and the negotiation of fatherhood and masculinity.

Case 2. Ribak (2001): the relationship between fathers and sons

In the article, Ribak (2001) approaches the computer as a site for male identity construction. His focus is on the negotiation of power between father and son using discourses about the computer. According to Ribak's interpretations, women (mother and daughter) usually take the role of 'organizer/allocator' trying to find a balance amongst the different needs of family members. It can be said that the existing gender-hierarchy within the family is also represented in the access to and use of computers (see Na, 2001 for a Korean example of gender-hierarchy related to home computer consumption). For Ribak, the disruption of hierarchical order mainly happens within the interaction between father and son, in relation to their computer use.

Parents in Aarsand's study took the position of novice, thus acknowledging children's authority. But fathers introduced in Ribak's study are often seen as reinforcing traditional family values when framing computer use. Here the intergenerational conflict happens. Fathers stand for old media or the traditional hierarchy, whereas children stand for new media culture and the blurring of boundaries framed by traditional values. In one instance, parents try to regulate the son's computer use by prioritizing computer use for work rather than play. However, the son defends his computer use as both work *and* play, thus troubling the hierarchy and getting his voice heard over the parents'. In another example, the father argues that computers decrease family time by encouraging isolated individual activities. But the daughter points out that even when they did not have a computer, they had few family-centred activities. In this instance, she defends the computer culture, which is represented as children's culture, from parents' nostalgic comment about television-centred time.

This article describes in detail how the fathers attempt to 'belittle' the new media use of children in order to regain authority. One father described in the study uses the analogy of 'immigrants learning a new language'. He explains that whereas children are more daring and less hesitant in learning new media skills, his use of new media, like an immigrant learning a foreign language, is bound to be heavily influenced by old (media) habits. This resonates with the popular discourse categorizing young people as digital natives and adults as digital immigrants (Prensky, 2006). However, it becomes more interesting when the interactions between the fathers and children concerning this analogy are looked at.

By using the analogy of 'the digital native', it can be said that the father tries to 'belittle' young people's ability in new media use by defining it as an innate skill of young people. He ignores the learning process or efforts put in by young people to gain knowledge. Ribak describes another instance where the father tried to put little significance on his son's computer knowledge:

> Despite Ben's (son) major in computers in high school, and irrespective of the many ways through which knowledge can be gained, Barry constructs his son's proficiency as eclectic and random. And therein lies the threat to the social order, as exemplified in his son, the 'self-made man' who has learned on his own and can change the power relations. But what Barry constructs as accidental (and thereby as dangerous) Ben redefines as planned and calculated...(Ribak, 2001: 230).

The father in this example also claimed that he would be able to master the technology if he had more time to spend on it, suggesting that young people are in a position to gain new media skills more easily as they have plenty of time on their hands. However, in response to the father's comment, the son 'insists that his father has the leisure time that it takes; and that indeed, as [the daughter] suggests, it is all a matter of priorities'. Responding to the popular discourses, fathers in this study acknowledge the importance of computer skills. They often claim that they are aware of what their children are doing with the computer and what types of skills are required. However, they hardly recognize children's ability as superior to theirs, thus trying to maintain traditional intergenerational power relations.

In this section, the generational 'digital divide' amongst family members has been approached as a resource in power negotiation. Children are expected to have expertise in new media use. Using this social expectation, both children and parents take part in negotiating their power relations. However, this power negotiation is not only limited to home: it also happens in schools between students and teachers.

2.2.3. Young people and new media in schools

The school is another important social space in which young people access and make use of new media. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are incorporated in schools mainly to support ICT as an examination subject, to encourage students to learn ICT-related skills, or to enhance learning experiences combined with other subjects (Loveless and Ellis, 2001; Holloway and Valentine, 2003; Buckingham, 2006). In the early stage of ICT implementation in schools, the school, mainly in government policy documents, was considered as a public access point to bridge the digital divide and provide young people with necessary skills related to new media use (Selwyn, 2006). However, as the appropriation rate of ICTs in homes started to grow, the school is often considered as lagging behind the home in terms of access to cutting-edge technologies.

Studies suggest that young people use ICTs in different ways at home and at school (Loveless and Ellis, 2001; Livingstone, 2003; Somekh, 2004). This is not only related to the level of technology or equipment, but also to the way in which the school space frames and regulates it. Young people's media use in schools is usually more restricted than at home (Livingstone, 2003; Lewin, 2004). In schools, there are technological limits of ICTs themselves, time limits when young people can use them (Harrison et al., 2003) and regulations and rules put upon them. The Pew Research Center published a report entitled *The Digital Disconnect* (2002), looking at the difference between 'internet-savvy' students' uses of the internet at home and in schools. In this report, students consider their internet uses at school as more limited or unexciting. Crook (2012) also points out that cognitive competence young people gain via recreational usage of Web 2.0 out of school is not easily realized in the school setting its socio-cultural constraints.

In addition, when ICT is taught as an independent subject, it usually focuses on decontextualized skills (e.g. how to use MS Office tools) without considering the existing experiences and knowledge of young people (Somekh, 2004). Even where students learn to make their own websites, for example, they often lack the opportunity for their homepages to reach a wider audience due to the school's filtering systems (Buckingham, 2006). Despite early expectations that new media technology would change the learning culture in schools and shift the relations between teachers and students (Schofield, 1997 cited in Holloway and Valentine, 2003), the ICTs implemented in schools do not always contribute to innovation due to resistance from teachers and education systems (Somekh, 2004). This also shows the shortcomings of approaching ICTs as neutral and instrumental tools. ICTs in schools can be understood better when they are approached as socially constructed entities that take shape within the process of implementation (Selwyn, 2010).

However, the gap between home and school computer use is not only due to the school's technical and regulatory framing of it, but also due to young people's identity performance within school contexts. In this case, the school is a 'socio-spatial environment', where young people negotiate their new media uses with adults (i.e. teachers) and peers. Holloway and Valentine (2003) explore how young people describe their identities in relation to the ways in which they make use of new media. For instance, they point out that girls feel more at ease to express their technical expertise at home than at school. Young people tend to label technical experts as 'nerds' or 'geeks' at school, whereas at home they are encouraged to express their skills. This tendency shifts when young people position themselves against teachers. Referring to other studies, Buckingham (2006) suggests that young people tend to assert their expertise over teachers and challenge the school's regulations by devising strategies to avoid school filtering systems or even to find ways to hack into teachers' files.

As this implies, young people perform around new media differently according to the image they think they should portray in different socio-cultural spaces and within different relationships. As Hartmann (2005) suggests, young people's new media use is often influenced by the expectations of them. She argues that 'young people increasingly feel the pressure to act accordingly – a pressure that stems not only from the commercial interests, but also from the older generation(s), their peers and the media' (2003:16). School is a unique space for new media use, as it becomes a crossroads of various discourses and cultural factors that influence young people's new media use. Facer and Furlong (2001) explain the discourses that characterize students' use of new media at school as follows:

> ...there are competing discourses within the school – not just those of fellow students but also those of teachers/parents/computer enthusiastic children and more popular media discourses that continually reiterate the value of computer use for young people. Caught between the discourses of the peer group and the policy document, some young people are treading an ambivalent line between their personal pleasures and their official awareness of appropriate attitudes to computers. (Facer and Furlong, 2001:461)

Young people's new media use in schools has another dimension due to the increasing mobility of young people's new media and the 'portability' of their social practices. Kent and Facer (2004) suggest that young people's computer use should be looked at beyond the 'home/school' divide. They describe the complexity of young people's new media use across these contexts as follows:

> It is arguable that young people's home use of computers, through instant messaging and the production of a 'virtual' social context in the home, is shaped by their expectations of social contact formed in the classroom and school, and that

> draws on many of the characteristics of the interactions they describe with physically co-present peers in school. This latter observation of the 'portability' of social practices from school to home provides an interesting challenge to the clear delineations between home and school as sites of computer use, indeed, as sites of learning, which have been identified in earlier studies (2004: 445).

As mentioned above, the boundary between home and school in relation to young people and new media is becoming blurred. Young people's new media culture formed outside school is influenced by the relations and expectations established in schools. At the same time, young people's private new media culture enters into the school setting due to the mobility of young people's new media and social networks.

Young people's use of 'private' media in the school setting brings up the issue of regulation again. Young people and teachers take part in an on-going negotiation around the regulation and meaning of young people's new media culture. (The literature related to this issue will be discussed further in chapter 9.) As discussed in the previous section, young people tend to position themselves as 'experts' and adults (in this case, teachers) as 'novices' when it comes to the knowledge related to new media. This power reversal between adults and children comes to attention when teachers try to regulate young people's new media use, and also when the decisions have to be made on what is valid knowledge that should be taught in schools.

Some argue that the change in the media environment should trigger a shift of focus in schools from print literacy to multiple literacies (Smith and Curtin, 1998 in Livingstone, 2002). As young people are more familiar with multiple literacies than adults, the traditional authority relation between teachers and students is thought to be reversed (Livingstone, 2002). However, there has been criticism of this stance, arguing that what young people know and do using new media is more about 'operational' literacy, which is 'a necessary but certainly not a sufficient skill in supporting more formal learning' (Facer, 2003:165). According to Facer (2003), there might occasionally be a change in the authority relations, but there is little proof that the pedagogical relationship is changing. As she argues:

> New technologies had perhaps altered what Bernstein (1977) called the 'framing' of knowledge (who could bring it into the classroom in the first place); they had done nothing, for this teacher at least, to alter what he called the 'classification' of knowledge, i.e. what does and does not count as legitimate knowledge in the first place. (Facer, 2003:165)

Therefore, the power reversal caused by young people's new media culture within schools can be seen as more symbolic and provisional rather than absolute.

2.2.4. Three contexts contributing to the construction of young people's new media culture

In the second part of this chapter, I have reviewed studies looking at young people's new media use within peer culture, at home and in school. These three contexts all contribute to the construction of young people's new media culture.

The peer group, which can be seen as both a social and spatial context, plays an important part in young people's orientation towards new media. For young people, new media used within the peer culture have both a bright side and a dark side. New media enable them to maintain more intimate communication and 'perpetual contact' with peers, but at the same time they function as tools for 'surveillance', leading to forms of 'bounded sociality', that are often considered as 'work' rather than enjoyment. Meanwhile, young people's peer networks constructed through new media typically escape the gaze of adults, due to the dominant social understanding of young people's expertise in new media.

This 'digital generation' discourse also influences the family dynamic in relation to young people's new media use at home. Studies looking into intergenerational interactions around new media at home show that both young people and parents (sometimes grandparents) actively make use of the 'digital generation' discourse. Adults sometimes intentionally play the part of the less knowledgeable generation in terms of new media in order to promote communication between themselves and young people. In some cases, young people actively present themselves as the 'digital generation' who are more knowledgeable in new media technology in seeking to negotiate the power relations between themselves and parents.

Studies about young people's new media use in schools mainly discuss the issue of how ICTs implemented in the classroom setting. By contrast with their new media use at home, young people's access to and use of new media in school is highly regulated and often filtered by school. When ICT is taught as a separate subject, it often has little relationship with young people's new media experience outside school. In addition, young people's practices in using new media in school can differ from those at home due to their identity performance around technology. The school's regulation of new media is often challenged by young people, which in turn contributes to their identity construction as the ‘digital generation’, especially positioned in opposition to teachers.

The research reviewed in this part of the chapter suggests that each context has different ways of framing young people's new media use. Young people often make meanings around the media within these contextual frames, and their new media practices, in turn, influence these contexts. In addition, these studies show that young people's identity construction influences how they use new media. Young people often pick and choose what media they use and how they use them in order to manage their identities, and in doing so they often construct their identities around technology in relation to other generations.

2.2.5. Young people's new media practices in the changing media environment

As seen in part 1, the digital technology develops in rapid pace and media services enabled to young people evolve continuously. Recent studies examining young people's new media use show that the media platforms young people use to access the internet are being diversified. For instance, majority of Korean youth pick the mobile phone as their preferred medium to access the internet and use social networking services (Lee et al., 2013). Livingstone and others (2011) report that more than one in five young people in European countries such as Norway and the UK access the internet via mobile devices. Social networking services that are actively used by young people have been changing over time as well (e.g. Lee et al., 2013). However, young people's orientations toward the internet and their purposes of using the internet have not changed much. A study looking into East Asian adolescents' use of the media point out that young people identify the internet as a medium for communication and entertainment (Jung et al., 2012). The spatial and social contexts that have strong influence on their new media culture are still reported to be their peer group, home and school (Livingstone et al., 2011). Young people's perception of the new media and various contexts of their new media use (e.g. social and spatial contexts) contribute to the construction of young people's new media culture. As such, it can be suggested that there is a new media culture specific to young people (Davies and Eynon, 2013) which has distinct characteristics despite of the changing new media environment.

Conclusion

Based on the studies reviewed in this chapter, it can be suggested that the 'media generation gap' between adults and young people is not only a matter of actual differences in media uses, but also of perceptions and orientations. In other words, it is a question of how different generations mutually perceive and identify each other around media technology. Simplistic categorizations of young people as the digital generation can be avoided by looking into young people's actual media usage and listening to their accounts of their media use (e.g. justification about their media choices, rules of media use etc.). This is what my research aims to do.

When considering methodological issues, it can be said that both quantitative research and qualitative research have their strengths and shortcomings. Survey data have strength in that they can take a snapshot of the new media environment of the moment and show the big picture through surveying a large population. Yet they mainly focus on *what* media young people use rather than considering the *why* and *how*. By contrast, qualitative studies can pull out the rich contextual factors enabling the study of the why and how of young people's new media use, but are mainly conducted using a small number of cases. To compensate for the limits of both surveys and case studies, research aiming to look into young people's new media culture has started to use both quantitative and qualitative data to grasp a realistic understanding of young people's new media use. To examine the 'media generation gap' between young people and teachers, I also chose to use both quantitative and qualitative data. Further discussions concerning the methodology will be introduced in chapter 4.

Chapter 3. Theories of Technology and Generation

Introduction: Towards a more nuanced description of the digital generation

As seen in chapter 1, digital generation discourses have two shortcomings in describing young people's relationships with new media. Firstly, these discourses are based on a technologically deterministic approach, which assumes that new media technology can in itself change the way in which users, in this case, young people, work, learn and live. Secondly, digital generation discourses consider young people as a homogeneous group, overlooking the various social, cultural and economic contexts of young people's lives and how those contexts influence young people's appropriation, perception and understanding of new media.

Empirical studies of young people and new media show the diversity of young people's media cultures. Studies discussed in the literature review illustrate how young people's new media use is placed within the users' economic, social and cultural contexts. In addition, the new media used by young people are not neutral tools as implied by 'digital generation' discourses. The media themselves are inscribed with social and technical attributes, which also function to construct and constrain young people's new media culture.

Therefore, for a more nuanced description of the so-called digital generation, it is important to look into the construction of this generation within the social context, and the ways in which young people and new media co-construct each other. By looking at the factors that make up the ‘digital generation’ and the interactions amongst these factors, one can see the complexity of this process. In this chapter, I will firstly discuss theories of technology, especially those that pay attention to the social aspects of technology; then look into theories of 'generation'; and finally propose a theoretical framework for studying the 'digital generation'.

3.1. Theories of Technology

3.1.1. Sociology of technology and domestication theory

When identifying young people with new media, the 'digital generation’ discourses take a technologically deterministic view. This technologically deterministic view considers technology as a neutral factor, and yet asserts that the development of technology brings about changes in society. By contrast, a sociological analysis of technology explores the social construction of the technology, and the social contexts that influence its use and development. For instance, when examining the relations between the development of computers and society, technological determinists argue that the development of computers caused social changes, whereas sociologists pay attention to how technology interacts with politics, society and culture when computers are adopted and used. Rather than considering computers as the cause of social change, this approach focuses on how 'computers affect society through an interactive process of social construction.' (Edwards, 1995:284).

However, most of the studies in this area focus on the development and design stage of technology. There are few studies focusing on the end of the technological development process, which is the consumer. *Consumption Junction* by Ruth Schwartz Cowan (1989) is one such study, which looks at the social relationships of consumers, and the role of consumers' preferences in shaping domestic technology. However, she does not look into the details of what occurs after the technology is appropriated by users. By contrast, domestication theory, an approach developed in media studies, does pay attention to this aspect of technology, especially in relation to the appropriation of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Domestication theory offers a framework to examine the media consumption of the household. It tracks the processes whereby media enter an existing family or system through to the stage when they are taken for granted (Hartmann, 2005). In addition, it examines how household members change the new media into a form to fit their daily lives, in other words the 'taming' of the new media in the domestic context.

Leslie Haddon makes a brief summary of the domestication approach as follows:

> [I]CTs come into consumer perceptions with their meanings pre-formed. This results from such processes as advertising, design, and surrounding media discourses. But afterwards, households and individuals invest them with their own significance. This includes the effort involved before acquisition in imagining how they might find a place in the home and a role in people's lives, the household discussions about the decision to acquire them, and the process afterwards of locating these ICTs in domestic time and space. (Haddon, 2006:44)

While Haddon draws attention to the process that goes on before the media in question actually cross the boundary from the public world into the private household, Hartmann describes the process of media consumption which happens after the technology enters the household.

> [T]he users play a role in how the technology is adopted not only into the household as a physical space, but also into the everyday routines of the household members. This finally leads to a form of communication to the outside world in which the technologies form a part of the status of the household in question. (Hartmann, 2005: 153)

This process of domestication is typically categorized into four conceptual stages: 'appropriation', 'objectification', 'incorporation' and 'conversion'. These four stages of media consumption suggested by Silverstone and Hirsh (1992) are commonly mentioned by studies using the domestication approach. However, it is agreed that these four stages are not a linear or a one-off process (Hartmann, 2003). This is rather a description of different levels of negotiation which are involved in the process of media consumption and use. According to Roger Silverstone (2006), objectification and incorporation are related to strategies of media use, whereas appropriation and conversion are concerned with media crossing the boundary between private and public.

Domestication theory is helpful in understanding new media culture, as it approaches the appropriation of media as a process of consumption (Silverstone, 2006). As the origin of domestication theory is traced back to consumption studies (Haddon, 2006; Silverstone, 2006; Sorenson, 2006), the domestication approach is influenced by consumption studies in several ways.

Firstly, it focuses on the symbolic meanings of ICTs (e.g. 'as quintessentially novel objects, and therefore as the embodiment of our desires for the new, as well as their status as transmitters of all the images and information that fuel those desires,' (Silverstone and Hirsh, 1992:3) and how those meanings influence people's consumption of the new media. As such, domestication theory includes not only the use of media but also provides a frame to explain the non-use of media (Haddon, 2006).

Secondly, the domestication of ICTs is considered not as passive but as an active meaning-making process. In other words, consumption is considered as an act of production in itself: for instance, the meanings that users attribute to the media, in turn, can bring about changes in both the media and users themselves.

Lastly, consumption studies often result in revealing the contexts (e.g. social, cultural and economic) of consumption by following the biography of the technology. This also applies to the domestication of media/ICTs. Through the process of ICT consumption, a household reveals its value system and understandings of and attitudes towards the media (Silverstone and Hirsh, 1992). In other words, domestication theory not only contextualizes a user's media consumption, but also reveals the social, cultural and economic situation of a certain group (household, individual, organization, society) by looking into the biography of new media as objects of consumption.

Turning to the consumption unit, it can be suggested that by focusing on the media consumption of the household, the domestication approach examines collective media use. Members of the household take part in negotiating media consumption and create norms in order to anchor the new media into their everyday lives. These negotiations and norms reflect not only what is expected from the media, but also the value systems and moral identity of the household. Studies of the collective use and negotiation of media use can be extended beyond the boundary of the household. For example, this approach can be applied to examine the media appropriation practices of social networks or friendship groups. Here the domestication approach can be used to study negotiations related to media consumption within a group of members with shared interests and shared identities. This reveals the identity a group expresses or constructs in the process of negotiating of norms and appropriating media. (This issue is further discussed in the following section related to the extension of domestication theory).

Furthermore, by looking into negotiation amongst group members in relation to media consumption, the domestication approach hints at the conservative aspect of media consumption. Silverstone (2006) suggests that domestication is intrinsically a conservative act as it is based on the existing 'moral economy' of the household. When studying the new media use of young adults, Hartmann also suggests that, in contrast to discourses about the 'digital generation', young people's media use is often conservative, reflecting values imbued from their daily lives. This aspect of domestication theory goes against the idea of technological determinism, which assumes that new technology inevitably results in changes in society.

Shortcomings of domestication theory when examining young people's new media use

Despite the strength of the domestication theory mentioned above, there are two shortcomings when applied to the examination of young people's new media culture. Firstly, despite its theoretical commitment to considering the 'double articulation' of media technologies, when applied to empirical studies, the domestication approach tends to focus more on media as *objects* of consumption, paying less attention to their *content* (Hartman, 2003). Secondly, changes not only in family situations but also in the media environment call for the theory to be extended to include more than just the household.

Double articulation: Content versus objects

Domestication theory differs from other theories that deal with the social construction of technology in the sense that it focuses on the 'media' aspects of ICTs. Silverstone et al (1992) explain how ICTs are unique in that they include aspects of objects, technologies and media. ICTs are 'objects', and their aesthetics as well as their functions are important. ICTs, like other domestic technologies, have an impact on the social and economic order of the household. However, unlike other objects and technologies, ICTs as 'media' also have a functional significance in mediating between the private and public (Silverstone et al., 1992). To describe this duality of ICTs, the concept of 'double articulation' is used.

Reflecting on domestication theory, Silverstone explains how ICTs are doubly articulated:

> All technologies once appropriated, found, in one way or another, their time and place in that space, and in their placing were articulated as material and symbolic objects into the fabric of everyday life. Information and communication added an extra dimension. This was their second articulation, for they brought, through the communications they enabled, a range of content-based claims, the hooks and eyes of mediation, which established but also

> disturbed the relationship between the private and the public spaces of communication and meaning. (2006:239)

As seen from the concept of double articulation, the domestication approach, in theory, considers both the content of the media and the status of media as material objects. However, when domestication theory is applied to empirical studies, the focus is mainly on the media as objects, not on their content. This lack of consideration of content is often mentioned as a weak point of domestication theory by those who conduct empirical research using this approach:

> What the domestication concept lacks is an emphasis on the reception aspects of the "audience" in media use, that is the making sense of media texts and their reception. It lacks this not so much in theory (rather this was a major emphasis, at least in the beginning), but in terms of the application of the theory (potentially as a methodological question). (Hartmann, 2003:29)

When examining young people's new media culture, it is clearly important to pay attention to new media as objects of consumption. Young people actively express their identities in terms of the types of media they choose to consume (Hengst, 2003). However, in the context of new media, there is a growing need to focus on media content as well.

Applying the domestication framework to examine young adults' new media use, Maren Hartmann points out the weakness of domestication theory when applied to new media use. She argues that the research material gathered by interviewing young adults about their new media use 'highlighted the lack of consideration of "content" in domestication theory' (2003:9).

As explained by Hartmann(2003), in the context of new media, the consumption of media content varies even if the same media platform is used. Additionally, for new media the content itself is more subject to the individual's control. It is not only the media as objects but also the content being used via the media that has important meaning in defining the identity of young people as a group of media users. When young people domesticate new media which are mobile and individualized, the symbolic meanings of media (e.g. design or types of mobile phones they carry) are still important, but the symbolic meaning of media content (e.g. what they do with the mobile phone: communicating via SMS or phone calls) becomes more meaningful (young people's generational identification of the media contents they use are discussed further in chapter 6).

Extension of domestication theory

Another limitation of the home-based approach of domestication theory is that it does not fully consider the social meanings of ICTs in different settings outside the household. Scholars who discuss the use of domestication theory to study new media have started to argue for extending domestication theory to spatial settings outside the home and also to the social networks that tend to collectively consume media (e.g. peer groups).

Haddon points out that when examining young people's use of new media, the media consumption that happens within the social network of peers needs to be considered. For instance, when studying mobile telephony use by adolescents, 'non-domestic social relationships' amongst young people should be considered if we are to make sense of their consumption patterns (Haddon, 2006). As Haddon describes in his example of mobile phone studies, young people often negotiate their own norms amongst peers, which are different from those negotiated within the household. They tend to construct a collective media culture based on their shared interests and identities. Extending domestication theory to social networks of young people can be useful when examining this collective media culture. Domestication theory, unlike quantitative approaches to the media consumption of social networks, offers an analytical tool to explain the complexity of collective media consumption (Haddon, 2006).

Domestication in various 'situated-realities' and the 'dislocation of domestication' caused by the mobility of new media

Domestication theory can be extended not only to other collective groups but also to other sites of media consumption. Referring back to Silverstone and Haddon's work, Hartmann (2005) suggests that domestication theory can also be applied to other cases of 'situated reality' than the domestic context. Domestication theory can be applied to media appropriation at multiple sites such as schools, public libraries or homes (Sorenson, 2006). It can be suggested that different places (or situated realities) may domesticate the same media in different ways. It is not only that different sites domesticate a medium in different ways, but also that these different approaches are integrated by users, contributing to the general identification of the medium. As Haddon (1992) describes in the case of the implementation of the 'micro(computer)' at home and in the workplace, the role a medium has outside the home can influence how the medium is identified and experienced[28].

---

[28] For example, when schools acquire a computer, they often appropriate it as an educational medium. They regulate the use of the computer by placing it within a glass panel with a lock in the classroom or in the library. They limit its use to information searches or to surfing educational websites. However, this regulation is often defied by students, as it does not correspond to the expectations they have from their use of the computer at home. The same

However, it is also important to pay attention to the increased mobility and personalization of new media. While using media, individuals often move through various 'situated realities' that have different norms and expectations for the same medium. In addition, new media technology often brings about an overlap between private and public spaces. For instance, mobile media such as mp3 players often converge public and private spaces and sometimes blend one into another (Carporael and Xie, 2003 cited in Lee, 2007). The boundary between public and private and the expectations related to the characteristics of the 'place' become unclear as mobile media enable users to be in a private world even when they are in a public space.

Individuals carry these personalized mobile media into the public setting, often causing a conflict with the norms of public space. At the same time, they bring public expectations or their social identities within the private household, often accelerating the individualized use of media. As such, the new media go through a more complicated process of domestication, adding diverse meanings to the media due to the social and spatial settings in which media use takes place. It can be said that young people are in a situation where they negotiate and adapt their use of new media according to the contexts/setting of use. In this way, the focus is on human agency, while the media remain flexible (Sorenson, 2006).

Domestication theory and the circuit of culture

Despite its limitations, domestication theory has clear advantages in examining the use of new media. The strength of domestication theory is that it puts the spotlight on users' active role in

---

medium, in this case the computer, is domesticated in different ways according to expectations of different places.

constructing media culture and ascribing new/renewed meanings to it (Sorenson, 2006). Domestication theory also shifts the focus to the act of meaning-making and identity construction rather than the artifact itself. By focusing on how users perceive technology/media, the domestication approach emphasizes human agency. These aspects of domestication theory 'meant a fundamental break with technological determinism, as well as a move away from a long-term tendency to interpret technologies in mainly instrumental terms, as purposive tools' (Sorenson, 2006:46).

However, this approach has limits in tracking the various ways that portable and personalized new media are domesticated both individually and collectively outside the household or family structure. The theoretical framework is designed to show how the entrance of new technology stirs up change not only in existing media environments but also in existing systems and eventually in the members of the systems. Therefore, in theory, when the domestication framework is applied to the study of new media consumption of young people, the ways in which media appropriation impacts upon young people can be examined. However, as mentioned by Silverstone (2006), this aspect is somewhat lacking in domestication theory.

Theories based on cultural studies give a clearer explanation of this aspect. The following section will now turn to the framework of the 'circuit of culture' for a more systemized way of examining young people's new media culture. In the following sections, I will discuss three different models of cultural circuits and look at their applications to actual study. In addition, I will try to define how the cultural circuit framework can underpin my research.

3.1.2. Cultural studies and the circuit of culture

When examining children's use of media, different academic disciplines have different frameworks of understanding. For example, the psychological approach tends to focus on the effect of media on children, presuming a linear relationship between the media message and the reader; while studies emphasizing the audience's agency and their active reading of media are often criticized for their lack of contextual considerations. The strength of the cultural studies approach is that it considers the social contexts surrounding children and media. At the same time, it focuses on the social construction of media and children by putting intermediate cultural actors in the picture.

The cultural circuit model, first suggested by Richard Johnson (1996), shows the diverse layers that need to be considered when approaching a social phenomenon from a cultural studies viewpoint.

3.2.2.1. Richard Johnson's circuit of culture

Cultural studies as an inquiry into forms of subjectivity

In his article *What is cultural studies anyway?* Johnson describes the subjects and aims of cultural studies as follows:

> For me cultural studies is about the historical forms of consciousness or subjectivity, or the subjective forms we live by, or, in a rather perilous compression, perhaps a reduction, the subjective side of social relations. ...*Our* project is to abstract, describe and reconstitute in concrete studies forms through which human beings 'live', become conscious, sustain themselves subjectively. (1996:80, 81)

Johnson focuses on the notion of 'subjectivity' (which is often expressed in the form of individual and collective identities) as an object of inquiry, not as a starting point. He argues that 'subjectivity' is not a given, but is structured and produced, albeit often in ways that are not recognized. Borrowing the arguments of structuralists, Johnson adds that the 'forms' which human beings use to sustain their subjectivity (i.e. language, signs, discourses etc.) also have a structured character. In other words, human beings' subjectivity is sustained and structured by the 'forms' we make use of, which in turn are structured. For Johnson, cultural studies is the examination of social forms and practices which construct our subjectivities and identities.

Johnson calls for a theoretical model that includes 'intermediate categories' that are needed to identify 'the subjective social forms and the different moments of their existence' (1996:82). The circuit of culture provides a theoretical model pinpointing different moments involved in circulation of social forms, especially those of cultural products considered as commodities. Johnson explains the circuit as follows:

> The diagram is intended to represent a circuit of production, circulation and consumption of cultural products. Each box represents a moment in this circuit.

> Each moment or aspect depends upon the others and is indispensable to the whole. Each, however, is distinct and involves characteristic changes of form...The forms that have most significance for us at one point may be very different from those at another. (1996:83)

The different ‘moments’ that a cultural object goes through to acquire meaning can be examined by following the circuit. Johnson uses the example of the Mini Metro car. The meanings ascribed to the Mini Metro on a national level give it a status of not only a popular cultural object but also of a social phenomenon.

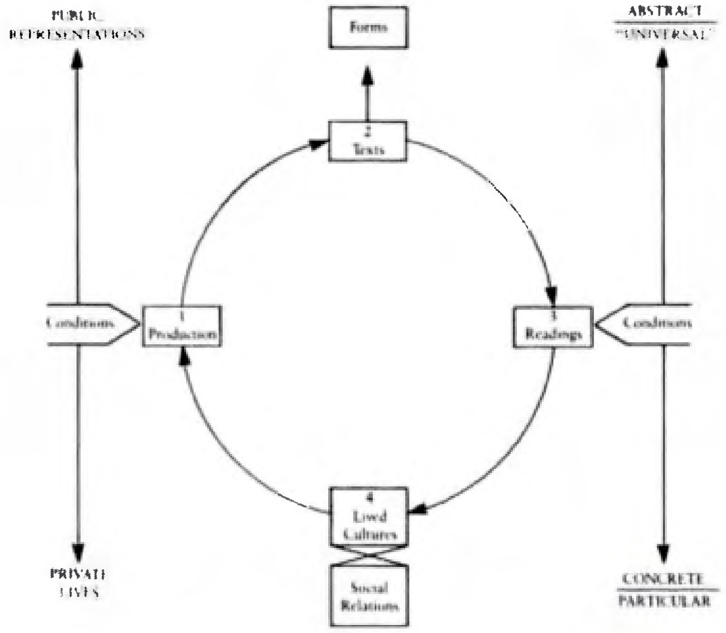
PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS
Forms
ABSTRACT
"UNIVERSAL"
2 Texts
Conditions
1 Production
3 Readings
Conditions
4 Lived Cultures
Social Relations
PRIVATE LIVES
CONCRETE
PARTICULAR

Figure 3.1. Richard Johnson’s ‘circuit of culture’ reproduced from Johnson (1996)

After production in the factory the Mini Metro takes a textual form, not only in terms of being a technical device, but also in terms of how it is represented in advertisements, how it is displayed in the showroom, and also how it gains meaning in discourses about the national economic recovery. When this text is 'read' by consumers, there are other levels of meaning attached to it. Johnson also differentiates between the spatial context in which the formation of the 'text' and the 'readings' take place. The construction of the Metro as a text takes place in a public domain, but readings of it take place in consumers' private domains. In this private realm of 'lived culture', the Metro contributes to constructing a pattern of family life. Johnson also gives an example of the Metro in 'lived culture', suggesting that 'it may have helped to produce orientations towards working life, connecting industrial "peace" with national prosperity'. In turn, the way in which the Metro is perceived and consumed can provide both cultural and financial resources for the company, which can be drawn upon for the next production.

As seen above, one of the distinctive features of Johnson's circuit of culture model is that it draws a line between public and private domains. However, the change in the media environment defies this clear divide between public and private domains. The blurring of boundaries between private and public invokes the issue of regulation and social control. This is also related to power issues embedded in the division between the public and private domains. For example, there is an element of power when making decisions on which cultural practices are worthy of public interest and which should be controlled and kept private. Johnson also briefly mentions this issue of power when discussing the example of teenage girls' magazines:

> Public representations may also act in more openly punitive or stigmatizing ways. In these forms the elements of private culture are robbed of authenticity or rationality, and constructed as dangerous, deviant or dotty...One further general

> mechanism is the construction, in the public sphere, of definitions of the public/private division itself...The snag is that the dominant definitions of significance are quite socially specific, in particular, tend to correspond to masculine and middle-class structures of 'interest'. (1996:89)

Therefore, to examine the use of new media that are becoming portable, individualized and openly displayed, the issue of (social) regulation should come into the picture. The cultural circuit introduced in a course book by the Open University covers this area of regulation. I will discuss this model further in the following sections.

3.2.2.2. Circuit of culture (devised by the Open University team)

As described in the previous section, the circuit designed by Richard Johnson (figure 1) maps out four main 'moments' which are also the main focus of cultural studies. Unlike Johnson's model, the circuit devised by the Open University team pinpoints five 'elements' which should be considered together to properly study the complex nature of a cultural object (du Gay et al., 1997). These five elements (representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation) are put together on a star-shaped circuit, on which all five elements are intertwined when constructing the meaning of a cultural object.

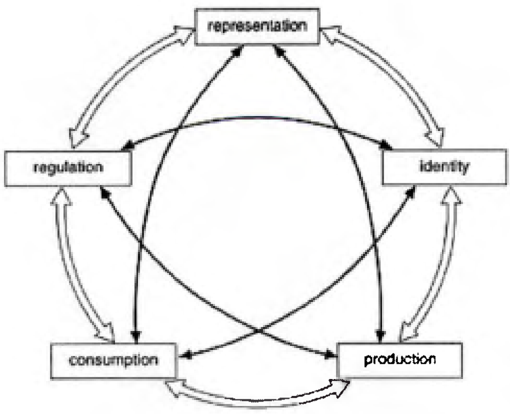

Figure 3.2. Circuit of culture by the Open University, reproduced from du Gay et al. (1997)

In *Doing Cultural Studies,* Paul du Gay and others utilize this model in relation to a specific example, the Sony Walkman. They argue that 'to study the Sony Walkman culturally one should at least explore how it is represented, what social identities are associated with it, how it is produced and consumed, and what mechanisms regulate its distribution and use' (1997:4).

Though the circuit makes it clear that all five elements are interlinked with each other, when approaching the Walkman with the focus of each element, different factors of Walkman culture come under the spotlight. Firstly, when focusing on the 'production' of the Walkman, one would look at the way in which the Walkman is produced as a technical tool and cultural artefact. During the production stage, producers inscribe the Walkman with particular meanings. For example, the design decisions of the Walkman reflect the cultural meanings the producers want the Walkman to convey. These intentions of producers are also delivered by advertisements. When focusing on 'representation', analysis of advertising texts should be considered to examine how those texts contribute to the construction of the cultural meaning of the Walkman. The images that advertisements portray are also linked with the types of identities which are associated with the target consumers of the Walkman.

By focusing on the element of 'identity', the researcher can examine both the social identities linked with the Walkman and how consumers use the Walkman to construct their own specific identities. Users' identity construction is linked to another element on the circuit, which is 'consumption'. This is to examine what kinds of meanings are attached to the Walkman when it is incorporated into the daily lives of consumers. Lastly, once the cultural object, in this case the Walkman, is appropriated by users, the way in which it is used causes changes in the social settings and often becomes an object of regulation. For example, as the authors point out, the 'neither simply public nor simply private' aspects of the Walkman bring about the institutional regulation of its use. As these attempts at regulation become clear to the producers, Sony in this case, they often bring about changes in the design and production of the cultural object.

As seen from the brief explanation above, even though each element is considered separately, other elements also come into the picture. For example, users often consume the Walkman in a way that was not expected by producers. This consumption pattern draws the company's attention, thus influencing further production and design (du Gay, 1996). One of the strengths of the cultural circuit model is that it shows this type of 'articulation'. Du Gay et al explain the concept of 'articulation' as follows:

> By the term 'articulation' we are referring to the process of connecting disparate elements together to form a temporary unity. An 'articulation' is thus the form of the connection that can make a unity of two or more different or distinct

> elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, or absolute and essential for all time; rather it is a linkage whose conditions of existence or emergence need to be located in the contingencies of circumstance (see Hall, 1996). Thus rather than privileging one single phenomenon – such as the process of production – in explaining the meaning that an artefact comes to possess, it is argued in this book that it is in a combination of processes – in their articulation – that the beginnings of an explanation can be found. (1997:3)

As seen in the quote, the authors suggest that when the articulation of an artefact is examined, different factors involved in the construction of the meaning of the artefact become visible. The cultural circuit shows how a black-boxed technology can be disassembled into endless nodes of factors. However, looking closely at the circuit, it can be said that it is not only designed as a framework to properly study a cultural object, but also as means of reflecting on the production and circulation of culture. Explaining the reason why they have chosen to study the Walkman, authors make it clear saying that 'to explore how culture works in the present day requires us to focus our attention on the structure, strategy and culture of these increasingly global commercial enterprises' (du Gay et al., 1997:2). It can be said that the Walkman is not only studied as a new technology or a popular medium but also as part of the workings of a global corporation, Sony, which produces various cultural products used in everyday lives. For example, by looking at the articulation of 'production' and 'identity' involved in the Walkman, one can also examine how Sony attempts to build a brand image.

3.2.2.3. Triangular model of the cultural circuit

David Buckingham offers a simplified, triangular version of the cultural circuit that is more directly related to media studies. This model pays attention to three moments of 'text', 'production' and 'audience', omitting the 'lived experience' which is discussed as a separate moment in Johnson's circuit. Buckingham explains that 'media research needs to concentrate primarily on the points at which people come to be constituted (or to constitute themselves) as audiences – as readers or users of particular media' (2008:224). Therefore, when narrowing the focus to media culture, the moment of '*lived experience*' can be integrated within other moments, especially that of 'audience'.

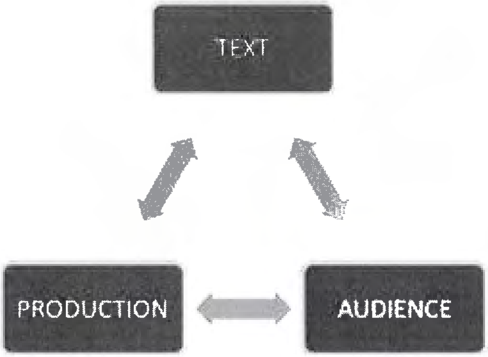

Figure 3.3. Triangular model of the cultural circuit drawn based on Buckingham (2008)

One of the characteristics of this model is that it pays attention to the interrelationship between moments, showing how each moment can influence another. For example, when considering the relations between 'text' and 'audience', it can be said that 'text' as a fixed product is given to the audience. Different audience members receive the fixed text, but often make personal meanings of it based on their experiences. Similarly, when looking into the interaction between 'audience' and 'production', it is clear that producers have images of their target audience but the real audience often reacts in unexpected ways. Lastly, producers work within the constraints of media institutions in producing a 'text', but at the same time their own inputs and preferences are represented within the text. Interacting with each other, these moments do not have fixed meanings. Rather, they consistently go through changes caused by interaction with others. In addition, these three moments also develop over time. Audiences' preferences evolve within their histories of reading and being engaged with other texts; texts also evolve intertextually, in relation to other texts; and policies related to media production develop within particular historical contexts (Buckingham, 2008).

To illustrate how the circuit can be applied to empirical study, Buckingham refers to research that examines the child audience, with a specific focus on children's television and children's interpretation of it. In this study, the child audience is approached in relation to all three 'moments' (producers, texts and audiences). To examine 'production', this study explored areas such as the historical evolution and the political economy of children's television. By auditing children's television schedules and popular children programmes, and conducting case studies of specific texts, the area of 'text' was examined. Lastly, the research included interviews with children describing how they make meanings of 'childhood' and what they think is appropriate content for children.

In this case, it becomes clear that the application of the circuit is not about simply putting the 'child audience' on the circuit and going around it to examine each moment. By examining the interaction and co-construction between the study object (in this case the child audience) and the three moments, this study explored the social construction of the child audience and that of childhood more broadly. In addition, social and historical contexts within these moments were also considered.

By looking into how children negotiate and construct the meanings of childhood, this study acknowledges children's agency, enabling children's voices to find a place in research. However, Buckingham makes it clear that it does not mean that children's agency is celebrated in a way that denies the influence ('power') of the media:

> The temptation to celebrate children's agency – and, in doing so, to speak 'on behalf of the child' – can lead researchers to neglect the broader economic, social and political forces that both constrain and produce particular forms of audience behaviour or meaning-making. The intellectual, cultural and, indeed, material resources that children use in making meaning are not equally available to all. The actions of media producers and the structures and forms of media texts clearly delimit, and to some extent determine, the possible meanings that can be made (Buckingham, 2008:227).

In other words, it can be said that the research shows how the 'agency' of children functions within the structures placed by media texts and production, which also reflect social contexts. One of the strengths of this model, then, is that it shows the mutually determining relationships between different moments in terms of structure and agency. Each moment has its own agency, but at the same time they also function as constraining structures in the agency of other moments. For example, when the focus of the research is on the 'audience', the audience acts within the spaces provided by the 'production' and the 'text'. However, the 'audience' has agency with which they influence both 'production' and interpretations of the 'text'. This can be illustrated in the following model:

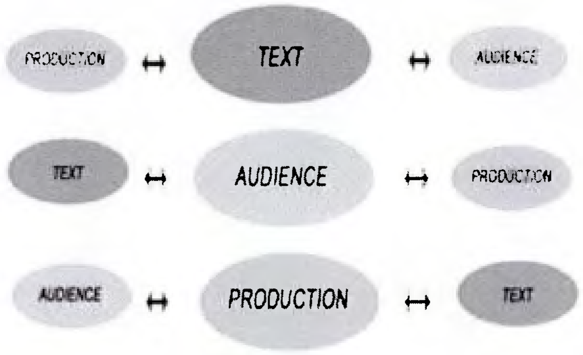

Figure 3.4. Three layers in Buckingham (2008)'s triangular model of the cultural circuit

When putting one 'moment' in the middle, other two moments become structures that confine the agency of the moment in focus. But at the same time, when the moment in focus moves aside, putting another moment in the middle, it then becomes a structure that affects the agency of the newly focused moment. In their study of children's Pokemon use, Buckingham and Sefton-Green point out the limits of putting media and audience in the oppositional position of structure and agency:

> [D]ebates about media and their audiences are often implicitly perceived as a zero sum equation. Despite all the talk of complexity and contradiction, we often seem to be faced with either/or choices: either the media are powerful, or audiences are. More significantly, such debates often seem to presume that structure and agency are fundamentally opposed. Asserting the power of agency necessarily means denying the power of structures. Proclaiming that audiences are active necessarily means assuming that the media are powerless to influence them; and asserting the power of the media necessarily seems to involve a view of audiences as passive dupes of ideology. This is, we would argue, a fundamentally fallacious opposition. (Buckingham and Sefton-Green, 2004:23, 24)

As was discussed in the study of the child audience, structure and agency mutually determine each other. This mutual determination of structure and agency can be explained using structuration theory:

> From the perspective of 'structuration theory' (Giddens, 1984), we would argue that structure works through agency, and agency works through structure: in order to create meanings and pleasures, the media depend upon the active agency of audiences; and yet (to paraphrase another well-known commentator) audiences can only make meanings in conditions that are not of their own choosing. (Buckingham, 2008:227)

This theoretical strength of the model becomes clear when it is applied to the study of new media use. New media have different characteristics in terms of production, text and audience, as compared with 'older' media such as television. It is often suggested that new media use should be approached not as a set of objects (texts) but as forms of 'practice' (Couldry, 2003). In addition, growing convergence and intertextuality across different media forms need to be taken into consideration.

Thus, examining the factors that triggered the Pokemon phenomenon, Buckingham and Sefton-Green (2004) point out that the textual structure of Pokemon itself 'positively requires activity'. According to this analysis, 'activity of various kinds is not just essential for the production of meaning and pleasures; it is also the primary mechanism through which the phenomenon is sustained, *and* through which commercial profit is generated' (2004:23). It can be said that this 'interactive' character of Pokemon is similar to those of new media that young people mostly use. Therefore, the circuit is not only applicable to the media in the traditional sense, but also to the phenomenon of 'media as practice', a cultural practice consisting of diverse media content (e.g. the character of Pikachu). By looking at the mutual determination and interaction between each moment of the circuit, and also considering their broader social and historical contexts, this model offers further resources for the analysis of young people's use of new media.

3.1.3. Domestication theory and cultural circuits: combining the theories

Thus far, in this part of the chapter, I have looked at domestication theory and cultural circuit theory. There are overlaps between these theories, as they both pay attention to the social aspects of technology development and focus on the agency of users/consumers. There are also differences, however. For instance, domestication theory concentrates primarily on consumers' interpretations and uses of new media technology. The cultural circuit model considers both technology and users as factors that influence one another, while focusing more specifically on the cultural aspect of media/technology.

In relation to my research, domestication theory, rather than functioning as a theoretical framework, provides a theoretical perspective especially in relation to how I approach the relations between technology and users. For instance, the domestication approach shows how various factors affect the realization of technology, as compared with how it was designed or expected to be used. It reveals the symbolic meaning that ICT has and achieves in the process of consumption, and pays attention to the ways in which various contexts (e.g. cultural, social and economic) contribute to users' meaning-making around ICTs. The concept of 'domestication' implies that these contexts of consumption might function as elements hindering more adventurous uses of new technology. Domestication theory suggests that when new technology (especially new media or ICTs) is taken up by users, it goes through stages of the appropriation process in order to 'tame' it to a form that people are used to. For this reason, the image and value attached to the technology can hinder people's appropriation of it (e.g. the computer being considered as a masculine or 'youthful' technology). In this sense, domestication is an innately conservative process (Silverstone, 2006), thus often conflicting with the popular discourse celebrating the innovative uses of new media by the 'digital generation'.

This research is not a study of a particular cultural or technological object, but rather of a 'generation' related to new media technology/culture. I examine the 'digital generation' as a social entity and the way young people, as members of this generation, construct their identity through the way in which they consume and make meanings of new media. Therefore, the cultural circuit model is more suitable for my research than the theories discussed above. As a theoretical model, the 'circuit of culture' shows the various cultural dimensions involved in the construction of cultural objects. And, by putting the different cultural dimensions on a circuit, it shows how each dimension interacts with one another. In the last section of part 1, I looked into three different versions of the cultural circuit. By discussing the characteristics of each version, I aim to find the model that is most applicable to the study of the 'digital generation'.

Firstly, the circuit of culture originally devised by Richard Johnson has the distinct feature of drawing a line between public and private domains. According to this model, once an object is produced it is presented in the public domain, whereas when it is consumed it goes back into the private domain. However, Johnson suggests that cultural forms are not divided into private and public, but that they *circulate*. He uses an example of a girls' magazine to show the circulation of cultural forms between public and private spaces. By presenting the issues related to girls' private interests, the magazine makes ‘private cultures of femininity public’; and in turn, it is consumed by girls, who reappropriate the published or ‘publicated’ texts in the private realm.

However, as discussed in relation to domestication theory, recent changes in the media environment defy this clear divide between public and private domains. New media are becoming portable, individualized and openly displayed; and the uses of these media are not confined to private space, but often take place publicly. At the same time, what were once considered as private cultures are actively published by individuals on the internet, which is basically an open public domain. The blurring of boundaries between private and public invokes the issue of regulation and social control.

The development of the cultural circuit introduced by the Open University team has advantages over Johnson's model, not least in that it covers this area of regulation. In addition, the cultural circuit devised by the Open University research team puts the context of the commercial structure and the cultural commodities produced by a global company into the frame. In doing so, it provides a space to relate one object to others that co-exist in real life. It can be said that this version of the circuit is especially suitable for studying new media that have become more individual and mobile, and function as means of expressing personal identities. For instance, media such as mp3 players and mobile phones, which freely cross the boundary of private and public and which are not only technologies but ways of expressing oneself, fit the framework provided by the circuit very well. However, the issue of ‘double articulation’ referred to by domestication theory still remains. New media convey content produced and distributed by producers (e.g. internet services which are placed within portal sites with news and other content, or recent models of mobile phones which have converged with TV), and there is therefore a need to study how this content takes part in the construction of media as well.

The simplified cultural circuit model, devised by David Buckingham, is different from the previous two in that it focuses specifically on media. It focuses on three moments (audience, text, production) and the interrelationships amongst them. The strength of this model is that it approaches the relations between each moment in terms of the interactions between structure and agency. Each moment has its own agency, but at the same time they also function as constraining structures in the agency of other moments. When putting one 'moment' (e.g. audience) in the middle, other two moments (e.g. text and production) become structures that confine the agency of the moment in focus; when the moment in focus (e.g. audience) moves aside, putting another moment (e.g. text) in the middle, it then becomes a structure that affects the agency of the newly focused moment. As seen in the examples of the child audience study and the Pokemon study, this theoretical model provides an approach to study young people as a group and to explore their new media culture. As my research focus is on young people's new media culture and their identity construction in relation to new media, one strand of the theoretical model I will employ is this triangular cultural circuit model. However, this approach needs to be extended through a more theorized analysis of the social and cultural construction of 'young people'. In the following part of this chapter, then, I will examine theories of 'generation'.

3.2. Theories of Generation

Broadly speaking, 'generation' is a term used to describe a group of people who are living in the same historical time with similar biological status. The concept of generation is used in various academic disciplines (e.g. social psychology, political science, anthropology, childhood studies etc.), but the theoretical concept is not always clearly defined. It is sometimes used in the place of concepts such as cohorts, kinship (e.g. parent-child), or life stage (e.g. college generation) and often as a mixture of these concepts (Kertzer, 1983).

As we have seen, young people today are often categorized as a generation who are different from adults due to the new media environment they grew up in, acquiring the title of the 'digital generation'. When looking into the concept of digital generation as a generational category, it can be said that there are two distinct approaches to generation underlying the concept. One is that of socio-cultural generation, which is established by Mannheim; the other is socio-structural generation, which is widely discussed in childhood studies (Alanen, 2001).

Young people are labelled as the 'digital generation' due to the new media culture that apparently differentiates their childhood from that of others. This type of categorization reflects the concept of socio-cultural generation, which pays attention to the influence of social/historical events on the construction of young people's generational consciousness. On the other hand, discussions about the 'digital generation' constantly oppose young people to adults, therefore categorizing both adults and young people into two separate social groups with different resources and possibilities. This reflects the concept of socio-structural generation, which focuses on child-adult relations within the wider social structure. In the following sections, I will look into both socio-cultural and socio-structural theories of generation, and examine the overlaps between the two approaches and their relevance to the 'digital generation' discourse.

3.2.1. Socio-cultural generation: Mannheim's theory of generation

Theories of socio-cultural generation mostly refer to Karl Mannheim's essay 'The problem of generations' as the starting point. Mannheim (1952) conceptualizes a 'generation' as a group of people who develop similar attitudes towards the social world, due to their common experiences (especially those of a traumatic nature such as a war) during youth. When a group of young people collectively appear in the social domain for the first time, they have ‘fresh contact’ with the society. If they experience traumatic events in this stage of ‘fresh contact’, it is likely that they will go on to form a specific frame in interpreting following social events or their future social experiences, which is distinctively different from that of previous generations. As a result, different age groups living in the same time period can have different frames for social interpretation (i.e. different forms of generational consciousness). Mannheim introduces a concept of ‘non-contemporaneity of the contemporaneous’ to describe how people in different generational groups can be co-present but living in qualitatively different social times. This concept implies that when young people gain their own generational consciousness the generation gap between elder and new generations is inevitable, which eventually leads to social change.

However, Mannheim emphasizes that a ‘generation’ is not a purely biological fact, but ‘the product of social and cultural forces’ (1952:311). It is not always the case that a new group of young people form a socio-cultural generation. He proves this point by conceptualizing three different levels of togetherness. According to Mannheim, a generation can be divided into three levels: ‘generation location’, ‘generation as an actuality’ and ‘generation units’.

Mannheim (1952) explains the ‘generation location’ as a potential generation consisting of a group of people who share a biological stage and who are ‘co-present in a historical and social region’. People who belong to the same generation location might or might not acknowledge their generational positions. It is only after these people, who share a generation location, develop common interpretations of their social experiences and a concrete bond to participate in the society that they become a ‘generation as an actuality’. Within this ‘actual generation’, there are subgroups which Mannheim describes as ‘generation units’. For example, Mannheim argues that 'romantic conservative youth' and a 'liberal-rationalist group' can be found in the same actual generation in Germany, showing that within the same actual generation there are groups 'which work up the material of their common experiences in different specific ways, [thus constituting] separate generation units' (1952:304).

By elaborating the category of generation into three different levels, Mannheim argues that the actual generation should 1) have experienced the historical (or cultural) events together when they were young, thus developing a 'generational consciousness' which is inevitably different from that of the previous generation; 2) members of the generation should be aware of this generational consciousness, thus putting it into motion in their social practices, which will eventually lead them to make changes in the society; 3) finally, by using the conceptual term 'generation units', he acknowledges that individuals who are members of an actual generation have various different characteristics, by which they can be clustered into smaller collective groups within an actual generation. However, this conceptualization of 'generation units' and the attempt to differentiate generation units from an actual generation show that Mannheim considers 'generation' as a collective identity that can encompass other collective identities (e.g. class, ethnicity, gender, etc.).

Following Mannheim's conceptualization of generation, it can be said that the collective identity of generational members is an important factor contributing to the emergence of an 'actual generation'. Michael Corsten (1999) also explains generation as a collective identity, which distinguishes the concept from similar categories such as an 'age group'. In addition, Alanen (2001) suggests that an actual generation needs to have distinctive characteristics recognizable to both members of the generation and others outside it. Therefore, the category of a 'generation as an actuality' requires not only intergenerational but also intra-generational discourses (Corsten, 2003). The construction of collective generational identities by members of a generation will be discussed further in the following section.

However, the realization of an actual generation does not solely depend upon the members of a society (including both generational members and others) recognising the generational group. It is also influenced by macro-level social aspects, such as the availability of resources for a generation (Edmunds and Turner, 2002) and the increasing speed of social change (Mannheim, 1952). Edmunds and Turner point out that for an active generation to emerge there need to be social resources available for generational members to take advantage of, in order to make changes in the cultural or political spheres. In an article entitled *Global generations*, they compare the case of the 1960s generation and people in 1970s and 80s, arguing that the 1970s and 80s did not see the emergence of active generations as ‘there was an incentive to protest, but no means to protest because of generational closure and world recession’ (2005:574).

In addition to the availability of social resources, the speed of social change also functions as an important context that triggers the formation of a generation (Mannheim, 1952). When there is rapid change in a society, the break between generations happens more easily. Young people will form their own ways of organizing and valuing social resources according to the changed social mechanism they experience. When the speed of social change is not rapid, it is easier for the elder generation to be in the position of transmitting their social resources to the younger generation, therefore gaining authority over them. However, in a society where change happens rapidly, adults and young people often find themselves in reverse social roles. Young people’s ways of understanding society gain authority over adults’. This can be one explanation of why the category of generation, especially that related to new media technology, has recently been under the spotlight.

Strengths and weaknesses of the theory of socio-cultural generation

Mannheim's theory of generation is useful in that it shows how and why a generation is constructed. It focuses on the interaction between biology and history, explaining that it is not only the socio-cultural contexts but also the biological stages the generational members go through which are important in the formation of a generation. It also shows how individuals who belong in a collective generational group can bring about social change, therefore providing a link between the individual and the society.

Despite these strengths, the theory has its shortcomings. Firstly, it has a rather strict limitation of the age when generational identity construction starts, which can be considered more of a reflection of the society at the time when Mannheim constructed the theory. Mannheim pinpointed 17-years-old as the age when young people start to form generational consciousness. However, the point he focused on was not the actual age, but rather the fact that this group of young people would experience a social life collectively for the first time. This was possibly due to the standardized age system, for example within education, which holds young people together and guarantees that they go through similar social experiences and are under similar social expectations (Corsten, 2003).

However, as the age system is also socially constructed, the point of 'fresh contact' to the society, which leads to the formation of generational consciousness, can vary in different social and cultural contexts. In addition, due to the possibilities provided by the new media environment, it can be suggested that in contemporary society, younger members can also express their collective social voice, thus experiencing 'fresh contact' with the society, at a younger age (e.g. there are cases seen in many countries of young people's civic engagement via new media in spite of their status as young students who are not yet considered as independent social actors). Such changes in the social environment lead scholars to question Mannheim's view of 'adolescence' as the time when generational consciousness is constructed.

In addition, Mannheim's theory of generation has methodological weakness. As Jane Pilcher (1994) points out, Mannheim's concept of generation works as a 'theoretical treatment of the problem', rather than a guideline for empirical studies. For instance, due to the complexity of factors involved in generation construction, empirical studies of a generation face issues such as boundary problems (e.g. where to divide the age group; which factors to include in relation to the construction of a generation). Discussing problems researchers might encounter when trying to investigate a generation empirically, Pilcher argues that the concept of generation itself entails a 'tension between its qualitative nature and their accompanying quantitative features of age and of time measured in numerical units' (1994: 486-487). As a solution to these time tensions, she refers to an argument by Spitzer. Spitzer (1973) argues that the boundary problem is always inherent in investigating social categories such as social class or political ideology. He advises that 'if age specific differences are historically significant, they will reveal themselves wherever the "cuts" are made in the continuum' (Pilcher, 1994:487).

It can be said that the implication of this solution is to study the generation with hindsight. In the preface of their book *Generations, Culture and Society*, Edmunds and Turner (2002) suggest that 'generations and their role in social change are best conceptualized retrospectively'. If that is the case, the study of children or young people as a generation, or a generation in the making, will be more difficult to conduct. For example, Hengst (2003) argues that the notion of young people as a 'media generation' does not qualify as a generational category, because:

> Their members do not operate as collective actors in the public sphere, nor do they develop any specific (common) generational awareness. Nor is there any genuinely convincing evidence to suggest whether (and how) such common participation in media innovations and the like can shape cohorts in any lasting way, and distinguish them permanently from previous and subsequent cohorts. (2003:116)

As mentioned above, generations which were studied or came under the spotlight in the society have been mostly examined with hindsight. By contrast, young people growing up in the new media environment can more aptly be seen as a generation in the making. Even though a number of social practices have been reported (e.g. demonstrations in the UK against the government's foreign policies) which involved young people and their new media culture, it is hard to predict whether or not this generational group will form an actual generation in Mannheim's sense. Nevertheless, as the theory of socio-cultural generation focuses on the interactions between cultural factors and biological aspects, young people's status as 'youth' (i.e. biological aspects) and the new media culture they grow up in (i.e. cultural factors) can be studied as elements which can contribute to the construction of a potential generation.

3.2.2. Social-structural generation: 'generationing'

As discussed above, the notion of socio-cultural generation assumes the visibility of the generational group in the society. In other words, it assumes that a group of young people can start to be formed into a generation when they gain social positions that require or entitle them to be seen as a collective group that can bring about social changes. For that reason, children or young people who are not yet independent are not considered as a potential generational group. However, modernity has arguably involved changes in age distinctions (Corsten, 2003), especially in relation to children, in the social structure. In the process, it can be suggested that the age at which young people become visible in society as a collective group is being lowered. In addition, scholars from childhood studies have been using the concept of generation to grasp the reality of childhood and children's agency. Children all have their individual experiences as children, interacting with adults and other children individually and going through childhood as a transient period. However, they also exist as a social group, positioned within a social structure as a generation. This approach to childhood as a generation can be applied to youth (Mayall and Zeiher, 2003). When expanding the theoretical discussion to youth, it can be argued that 'youth' as a generational structure interacts with both childhood and adulthood. In the following section, I will look into the conceptualization of socio-structural generation, which is actively employed in childhood studies.

When a generation is approached as a social structure, especially in childhood studies, it has two distinct characteristics: it is both structuring and structured, and it is both structural and relational.

Within childhood studies, childhood is often considered as a source from which children's agency originates, and a generational structure that provides or limits the possibilities of actions and social practices. Leena Alanen (2001) elaborates how generation is approached in the social study of childhood as follows:

> 'Generation'..., is the term that names the social (or macro) structure that is seen to distinguish and separate children from other social groups, and to constitute them as a social category through the work of particular relations of division, difference and inequality between categories... [M]embership in [the childhood] category

> does make huge differences to them in terms of activities, opportunities, experiences and identities (Alanen, 2001:13, 14).

In other words, children as a collective group are positioned within the generational group of childhood which structures their social practices as those allowed or expected for children. However, the notion of childhood is not only 'structuring' children but also 'structured' by them. Children are placed within the social structure that limits their agency, but they also influence the structure with their ideas and interpretations of the social expectations related to childhood. As Alanen explains, 'belonging to the category of children is something that is also the making of children themselves: childhood is socially constructed' (2001:129).

It is not only children, but also other members of other generations (i.e. young people, adults) who are involved in negotiations about their social positions and expectations, and over social resources and the possibilities and limitations of social practices. Therefore, the construction of childhood as a generation involves the traits of social structure, how children interpret social structures, and also negotiations and interactions with members of other generations. Leena Alanen and Berry Mayall use the example of the interactions between teachers and pupils to explain generation as 'a system of relationships among social positions':

> [W]ithin the structure of the school, the actions of 'children' or 'pupils' are affected by the complex relations in force, as are the actions of 'teachers', and at the same time, that complex of relations is affected by the actions of the people acting within this generational structure. (Alanen and Mayall, 2001:3)

These negotiations between generations are an ongoing process located within the structure that is in turn being shaped by these negotiations. As Harriet Strandell (2010) explains, the structural approach to childhood provides a 'process-oriented direction' in studying children as a generation.

One of the reasons why children are in a position to negotiate the meaning and expectations of childhood/adulthood with adults is that their ideas of childhood (i.e. of what it is to be a child) are constructed in different social time periods. This approach is similar to Mannheim's understanding of a generation that suggested generational consciousness tends to be formed in youth and therefore different generations have different frames of interpretation for social practices/events. Therefore, in this process of negotiation between children and adults on childhood, generational differences often become visible.

In the introductory chapter of the book *Conceptualizing Child-Adult Relations*, Mayall explains why generational difference is characteristic when considering the interactions and negotiations between childhood and adulthood. According to Mayall (2001), adults already have a formed knowledge they have gained through the trajectory of their lives, which in many cases differs from the knowledge that children are acquiring. This generational difference plays an important part in each social group's (i.e. children's and adults') understandings and expectations of childhood and adulthood. As such, generation as a social structure is always manifested within relations with other generations (or other social structures).

However, Alanen (2001) emphasizes that the category of generation is not only 'external' but also 'internal'. When generation is seen simply as an external category consisting of a group of people born at the same time, it is not different from the concept of birth cohort or age group. Yet 'generation' differs from 'birth cohort' as it is also placed within an internal relation. Children as a generation cannot exist without their relations with adulthood (and similarly youth can't exist without its relations with both childhood and adulthood). It is because of this internal characteristic of generation that 'generationing' (i.e. generational structuring) is a key concept in understanding socio-structural generation:

> The notion of generational structuring – or 'generationing' for short – refers to the complexity of social processes through which people become (are constructed as) 'children' while other people become (are constructed as) 'adults'. 'Construction' involves agency (of children and adults); it is best understood as a practical and even material process, and can be studied as a practice or a set of practices. The two generational categories of children and adults that are recurrently produced within such practices therefore stand in relations of connection and interaction, therefore interdependence: neither of them can exist without the other, what each of them is (a child, an adult) is dependent on its relation to the other, and change in one is tied to change in the other (Alanen, 2001:129).

Through the process of 'generationing', children modify and influence their concrete situations and their adult partners' ways of thinking. This 'generationing' happens at both the macro level, which is to say in interactions in the social between children and adults as collective groups, and at the micro-level, in negotiations between individual children and adults. However, in both cases, it can be said that a child's collective identity as a member of the childhood generation of the time is the key link between the individual and the social.

3.2.3. Socio-cultural generation versus Socio-structural generation

In the book *Childhood in Generational Perspective*, Mayall and Zeiher (2003) describe how Alanen focuses on Mannheim's conceptualisation of 'generation' as a dependent category influenced by various socio-cultural factors, rather than an independent one or a 'pervasive social cause that can have implications for many social phenomena'. However, the difference is that Mannheim's concept of generation focuses on one generation which takes power and overtakes the older generation, thus eventually leading to social change; whereas the socio-structural notion of generation always considers a generation in terms of its relations with other generations and looks at the interactions and negotiations between them in an ongoing construction of each generation's identity.

Another difference between the concepts of socio-cultural generation and socio-structural generation is that the former considers that the generational identity formed in the members' youth is sustained throughout one's life, whereas the latter focuses on the social stages individuals go through in groups (e.g. childhood, youth, adulthood), therefore assuming that their generational identity is limited within a certain time frame. For instance, to approach the idea of the 'digital generation' as a socio-cultural generation would be to assume that this identity will last longer than the period for which its members remain 'young people'; whereas if it is considered a socio-structural generation, the characteristics of the generation that are brought about by their status as young people will be of more importance, but will also be seen as less permanent.

However, both socio-structural generation and socio-cultural generation have common characteristics, both insofar as they are concerned with the power division between generations and in that they attempt to find a balance between structure and agency. Firstly, looking at discussions about both socio-cultural generation and socio-structural generation, it can be said that the category of generation is different from other categories based on age as it pays attention to the issue of power distribution/division. A socio-structural approach to generation (or approaching childhood as a generational structure) pays attention to the distribution of resources and control over the distribution of power. It considers 'generation' as a social structure that limits and enables practices, activities and resources that each generation can work on. In the case of socio-cultural generation, especially the theory of generation conceptualized by Mannheim, the issue of power distribution between generations is not so clearly discussed. Mannheim talks about the distinctive break between generations, when a new generation forms a distinctively new generational consciousness from that of the adults. However, even though Mannheim acknowledges the 'non-contemporaneity of the contemporaneous', he does not discuss the possible intergenerational conflicts which can be caused due to this different generational consciousness. For Mannheim, the process of the younger generation taking over the older generation is a natural course of social metabolism. However, Edmunds and Turner (2002) focus on intergenerational relations when elaborating Mannheim's theory of socio-cultural generation. They pay attention to intergenerational conflicts over social resources, arguing that each generation has different ways of organizing and valuing social resources. These different value systems between generations bring about generation gaps and intergenerational conflicts. At the same time, this shows the possibility of conflicts between old and new generations, by pinpointing the anxiety the older generation can have towards the emergence of a new generation, due to the difference in the values and aspirations relating to social resources (e.g. knowledge, qualifications, etc.) and their fears of losing control/authority over those resources.

Secondly, both approaches to generation consider the individual's agency in terms of their involvement in the construction and negotiation of the (generational) structure. They acknowledge the discursive relations between structure and agency in the construction of a generation. The difference is that the socio-cultural approach puts emphasis on the structure, whereas the socio-structural approach focuses on generational members' agency. The risk of the macro-approach (e.g. Mannheim's approach) is that it can be too deterministic (and potentially technologically deterministic when defining young people in relation to the new media environment). The risk of the micro-approach (e.g. Alanen's concept of 'generationing') is that it often does not consider the limits of agency. Children are seen to have agency to negotiate the meaning of childhood, but at the same time their individual actions confirm or reproduce the generational structure. Social practices based on individual agency (e.g. age performance/age construction) can be negotiated, but they are also defined in relation to other social structures (e.g. social institutions that segment populations in terms of age, media messages, marketing, legal regulations etc.). Therefore, for a better understanding of young people as a generation, theories that balance structure and agency – and account for the dynamic relations between them - are needed.

3.3. Theorising the 'digital generation'

When considering the 'digital generation' concept, it can be said that it has traits of both socio-cultural and socio-structural approaches. 'Digital generation' is a categorical concept differentiating young people from adults in terms of the media environment in which they grew up. It has characteristics of a socio-cultural generation as it presents young people as a distinctive group whose mindset is influenced by the emergence of new media technology (e.g. the 'N-generation' identified by Don Tapscott). At the same time, it can be seen as a socio-structural generation as it focuses on young people as a generational group, and defines them in relation to adults within a social structure (e.g. the 'Digital Native and Digital Immigrants' concepts coined by Marc Prensky). Young people's identity as a digital generation is structured by the media environment (e.g. the widespread appropriation of new media technology), and also constructed within the social structure where they interact with older and younger generations in relation to their new media culture.

'Digital generation' is a unique categorical concept in that it defines young people in relation to new media technology. When young people are seen as a generation defined by technology, this invokes broader theoretical discussions about the construction of both ‘generation’ and ‘technology’, and how both concepts are interlinked or intertwined. It is not clear whether the 'digital generation' will last as a permanent generational category, or will end up as a rhetorical frame that differentiates young people from adults by using the technology that is under the spotlight at the moment. However, based on my discussion of the theories underlying the 'digital generation' concept, I argue that for a more nuanced understanding of young people as a 'digital generation', it should be looked at from both aspects – in terms of of 'generationing' (as discussed in part 2) and in relation to the co-construction of young people and new media (as discussed in part 1).

Thus, when considering the construction of the 'digital generation' from the theoretical perspective of 'generationing', the focus needs to be on both the macro level (i.e. the changes in young people's new media environment) and the micro level (i.e. the generational identification of young people themselves around the technology). Additionally, the 'new media' in discussion here (that is, the media environment, the new media texts and productions young people use) need to be approached as social entities that are co-constructed both for and by young people.

In this concluding section, I will summarise how I employ the theories of 'generation' and 'technology' to examine the 'media generation gap’ and the construction of the 'digital generation’; and briefly introduce other theoretical concepts (e.g. 'capitals' and 'social identity') that are used in my analysis.

Firstly, as the concept of 'generation' implies, the notion of a structural break between the old and new generation needs to be looked at. When it is applied to the ‘digital generation’, the structural break is in the changes in the media environment. However, as discussed in the first part of this chapter, I approach the new media technology/environment not as a neutral factor that determines the 'digital generation', but as a socially constructed entity that continuously changes and co-constructs itself within interactions among young people, and between young people and adults. The new media and young people rather co-construct each other; young people are influenced by the new media environment, and at the same time influencing the development and usage of new media.

Secondly, the construction of the ‘digital generation’ needs to be approached as one aspect of young people’s ‘generationing’ related to the new media technology. ‘Generationing’, here, entails the 'generational identification' of young people (as members of a generation) as well as 'generational structuring' in which young people and adults both take part. Young people’s 'generational identification' around the new media is a key dimension of their construction of new media culture. As Benhabib (2002) defines it, 'culture' is a process of 'constant creations, recreations, and negotiations of imaginary boundaries between “we” and the “other(s)”. Young people construct their new media culture within various contexts, including that of their generational discourse around new media. To explore how young people construct their new media culture, I propose to employ a version of the circuit of culture approach. As mentioned above, the media technology young people grew up with is not a neutral factor. Especially when considering young people’s new media culture, the textual and commercial aspects of new media need to be considered. In addition, young people practice ‘generational structuring’ by identifying their own new media culture and differentiating it from that of adults (teachers, in my case). Therefore, the ways in which young people position themselves in relation to adults by identifying and 'othering' their generationally specific traits related to new media need to be explored. When explaining the process of social identification, Richard Jenkins (2008) emphasizes that it is an 'internal-external dialectic' and that the self-image of a social group is as important as its public image. This can be applied to the generational identification of young people as well. The process of 'generationing' around technology happens through a dynamic relationship between young people's acknowledgement of their own collective generational memberships in relation to new media (i.e. external) and the 'othering' of young people's new media culture from that of adults' (i.e. internal).

Lastly, young people's new media practices and their positioning as a 'digital generation' opposed to adults necessitate the discussion of 'capitals' in Bourdieu's sense. In the introduction to *Language and Symbolic Power* (1991), John Thompson summarizes Bourdieu's concept of capitals as follows:

> One of the central ideas of Bourdieu's work, for which he is well known among sociologists of education, is the idea that there are different forms of capital: not only 'economic capital' in the strict sense (i.e. material wealth in the form of money, stocks and shares, property, etc.), but also 'cultural capital' (i.e. knowledge, skills and other cultural acquisitions, as exemplified by educational or technical qualifications), 'symbolic capital' (i.e. accumulated prestige or honour), and so on (1991: 14).

In addition to economic, cultural and symbolic capital as explained above, Bourdieu defines 'various kinds of valued relations with significant others' as social capital (Jenkins, 2002).

When looking into the intergenerational relations between the 'digital generation' and adults, the concept of 'cultural capital' can be applied. As discussed in the previous section of this chapter, the category of generation pays attention to the issue of power – that is, the distribution/division of social resources, and intergenerational conflicts over those resources. When the 'media generation gap' between young people and adults is discussed, knowledge/skills relating to new media technology can be seen as 'social resources' or forms of 'cultural capital', and hence as forms of power, that adults lack when compared to young people. Furthermore, young people's new media practices can be explored in relation to their exchanges and accumulations of 'capitals'. For instance, new media, especially commercialised new media such as mobile phones or social networking sites that are frequented by young people, entail certain forms of economic practice. These practices are not only related to monetary capital but also to exchanges and accumulations of social, cultural and symbolic capital.

Conclusion

Young people have constantly been categorized as a generation defined by (new) technology. As discussed in chapter 1, these generational labels are not based on thorough research on young people or empirical studies about their new media use. Rather, they represent adults' hopes and fears about both new technology and young people. The 'digital generation' is a category that separates young people from the rest of the society, and can be seen as a social attempt to define and regulate young people and new technology: it may well say more about adults, the people who are mainly doing the categorization, than young people themselves.

However, the digital generation discourse cannot be simply dismissed due to its lack of evidence and flaws in the rhetoric. It is clear that young people are saturated with new media culture and media representations (e.g. age-targeted marketing) and public discourse continuously defining them as a digital generation. As such, it is necessary to consider their generational identification around technology.

Following the approach outlined in this chapter, I examine the 'media generation gap' between students and teachers by examining both the macro level (i.e. the media environment) and the micro level, the everyday 'generationing' by young people and teachers in relation to new media. In this way, I seek to understand the co-construction of young people and their new media culture. My research questions are therefore as follows:

1) Is there a 'media' generation gap between students and teachers?

2) To what extent and in what ways do young people construct themselves as a digital generation?

3) How is the 'digital generation' discourse played out in the school setting, both by students and teachers?

These questions will be explored using both quantitative data (a large-scale survey monitoring young people and teachers' new media environment) and qualitative data (interviews with young people and teachers discussing young people's new media culture and its use/regulation in schools). In the following chapter, I will discuss the methodology and methods of the thesis in more detail.

Chapter 4. Methodology

Introduction

In previous chapters, I looked into the ways in which young people and new media are understood in popular discourses and in academic research. This was followed by the investigation of the theoretical issues that are raised by the 'digital generation' concept, which identifies young people as a distinctive generation in relation to the new media technology they use. Based on these discussions, I have argued that to study the construction of the 'digital generation' in the school setting, it is necessary to examine the alleged 'media generation gap' between teachers and young people at both the macro level (i.e. in relation to structural aspects of the media environment) and the micro level (i.e. in relation to the everyday 'generationing' that occurs around the use of new media). With this approach in mind, in this chapter I will discuss the overall methodological approach of my study, including the research design, data collection methods and analytic approaches.

4.1. Research design

Multi-method research: Using mixed methods

The aim of this study is to examine how people take part in the construction of generational identities through their relations within a given social structure (both a media/cultural structure and a generational structure). The study is framed within the cultural studies paradigm paying attention to the dialectical relations between structure and agency (i.e. 'structuration theory'). Though the research questions require the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods, the interpretive framework of this study primarily follows that of qualitative research. Describing the qualitative researcher as a bricoleur, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) pay attention to the multi-method focus of qualitative studies:

> [Q]ualitative research is inherently multimethod in focus. However, the use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. Objective reality can never be captured. We know a thing only through its representations....The combination of multiple methodological practices, empirical materials, perspectives, and observers in a single study is best understood, then, as a strategy that adds rigor, breadth complexity, richness, and depth to any inquiry. (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011:5).

As mentioned in chapter 2, to study the media generation gap at both structural and individual levels, it is necessary to combine quantitative and qualitative methods (i.e. through a mixed-methods design). Mixed methods can be approached as either a methodology or a method of collecting data. When approached as a methodology, mixed method provides complexity as quantitative and qualitative research are underpinned by different philosophical perspectives (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007). Epistemological purists argue that the normative perspective of quantitative research and the interpretive perspective of qualitative methods are incompatible (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2003; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). However, many academics conduct research using mixed methods as a technique to collect and analyze the data rather than a methodology (e.g. Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007; Greene, Caraceli and Graham, 1989). In this case, the choice of methods is guided not by broader epistemological considerations but rather by the research question. Lobe and others (2008) argue that it is more important to approach methods with the focus on the research questions, therefore choosing the method that is most suited to answering the research questions. Likewise, in an article entitled *The focused interview*, Merton and Kendall (1946) explain that rather than choosing between qualitative and quantitative data, '[the] problem becomes one of determining *at which points* they should adopt the one, and at which the other, approach' (Merton and Kendall, 1946, cited in Cohen et al., 2002).

Mixed-methods design can be applied in various ways depending on the order in which the quantitative and qualitative work is conducted. For instance, a qualitative study can be conducted to define and explore the themes, followed by quantitative work examining them; or a quantitative study can conducted prior to the qualitative study to explain the issue and provide a basis for further exploration (Lobe et al., 2008). The purposes for using mixed methods also vary. Greene and others (1989) identify five purposes: triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion. As for my research design, I used mixed methods primarily for their complementarity.

To examine the structural aspect of the media generation gap, quantitative study is useful. I chose to conduct a survey to collect quantitative data on individuals' access to media and their media usage patterns. Survey research is more practical in examining the media environment of a large demographic, which is a necessary factor in the 'generational' approach. However, it is difficult to examine the various contexts that influence media use via a survey. This shortcoming can be complemented by qualitative study. In addition, it was necessary to conduct a qualitative study (e.g. interviews) to examine the ways in which young people and teachers take part in 'generationing' (the construction of generational identities) in relation to new media. Therefore, I planned to conduct the quantitative study first to examine potential patterns in terms of the 'media generation gap' (phase 1), then conduct a qualitative study to explore the findings further and examine young people and teachers' construction of the 'digital generation' identity in the school setting (phase 2).

Phase 1: Conducting surveys

Phase 1 of this study is designed as descriptive research, which 'deals with questions of *what* things are like, not *why* they are that way'. As mentioned above, I chose to conduct surveys to examine the apparent 'media generation gap' between teachers and young people. Surveys are used to collect data 'at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions' (Cohen et al., 2002: 169). De Vaus (2002) points out that survey research provides a researcher with a structured data set in the form of 'a variable by case data grid', which is analysed by comparing cases to find 'naturally occurring variation'. By conducting the survey, I aimed to collect a systematic data-set to explore the differences between young people and teachers' new media environment, and to see if there is indeed a 'media generation gap' occurring between teachers and young people by comparing their cases.

As for the survey technique, I chose to use questionnaires. Compared to other survey techniques, questionnaires are highly structured and have the merit of providing a researcher with straightforward ways of acquiring information one needs (De Vaus, 2002). Through a process of piloting, I devised the questionnaire for distribution to teachers and young people. It included questions examining the patterns of young people's and teachers' media use, their media orientations and their perceptions of each others' media use (i.e. young people's perception of teachers' media use and orientations, and vice versa). Young people and teachers responded to the questionnaire and were asked the same set of questions. Therefore, the survey data can be analyzed comparatively, exploring the gap between teachers and young people.

In sum, the survey produces data which can reveal the media environment teachers and young people are in. However, the use of surveys has shortcomings such as limits of self-reporting (Blair and Czaja, 2005) and difficulties in considering the various contexts which influence patterns of media use. Survey data revealed 'where' the media generation gap is; the various contexts of the gap and the meaningful 'construction' of the gap by young people and teachers then needed to be probed further by qualitative study.

Phase 2: Interviewing young people and teachers

Focus group interviews with young people

The main purpose of the qualitative study was to explore what young people say about their new media culture and to look into the construction of young people's generational identification in relation to new media in the school setting; and to explore how this was understood by their teachers. I decided to conduct interviews with young people and teachers: focus-groups interviews with young people and individual interviews with teachers. Interviews are actively used in qualitative studies as they enable the researcher 'to reach areas of reality that would otherwise remain inaccessible such as people's subjective experiences and attitudes' (Peräkylä, 2005).

As I aimed to study how young people collectively and interactively make meaning of their new media culture and their construction of their own identity as a 'digital generation' (i.e. 'generationing'), I decided to conduct focus-group interviews rather than individual interviews. Focus group interviews are considered useful when a researcher is interested in exploring the everyday use of language and culture of a particular group (Morgan and Kreuger, 1993). By contrast with other interview methods, focus group interviews provide interview participants with a setting for group discussions (Vaughn et al., 1996). Enabling participants to interact with each other and develop others' comments or responses, group interviews 'often produce rich data that are cumulative and elaborative' (Fontana & Frey, 2003). In a report discussing the methodology of studies concerning young people and new media, the authors of the report suggest that 'focus groups are best when [the research wants] to consider not only children's own accounts of reality but the way they negotiate these accounts with others, therefore showing divergence or convergence between their views' (Lobe et al., 2008). In addition, as I approached the interviewees as a group in seeking out knowledge that I do not already have, I could benefit from a focus-group interview that provides a space for interviewees to bring out issues that are not planned or anticipated by the interviewer (Bragg, 2007). Compared to individual interviews, focus group interviews 'give more weight to the participants' opinions, decreasing the influence the researcher has over the interview process' (Madriz, 2003).

However, the focus-group interview is not without its limits. Smithson (2000) points out that interactions within the focus group can be limited due to 'individuals dominating within the groups, constructing the Other'. I recognized during the focus-group interviews that it was difficult for a participant with a 'marginalized' voice (for example in terms of their media experience) to actively join in the group discussions. There was an instance of a boy I interviewed whose father strictly prohibited him from using the internet and online games. His father valued the 'old' media and encouraged him to read books and newspapers instead of spending time online. During the interview activity, he chose books as his favourite medium, and mainly talked about the new books he was interested in. However, as his media experience differed from the rest of the group, he often had difficulties in joining in discussions about other new media such as online games, IM or SNS.

In addition, as the interview is conducted in groups, it is possible for young people to feel more reluctant to talk about sensitive issues (Fontana & Frey, 2003), such as online 'risks', than they do when they are in individual interviews. I attempted to minimize these limits by recruiting young people who had already formed relationships with one another, as well as by probing young people more and often encouraging the discussion to go a bit further when they briefly touched upon a sensitive issue that I thought was relevant to the research.

These limits of focus group interviews reflect the limit of my research. As my research focus is on the collective meaning-making that characterises young people's new media culture, I do not discuss young people's individual media experiences in depth. Young people's individual new media use can differ broadly amongst themselves, and from the common new media experiences recognised by young people. This is an important topic to examine in relation to young people and new media, but it is not covered in my study.

Interviews with teachers

For both the survey and the interviews, I collected data from teachers as well as young people. However, the qualitative study emphasizes the interview data with young people as the main data, with the teachers' interviews providing data to supplement the young people's responses. This research design is based on the theoretical framework for approaching the construction of the 'digital generation'. As discussed in the previous chapter, the 'generationing' process is an 'internal-external dialectic' (Jenkins, 2008). Therefore, it is important to consider not only young people's claims about the generational traits of their new media culture but also those made by other generations (i.e. adults, teachers in case of my research). Individual interviews with teachers were planned in order to examine how teachers approach young people's new media culture and how they interact with young people around new media both in and out of schools. In addition, teachers' interview data help to contextualise young people's interview data about their new media use in schools. They provide information about the broader structure (e.g. school regulations, the school media environment) within which young people use new media.

Unlike the group interviews with the young people, the teachers' interviews were conducted individually. As the interviews focused on teachers' understandings of young people's new media culture and their experience of new media use, especially with their students (e.g. regulating young people's new media in the classroom, or communicating with young people via new media), it was considered better to interview teachers individually and in more depth than would have been possible in group interviews.

During the interviews, questions about teachers' personal preferences concerning the media and their approach to the new media were asked. However, questions concerning teachers' individual new media usage were included more as an ice-breaker and a basis to elaborate on their understandings of young people's new media culture in comparison with their own. The focus in this research is primarily on young people's identity construction related to new media rather than that of teachers. Teachers' identity construction related to new media would be in interesting topic for further research.

4.2. Collecting the data

4.2.1. Research context

Middle schools in Korea

Before going into a detailed exploration of the research design, I will discuss my research contexts. As explained in the introduction chapter, my research is focused on the 'media generation gap' in school settings. The target demographic of my research was students (who are aged between 14 and 16 years old) and teachers in middle schools. The Korean school system consists of six years of primary education, followed by three years of middle school, then three years of high school. It is compulsory for young people in Korea to attend primary and middle schools. The survey and interviews took place in the Seoul Metropolitan area (this is the area that includes Seoul and Gyung-gi province, which made up 46.3% of the national population in 2001 according to the National Statistics Office). Data were collected from three different areas of the Seoul Metropolitan area: the South Bank, the North Bank and Gyung-gi province. These three areas were chosen as the research sites due to their different socio-economic characteristics.

Timeline for data collection

The survey of young people and teachers was conducted between May and June in 2004 in Korea. After collecting the quantitative data, I came back to the UK and analyzed the data to guide the design of the qualitative study. The following year I went to Korea to conduct interviews with young people and teachers in the middle schools between May and June. There was a year's gap between the quantitative and qualitative study to provide time to analyze the survey data, and also for practical reasons. When contacting teachers to recruit young people and teachers for the research, they informed me that it would be easier for teachers and young people to spare time for the research from mid-May to mid-June due to the academic schedules.[29] In the following sections, I will explore the research design in more depth discussing the benefits and limitations that emerged.

4.2.2. Survey: pilot study, data collection and data analysis

Before finalizing the questionnaire, I piloted it with three middle school students and a middle school teacher in Korea. The main purposes of the pilot were to avoid the survey questions being ambiguous/unclear and to measure if the time allocated for the survey was realistic. After revising the questionnaire based on the pilot study, I went through the revised version with a middle school teacher to discuss if there were any questions that students might not understand or might be reluctant to answer.

---

[29] The academic year begins in March in Korea.

Once the questionnaire was designed, I started recruiting respondents. As discussed in the previous section, I recruited research participants (for both the quantitative and qualitative study) based on the area where the schools are located, using the non-probability quota sampling method. I aimed to acquire at least 200 young people and 50 teachers from each area. I conducted the survey with help from teachers I already knew either personally or professionally. The teachers I contacted recruited young people and other teachers from their schools, and took charge of distributing and collecting the questionnaires. As the survey was administered by the school teachers, it was easier to achieve a high response rate. The survey of young people was conducted during the school day (mainly during the period scheduled for extra-curricular activities). Young people were given 45 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Teachers read the short introductory comment I included at the beginning of the survey to young people, and informed them that they could ask the teachers if there were questions they found difficult to understand.

As for the teachers' survey, teachers who became my contact point recruited other teachers who worked at the same school. I asked them to recruit other teachers in as diverse an age range as possible. Teachers who agreed to take part in the survey were given the questionnaire at the beginning of the day and were asked to return it by the end of the school day.

After conducting the survey in May and June, I collected questionnaires completed by more than 700 students (N=723, Girls: 316, Boys: 407) and nearly 150 teachers (N=148). Data collected via questionnaires were entered into a data file for statistical analysis. Survey data were analyzed using basic statistics and SPSS. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics were used to reveal patterns of media use and orientations of young people and teachers. In addition to studying the media environment of both young people and teachers, I focused on interpreting the data comparatively by analysing the data in terms of the 'age' variable: comparing the media usage patterns of young people with those of teachers and also comparing the patterns amongst different ages of teachers. Findings from the survey contributed to the design of the qualitative study which followed in the next year.

4.2.3. Focus group interviews with young people

Designing focus group activities

To look into young people's construction of themselves as a digital generation, and explore their new media culture, I interviewed middle school students in small groups of four to six. The group interview was designed around ‘student-led’ activities to encourage young people's active involvement in it. The focus-group interviews with students consisted of four activities, which were: 1) list the daily media you use (the ‘media diary’ activity); 2) choose your favourite medium and explain why; 3) categorize the media you mentioned so far into ‘young people’s media’ and ‘teachers’ media’ (the ‘media categorization’ activity); and 4) design an instructional media manual for teachers (the ‘media manual’ activity). These four different types of activities were planned as means to validate and strengthen young people's arguments.

In terms of the research design, these activities can be divided into two parts. The first part, including the media diary activity and choosing one's favourite medium, focused on young people's media culture, and media functions that are shared and enjoyed amongst young people. The second part of the interview (the media categorization activity and the media manual activity) was designed to position young people as a group opposed to teachers. This aimed to focus much more explicitly on the 'media generation gap' between teachers and young people, and on young people's 'generationing' in relation to new media.

Underpinning this two-part design is the 'generationing' theory. As discussed in the previous chapter, generational identification (or ‘generationing’) involves both an internal and external process: internal identification being members' recognition and construction of the traits common amongst them, and the external process being the act of differentiating their collective culture from that of others. The first part of the interview was planned to examine the external identification process, whereas the following part aimed to focus on the internal identification process. In the following section, I will briefly explain how each of the activities were planned and conducted, and discuss in more detail the media manual design activity.

Activity # 1. Media diary activity

The interviews with young people started by talking about their daily media use, and making a list of the media using colour cards. This activity was designed as an ice-breaker between young people and the interviewer, and also to ease young people into thinking about the media they use every day. I specifically asked them to write down all the media activities (e.g. not just 'the internet' but 'SNS', 'IM' or 'online games' – including the name of the game they play - or 'search engine' - including the name of the search engine they used, etc.). This guideline was decided based on the findings from the survey, which showed that young people and teachers tend to use the same media but in different ways. This activity led young people to discuss which features of the media they mostly used and why.

Activity # 2. Choosing your favourite medium

After writing down the media they use on cards, I asked them to pick the one with their favourite medium and explain why they chose it. This activity brought about discussions from the young people about why they like using the media and which function of the medium they value the most. These two activities (part one of the interview) included occasional discussions between participants, but mostly consisted of young people taking turns and giving individual responses. The following activities (the second part of the interview) were designed to promote group discussions and collaboration.

Activity #3. Media categorization activity

The 'media categorization activity' was designed to see which media and which function of a medium young people identify as their own and which media they consider to be preferred by adults and why. During this activity, young people were asked to divide the media cards they made into two categories: one being 'young people's media' and another being 'teachers' media'. Young people were guided to discuss this within the group, and then complete a media chart that divided the media into two categories. To complete the chart, group members had to discuss and negotiate between themselves. I audio-recorded the discussions with consent and often joined in to probe their comments and encourage further discussion.

The design of this activity was partly changed after the pilot study. When conducting the pilot interview, I realized that young people tended to be reluctant to put the media they had identified as their daily media into the 'media for teachers' category. For the main data collection, I provided young people with pre-made media cards explaining that they were gathered from the middle school students I had previously interviewed, giving them a space to suggest other media if they wanted to add any.

Activity #4. Designing the media manual for teachers

After finishing the media categorization activity, interviewees were asked to choose one medium from the list that they would give as a present to teachers (teachers in general). I asked them to design an instruction manual for the medium they chose to recommend to teachers. The group was divided into pairs, and each pair discussed which medium to choose and talked about the reasons why they would recommend that medium to the teachers. After their discussions, each group started designing the manual. The discussions and negotiations that took place between the pairs were audio-recorded with consent and transcribed later for data analysis. When observing young people designing the manual, I noted down questions related to their discussions or the contents in the manual and asked the young people questions after they completed designing the manual.

As for the contents of the manual, I gave the young people brief guidelines. The contents of the manual should include: an image of the medium; brief instructions on how to use it ('directions'); and things one should know when using it (‘warnings’). This format was based on typical instruction manuals that accompany electronic devices, but it was also chosen as it met the specific needs of the research. I expected the instruction on ‘how to use it’ to cover the technical knowledge young people have concerning the medium. The ‘things you should know (warnings)’ part was designed for students to discuss factors that are invisible to adults (or those who are not participants in new media culture). In many cases, these factors include the cultural knowledge young people share in relation to the media and/or risks they think they experience in using new media. The 'image' part of the manual was included to examine the elements of the medium young people perceive as salient (e.g. which elements they emphasize when drawing the medium). I also expected the 'image' section to provide data that would triangulate young people's explanations of their new media use[30].

This activity can be described as a 'creative visual method' in the sense that it focuses on young people producing a media text. I chose this method due to the opportunities it could provide for interviewees to reflect on the question and build up their own idea without the interviewer interfering (Gauntlett and Holzwarth, 2006). However, when approaching data that are collected via this creative visual method, it is important to keep in mind that they are inevitably influenced by the characteristics of the media format or genre, and the participants' understanding of the medium (Buckingham, 2009). In the case of my media manual design activity, the 'manual' as a text characteristically positions the authors (i.e. young people) as experts who are expected to teach teachers. However, the manuals the young people produced had different foci according to their understanding of the activity. Even though I asked the young people to make a manual for teachers, which implies 'teachers' as their target audience, some groups made manuals for a general audience (or rather for themselves). Manuals that were clearly aimed at teachers tended to have simple step-by-step directions and a 'warning' section with a 'teacherly' approach (e.g. be careful not to misspell when using SMS); whereas manuals that did not specifically address teachers put more effort into explaining the cultural rules (or

---

[30] The ideal research plan would be to observe how young people actually use the media that they mentioned in the interview. However, it was not possible in my case due to the privacy issue, as the media mentioned by young people contained contents that they consider private. In addition, as discussed in previous studies, the presence of the observer (researcher) often influences how young people use the media and present themselves using the media (e.g. Lewis and Fabos's (2005) observation of teenagers using IM notes the changes in language use amongst young people due to the researcher's presence). Therefore, I chose to triangulate young people's description of their new media culture using other means such as discussions amongst young people which were recorded during the media categorization activity or media design activity, and by probing them further based on the image they drew of the medium for the manual. Interview data with teachers was also used for triangulation, which will be discussed later.

'etiquette') they are expected to follow when using the media with peers (see chapter 6 for further discussion).

In addition, this creative visual method is considered to have strength in exploring the emotional and symbolic aspects of young people's media experience, as it provides young people with a different mode of expression besides verbal and written language (Gauntlett and Holzwarth, 2006). The media manual also included an image of the medium through which young people could explain the characteristics of the media without the need of elaborating them in words. However, I was not clear how to analyze and/or interpret the images that young people drew for the manual. As explained above, I included the media image in the manual in an attempt to triangulate what young people said in the interview; although except for triangulation, I did not pursue analyzing the image data any further. As critics of creative visual methods argue, when applying creative visual methods, researchers should avoid the pitfall of considering the media production as complete data. I learned, in retrospect, that much of the data yielded by creative visual methods needs to be interpreted in dialogue with interviewees (Bragg, 2007). If I were to analyze the images young people put in the manuals in more depth, I would need to conduct follow-up interviews with the young people to discuss the meaning of the image together with them.

Recruiting young people for the interviews

The interviews with the young people in middle schools were conducted in May and June, 2005. I interviewed 12 groups (one being the pilot-study group), each group consisting of four to six participants. As in the case of the survey conducted in the previous year, participants for the group interviews were recruited based on the school area (different school areas represent different demographics in relation to SES: see section 4.2.1.). At first, I contacted teachers with whom I have either personal relationships (e.g. friends/acquaintances from university) or professional relationships (e.g. teachers whom I met through media education workshops etc.). I briefly described my research and explained the group interview activities to the teachers, and asked them to recruit students for the interviews. In addition to recruiting young people, I also asked the teachers whether they could meet me for an individual interview (interviews with teachers will be explained below). Teachers recommended students who had time or who were willing to talk to me. The ways in which teachers recruited students for the group interviews differed case-by-case. Some teachers gave a brief explanation of my research and asked students to volunteer. Some teachers intentionally gathered students who were very articulate (and often had good grades). Some teachers intentionally mixed students with good grades and average grades in an attempt gain greater variety. Teachers recruited the participants from their own class or from the after-school club they were in charge of. As a result, the group members had already formed a close relationship with each other, spending at least three months together in the same class or after-school club. It was easier for them to share their media experience, often teasing each other about the media they used and/or the way they used the media. Teachers also contacted students' parents to gain permission for the young people to spend about an hour after school taking part in the interview.

Group interviews with young people took place in the school setting, mostly in the classroom after school. When there was no classroom available, I moved the interviews to other spaces in school such as the school library or the playground. Teachers were not present during the interviews, and it was made clear that the responses would be not passed to teachers without their consent. Choosing school as a spatial context for the interviews had the benefit of convenience for students and me, as I often scheduled to interview teachers at school after the group interviews with students. However, more than an issue of convenience, conducting interviews at school put the young people in the correct mind set, focusing on their interactions with teachers and peers around their media usage.

Pilot study: Changes in research design after conducting the pilot interview

Once the groups of young people (12 groups) were recruited, I conducted a pilot study with a group of young people from Jang-won middle school. During the pilot study, I paid attention to issues such as wording (when explaining the activities) and timing (if all four activities could be completed in about an hour, which was suggested as ideal for young people by teachers). I roughly analyzed the data collected via the pilot study to see if the planned activities produced material which was relevant to my research questions. As a result of the pilot, there was a slight change to the media categorization activity as explained above. In addition, the pilot showed that activities in the second part (i.e. the media categorization and media manual activities) yielded more interesting data to work on. Therefore, for the main data collection, I allocated more time to the second part of the interview so that young people could spend more time on the hands-on activities and the related discussions.

4.2.4. Interview with teachers

Alongside group interviews with young people, I interviewed 12 middle school teachers in June and July 2005. Individual interviews with teachers lasted about 90 minutes. The interviews were semi-structured. I had a list of questions to work through which was often reordered or added to, with additional questions according to the teacher's replies. The teacher interviews were planned to explore how adults, especially teachers, 'generation' young people (define them in generational terms) in relation to new media, and how the negotiations between young people and teachers around new media play out in the school setting. Questions asked in the interviews covered the regulation of students' media use in schools; teachers' perceptions of students' media use in general; teachers' thoughts about the 'digital generation' discourse; and teachers' personal experiences of media usage. Amongst the teachers I recruited for the interviews were those who helped me in recruiting young people for the focus-group interviews. Therefore, during the interviews, I was able to ask questions concerning the background of the young people such as the socio-economic status of the students, and the way teachers recruited the young people and why.

Unlike the group interviews with the young people, the teachers' interviews were conducted individually. Teachers in Korea often have heavy workloads, even after school hours. I tried to accommodate the time and place of the interview within teachers' schedules. With two teachers, I conducted the interview via email as they said they were too busy to make time for an interview. I sent them the interview questions, and kept in touch with both of them for follow-up questions concerning their replies. On one occasion, I attended a teachers' meeting and interviewed four teachers in a group. They took turns in answering the questions and as the interview progressed it developed into a group discussion sharing experiences amongst teachers. They were well acquainted with each other, having been in the same study group (media education study group) for more than three years. Therefore, they were not reluctant in sharing their individual experiences in schools with each other.

4.3. Data analysis and the analytical approach

From the focus-group interviews with young people, the data I collected included: media products made by young people, such as media categorization charts and media manuals; audio recordings of the young people's responses and discussions amongst group members; and the notes I took during the interview (e.g. facial expressions, tone and observational notes concerning the school environment and media equipment in the classrooms). The audio recordings were roughly transcribed as soon as possible after each interview was conducted, as it was important to collate the transcription with the notes. For instance, when the young people discussed issues related to adults' concerns such as the ‘risks’ of new media, they tended to use exaggerated tones ironically presenting themselves as 'media-savvy young people'. Observations as such were noted and combined with the interview transcripts. Teachers' interviews were also audio-recorded, and transcribed afterwards.

The group activities were designed with specific questions. However, they were not designed to accumulate direct answers to the questions or test a theory, but to tap into young people’s social discourse concerning their new media use. When analyzing the data, the transcription of the discussion yielded more interesting results than simply quantifying answers given by the young people (e.g. how many of them chose email as teachers' medium, or how many young people chose instant messenger as their favourite medium).

After all the interviews (with the young people and teachers) were completed, I transcribed the interviews in detail. Interview transcriptions and texts produced by young people (e.g. the media manuals) were saved in a database organized by Atlas.ti, a qualitative analysis software. The coding was also done using Atlas.ti. The use of computer software to analyze qualitative data is considered to be advantageous, enhancing the validity and reliability of the research. It can improve ‘(a) validity (by the management of samples); and (b) reliability (by retrieving all the data on a given topic, thereby ensuring trustworthiness of the data)’ (Kelle and Laurie, 1995:27 cited in Cohen et al., 2002:156).

When analysing the data, the main analytical approach used was that of 'grounded theory'. The qualitative data in this study are analysed to 'identify categories and concepts that emerge from text and link these concepts into substantive and formal theories' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). However, the analytic categories I use are not only inductive but also deductive. I look for the themes arising from the data, and generate theory from the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). At the same time, the data are analysed based on theories of the 'digital generation' and concepts drawn from relevant literature. As Ian Dey (2003) argues, 'qualitative analysis requires a dialectic between ideas and data'.

The analytic categories are built through the process of coding. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) describe codes as 'heuristic devices'. They point out that using coding enables the researcher to generate concepts from the data. In the case of my research, data coding was done in two stages. Firstly, I analysed the data using both descriptive and deductive codes. I coded the data according to the media (e.g. mobile phone, social networking sites, instant messenger, peer-2-peer network), responses to the interview activities (e.g. media categorised as young people's and as teachers', young people's favourite media, etc.), and also according to the concepts drawn from the literature and theories related to young people and new media (e.g. peer group, media skills, contexts of media use, media interpretations, 'generationing', co-construction of young people and new media, 'capitals', etc.).

Then I moved on to thematic and inductive coding focusing on the recurrent themes mentioned and discussed by young people during the interview (e.g. communication, regulation, risks, relations with adults, new media as a private space etc.). Denzin and Lincoln (2003) explain that researchers coding data inductively 'start with some general themes derived from reading the literature and add more themes and sub-themes as they go'. To identify the themes, I went back and forth between the data and the ideas. The themes used to code the data inductively were tested and refined 'to the point they can be applied to an entire corpus of texts' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003).

Coding the data is just the first step of data analysis. The themes and theoretical concepts identified by coding need to be connected in a theoretical model (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In the case of my study, the codes, concepts and themes established from the qualitative data are examined within the theoretical model of 'generationing' and the co-construction of new media culture (as discussed in Chapter 3). By establishing the linkages between data and theoretical models, I aim to find out the ways in which young people and teachers take part in the construction of the idea of the 'digital generation' and to generate a theory that can explain how and why this occurs in the way that it does. In addition to analysing the data in terms of the thematic contents, then, I investigate the interview data with the frame of the 'digital generation discourse' (as discussed in chapter 1). Referring to the notion of “thick description” (Geertz, 1973), Coffey and Atkinson (1996) emphasize the value of “thick” analysis which can be produced by deploying multiple analytic strategies.

What young people say about what they do, how they position themselves in relation to the media, and what claims they make about generational identity can be seen as aspects of their social practices, constituting themselves as having a shared generational identity in relation to new media (i.e. taking part in the construction of a discourse). Therefore, it is important to pay attention not only to how young people describe their new media use (e.g. as seen through thematic coding) but also to the claims they make about new media technology and their new media culture. Approaching the interview data as *discourse* in this sense requires attention to the language used, in this case by young people and teachers. I analyse how the words and expressions characteristic of the digital generation discourse crop up in the interview data (e.g. how young people use the word 'easy' and 'fun' to differentiate the new media they identify as their own from those of teachers). I also look into how young people make use of the 'digital generation discourse' to present themselves within young people-adult relations. I do not claim this analytical approach to be a strict 'discourse analysis' approach as defined by Potter and Wetherell (1987); although I do aim to look at some detailed features of the discourse insofar as this is appropriate to my broader questions and concerns.

Issues in translation

When working on the interview data analysis, I had to make a choice concerning at which point I needed to translate the interview data. One possibility was to translate the original data into English, then code and analyze the translated data. Another option was to work with the original data when coding and analyzing, then translate the parts of the interview which would be discussed in the data chapters (for more detailed discussion related to translation issues in qualitative research, see Temple and Young 2004). I chose the latter for two reasons. One was due to the impracticality of translating the whole interview data into English. But more importantly, I chose to postpone the translation to a later stage in order to minimize the loss of nuances and contents that inevitably happens when data are translated. Information is lost in translation, as it is not possible to match everything word for word when translating one language to another. For instance, as shown in chapter 6 (see page 218), when describing why they prefer SMS to phone calls, young people used the term '편하다 [pyun-ha-da]', which can mean either 'convenient' or 'comfortable' depending on the context. However, young people often used the term implying that they favour SMS due to both the convenience of the technology and comfort they feel when communicating via the medium. This type of multi-layered meaning in one term is likely to be missed if the analysis were done based on the translated transcripts of the interview. Therefore, I worked on the original data for coding and analysis. When I had to go back to the data or add other data during writing, I went back to the original data and translated more when necessary.

As in the example mentioned above, I tried to complement the translated interview extracts with further discussions related to the terms or expressions used by the young people in the interview, whenever it was necessary. In addition, to enhance the validity of the translation, I contacted two teenagers who were in the same age range as the interview participants. They are students in the UK yet spent their childhood in Korea and therefore have an understanding both of Korean culture and of the experience of being a young person in the UK. I sent them parts of my interview data and asked them to translate it paying attention to the language (or lingo) the young people used. After receiving the sample translations, I crossed-checked them with my version of the translation. My plan was to have further discussions with them if there were major differences or gaps in the translation. However, as there were few differences between their translations and mine, I continued to use my translated version of the data in the data chapters.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the methodological framework of the research by looking at the research design, data collection methods and analytic approaches. Informed by the 'digital generation' theory (discussed in chapter 3, part 3), the research design, methods and analytical framework of data analysis all implied one another. At the same time, this theoretical and methodological framework reflects the limits of my research. As the research focus was on the collective construction of generational identities, young people's in-depth discussions about the new media tended to be limited to the new media they commonly used. For instance, young people touched upon media such as online games (preferred by boys but not by girls) or internet fiction / fan-fiction (mentioned by girls but not by boys) during the interviews, but I could not explore these media in depth as some of the group members were unaware of and not interested in them.

Now, I will move on to the data chapters. The next chapter examines the 'media generation gap' between teachers and students at the macro level. Based on the survey data, the 'media generation gap', both in the respondents' media environment and in their media orientations, will be discussed.

Chapter 5. Students' and teachers' media environments

Introduction

The survey of students' and teachers' media usage was conducted in 2004 with the aim of exploring the 'media generation gap' between them. To study this, a questionnaire was distributed to both teachers and students asking the same sets of questions. The main themes of the survey questions were: 1) Access to and use of both old and new media, 2) How and why they use the media, especially new media such as computers and the internet, 3) Attitudes and orientations towards media, and 4) Their opinions on each other's media use and also on the 'digital generation' claims. The questionnaires were distributed to schools in Seoul and Gyung-gi province. Schools were chosen on the basis of their area code to see if there was a difference in media usage in relation to students' socio-economic status. (Parents' occupations were asked, but there was no other way to know their SES.) More than 700 students (N=723, Girls: 316, Boys: 407) and nearly 150 teachers (N=148) answered the questionnaire.

In this chapter I will introduce the findings from the questionnaire in three parts. The first part (5.1) focuses on discussing the 'media generation gap' between students and teachers by looking at their access, use and ownership of media. The data discussed in this part describe the media environment of both students and teachers and also show the specificity and similarity of the Korean media environment in relation to other countries. The following part (5.2) looks into the data about students' and teachers' actual use of the media, especially their use of computers and the internet (e.g. what they use them for and how they use them; the reasons for media use – the 'why' – will be discussed in the following part). Lastly, in 5.3, I will discuss if there is a 'media generation gap' in terms of their media orientations and their opinions about each other's media use.

5.1. Access and use of media

Firstly, students' and teachers' access to and their actual use of media were studied. The young people were asked to pick all the media to which they generally have access. They were also asked to be more specific and identify the media they have at home and in their room. The teachers were given the same set of questions as the students. However, the teachers were asked to choose the media they have in their office (in school) instead of choosing the media they have in their own room, as teachers spend much of their time in school, treating their office as a place where they work, relax and spend time on their own.

5.1.1. Young people's use and ownership of media

	Radio	Books	Comics	TV	VCR	Game console	Computer	Internet	Computer game	Mobile	Digital Camera
General Access	89	92	89	98	91	80	95	98	92	85	64
At home	93	95	82	98	92	49	96	97	91	91	44
In room	67	93	69	14	8	19	50	48	41	60	16

Table 5.1. Young people's access to media (%) (N=723)

The young people show high access rates to both the old and new media listed in the questionnaire. More than 90% students replied that they have access to media such as books, TV/VCR, computer, internet and computer games. When looking into the survey data, I divided the list of media into four categories: old/print-based media (e.g. radio, books and comics), screen-based media (e.g. TV, VCR and game consoles), computer-based media (e.g. computer, internet and computer games) and other digital media (e.g. mobile phones and digital cameras).

One finding that stands out from the access data is that young people in Korea have computer-centred bedrooms rather than TV-centred ones. For students in Korea, media such as TV and VCRs are placed in a common space for the family rather than in their own rooms. The data show that a relatively small number of young people have screen-based media in their room (TV 14%, VCR 8%, game consoles 19%), whereas nearly half of the students had a computer with internet connection in their room.

In addition, the data show that *having access* to an item of media technology does not necessarily mean *owning* it. For instance, in the case of the game console, around 50% of students have one at home, but 80% of them said they have access to one: the rate of individual ownership of game consoles is not very high, but the access rate is. Young people can also access the media outside the home, in a setting such as friends' homes or other public spaces (The place of media use will be discussed further in section 5.2.).

5.1.2. Teachers' access and use of media

The teachers were also asked to pick from a list all the media they have used before, media they have at home and media they have at their workplace (school). For the data analysis, they are categorized into three groups by their age. Group 1 consists of teachers who were 34-years old or younger in 2004, who were born after 1970. In terms of generational categories in Korea, they are younger teachers who fall into the category of 'generations X and Y'. In group 2, there are teachers who were aged from 35 up to and including 42-years old. They were born between 1962 and 1969, and belong to the so-called '386 generation'[31]. Lastly, teachers in group 3 are those who were 43-years old or older. The key findings here were as follows.

Older teachers own more radio and print media compared to younger teachers

Even though a relatively small number of teachers have radio and comics at school (around 60%), more than 80% of teachers of all ages have radio, books and comics at home. The rate of owning these old media at home increases as the teachers get older. Age group 3 shows the highest rate of owning radio and print media at home.

---

[31] 386 is a generational category coined in the late 1990s referring to the young adults who are in their 30s and were seen as unique for their active expressions of their views on social issues. The generational title comes from the newest computer of the time (i.e. the 386 model). It includes people who are in their 30s ('3'), attended universities in the 1980s ('8'), and were born in the 1960s ('6'). (see http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/special/2008/04/180 18529.html for further explanations about the 386 generation in Korea)

	Age group 1			Age group 2			Age group 3		
	General	Home	School	General	Home	School	General	Home	School
Radio	75	92	63	84	98	65	81	100	81
Books	100	100	94	96	100	98	94	100	96
Comics	72	81	59	82	86	71	68	89	68

Teachers N=145

Age group 1: Teachers who were 34 years old and younger (N=47)

Age group 2: Teachers who were aged from 35 - 42-years old (N=51)

Age group 3: Teachers who were 43 years old and older (N=47)

Table 5.2. Teachers' access to radio, books and comics (%)

Older teachers do not use game consoles, but they have the highest rate of owning them

More than 80% of teachers of all ages have access to TV and VCRs at school. All of the teachers have a TV at home, and around 90% of them own a VCR. The access rate and ownership of TVs and VCRs are similar amongst teachers of different age groups. Younger teachers have more experience of using game consoles than older teachers. Age group 1 teachers' general access rate is twice as much for game consoles as teachers in age groups 2 and 3. However, a greater number of older teachers *own* game consoles at home than younger teachers. It can be assumed that this is because older teachers are more likely to be parents. The fact that teachers in age group 3 show the lowest rate of access to game consoles and the highest rate of owning them proves the point that having access to a medium doesn't necessarily mean using it.

	Age group 1			Age group 2			Age group 3		
	General	Home	School	General	Home	School	General	Home	School
TV	98	100	85	100	100	90	96	100	81
VCR	96	89	91	90	96	90	92	100	87
Game Consoles	34	15	4	14	26	4	17	45	4

Teacher age group 1: N=47, teacher age group 2: N=51, teacher age group 3: N=47

Table 5.3. Teachers' access to TV, VCR and game consoles (%)

Almost all teachers have access to computers and the internet at home and school

Nearly all teachers have used computers and the internet before, and have access to them at home. More than 98% of teachers have access to computers and the internet at school. Even though most of the teachers have computer and internet connection at both home and school, less than one-third of them have played computer games before. Younger teachers (teachers in age group 1) have relatively more experience using computer games compared to older teachers (47% for age group 1, 33% for age group 2, 23% for age group 3). However, as in the case of game consoles, older teachers have a higher rate of access to computer games at home than other groups of teachers.

In terms of screen-based media, such as TV and VCRs, all teachers have access to TV at home, and more than 90% of teachers have access to a VCR at home. Over 80% of teachers have access to TV and VCRs at school, meaning that they can use TV and VCRs for school lessons in most cases.

	Age group 1			Age group 2			Age group 3		
	General	Home	School	General	Home	School	General	Home	School
Computer	100	98	98	100	98	100	98	100	100
Internet	100	96	96	100	96	98	100	100	100
Computer Games	47	55	33	33	67	37	23	70	43

Teacher age group 1: N=47, teacher age group 2: N=51, teacher age group 3: N=47

Table 5.4. Teachers' access to computers, the internet and computer games (%)

	Age group 1			Age group 2			Age group 3		
	General	Home	School	General	Home	School	General	Home	School
TV	98	100	85	100	100	90	96	100	81
VCR	96	89	91	90	96	90	92	100	87

Teacher age group 1: N=47, teacher age group 2: N=51, teacher age group 3: N=47

Table 5.5. Teachers' access to TV and VCR (%)

Older teachers have more access to digital cameras at school, but younger teachers have more access to them in general

Younger teachers have more experience of using digital cameras, but a greater number of older teachers have access to them at school. More than 80% of teachers in age group 3 and 68% of teachers in age group 1 have access to digital cameras at school. It can be argued that it is not hard for teachers to get hold of digital cameras if they want to use them in their lessons. In addition, more than 70% of teachers have access to mobile phones. Younger teachers have greater access to mobile phones in general compared to older teachers.

	Age group 1			Age group 2			Age group 3		
	General	Home	School	General	Home	School	General	Home	School
Mobile	85	100	76	75	100	69	70	98	77
Digital Camera	70	64	68	57	59	78	55	79	83

Teacher age group 1: N=47, teacher age group 2: N=51, teacher age group 3: N=47

Table 5.6. Teachers' access to digital cameras and mobile phones (%)

Summary

In the first part of the survey chapter, I aimed to examine if there is a 'media generation gap' between students and teachers in terms of their access to and ownership of media. I also attempted to study the media environment of Korean students and teachers, by ascertaining the types of media they have in their private and work spaces. Three main findings can be seen in relation to students' and teachers' access and use of media.

Firstly, it is clear that both students and teachers live within media-rich environments, and have high rates of access to both old and new media. Difference in the access rate between teachers and students is evident only in relation to games-related media.

In terms of general access to media, students show high rates of access to all media including old media such as radio and comics, as well as new media such as computers and the internet (students' general access to radio is 89%, books 92%, comics 89%, TV 98%, VCR 91%, game consoles 80%, computers 95%, the internet 98%, computer games 92%, mobile phones 85% and digital cameras 64%). Amongst the given list of media, all media except digital cameras were accessed by more than 80% of students. In particular, more than 95% of students said that they have access to computers, the internet and TV, which were the three media with the highest access rates.

Teachers also show high rates of access to both old and new media. In line with the students, computers, the internet and TV were the top three media in terms of access. Nearly all teachers responded that they have access to both computers and the internet, and 97% of teachers had access to TV. However, a difference between students and teachers is seen in their access to game-related media. Referring back to the students' data, 80% of students have access to game consoles and 92% of them access computer games. In the case of the youngest teachers (age group 1), 35% have access to game consoles and 47% to computer games. Fourteen percent of teachers in age group 2, and 17% of teachers in age group 3 said that they had access to game consoles. As for computer games, 33% of teachers in age group 2 and 23% of the oldest teachers (age group 3) said they had accessed them before.

Therefore, it can be suggested that in terms of access to media, there is no clear media generation gap, aside from the differences in games-related media. However, it is always important to examine the uses, purposes and functions of the media. The generation gap in terms of media orientations and students' and teachers' attitudes towards media will be discussed in part 2 of this chapter.

Secondly, the data collected from both students and teachers show that there are discrepancies between access, use and ownership of media. Having access to media does not necessarily mean owning them, especially in the case of media that are often used socially. For example, 80% of students responded that they had access to game consoles, although only 49% said that they had game consoles at home.

At the same time, owning media does not always mean accessing or using them. As seen in the teachers' data, teachers in the oldest group (group 3) have half the access rate (17%) to game consoles compared to the youngest teachers (group 1, 34%). However, they are the group of teachers who show the highest rate of owning game consoles at home (45%). As mentioned in the data analysis, this could be due to the composition of the family in this age group.

This discrepancy suggests that both students' and teachers' media uses take complicated forms in relation to the social, familial and other contexts in which they live. To have a realistic picture of the media generation gap, these contextual factors should also be closely looked at (this issue will be further discussed in the conclusion of this chapter).

Lastly, the findings show the specificity of the Korean new media environment. Previous studies in the UK (Livingstone and Bovill, 2001; Livingstone, 2002) suggest that young people in the UK have TV-centred bedrooms. In contrast to the UK, in Korea young people are more likely to have a computer-centred bedroom, rather than a television-centred one. More than half of the students who responded to the survey answered that they have access to computers and the internet in their own rooms. Teachers also have a computer-centred work space: nearly all teachers said that they have access to computers and the internet at school (99% and 98% respectively).

5.2. Same media, different uses

The survey data analyzed in part 1 show that, in contrast to 'digital generation' discourses (see chapter 1), both young people and adults have high access rates to both old and new media. Both groups live in media-rich environments with new-media-centred work or private spaces. However, as discussed in the literature review, when studying young people's new media use, simply measuring access to new media does not tell us much about their new media culture. For a better understanding of young people's new media use, it is important to look at the purposes and functions of media use. In short, for a more realistic understanding of the 'media generation gap', it is necessary to study the 'what', 'how' and 'why' of both teachers' and students' new media use. In this part, I will look into the data focusing on their actual use of media, especially their use of computers and the internet (e.g. what they use them for and how they use them).

5.2.1. Most frequently used media: the internet and computers

Teachers chose the internet and computers, students chose the internet and TV as their most frequently used media

To examine the media students and teachers use the most, the questionnaire asked them to choose their three most frequently used media from eleven choices. Chart 5.1 presents the top three media chosen by students and teachers. The first three choices of the young people were the internet, TV and computer. The 'digital generation' discourse typically claims that young people do not watch TV any longer, but my data show that TV is still a medium that young people frequently use. As for the teachers, two of the media that were most often chosen by them were the internet and computers. Following the internet and computers, older teachers (groups 2 and 3) chose TV, while younger teachers (group 1) chose mobile phones as their most frequently used medium.

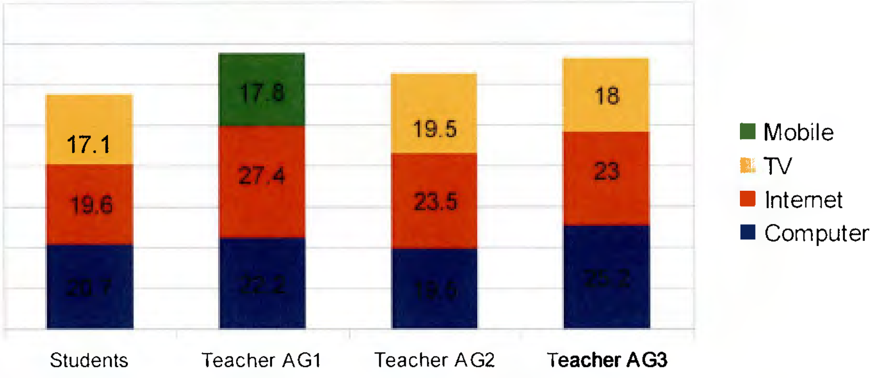

Chart 5.1. Media that students and teachers most frequently use (First three choices)(%) (Students: N=723, teacher age group 1: N=47, teacher age group 2: N=51, teacher age group 3: N= 47)

As the data show, both teachers and students picked the internet as their most frequently used media. The ‘media generation gap’ between teachers and students doesn’t seem to appear in this data. However, when the questionnaire asked what teachers and students actually do with computers and the internet, differences between the generations did appear.

5.2.2. Teachers' and students' use of the internet

Teachers and students were asked to identify what they mostly do when they use computers and the internet by choosing three activities from listed examples. The data show that students mainly use the internet for entertainment and communication, while teachers use the internet mainly for work and information searches.

Identifying the activities they take part in when online, 64% of students suggested that they use instant messaging the most. Following messaging, students picked playing online games (47%), participating in an online community (46%) and downloading and uploading music (37%). As shown from this set of questions, students mainly use the internet for entertainment and communication. By listing the internet features that less than 10% of students chose, it can be suggested that at the time of the study students generally do not use the internet in place of other old media. They do not listen to radio via the internet, or watch TV programmes online; they do not try to get news information from the net; they do not download movies; and they do not do online shopping and banking.

Students answered another set of questions asking which media they tend to choose for different purposes (e.g. to watch a movie, to listen to music etc.). They said they prefer using TV to watch TV programmes or to get news information. They prefer to watch a movie at a cinema or on TV. Except for listening to music, when other media are available in addition to the internet, young people tend to choose old media. It can be argued that at the time the survey was conducted (2004), media convergence was not occurring very often in students' actual use of digital media.

As for the teachers, more than one-third of teachers chose emailing (69%), getting news information (60%), taking part in an online community (42%) and researching information for hobbies (36%) as their most used functions of the internet. Comparing this to the students' list, 20% of students said they use email the most, 5% said they find news information, 46% said they take part in an online community and 18% said they research information for hobbies. Except for online communities, it appears that students and teachers do not have much in common in terms of the nature or purpose of their internet use.

The difference in internet use between teachers and students becomes clearer when we compare the number of teachers' choices that correspond to the mostly frequently used features of the internet as chosen by students. More than one-third of the students chose using instant messaging, playing online games, taking part in an online community and downloading music. However, 13% of teachers said they use instant messaging, 5% said they play online games and 12% said they download music. As regards the things teachers are least likely to use on the internet, less than 10% of teachers said that they play online games (5%), watch TV programmes (4%), listen to radio (3%) and download movies (3%). None of the teachers said they use chat rooms the most. It seemed that teachers also prefer to rely on old media such as TV and radio rather than watching TV programmes or listening to the radio on the internet.

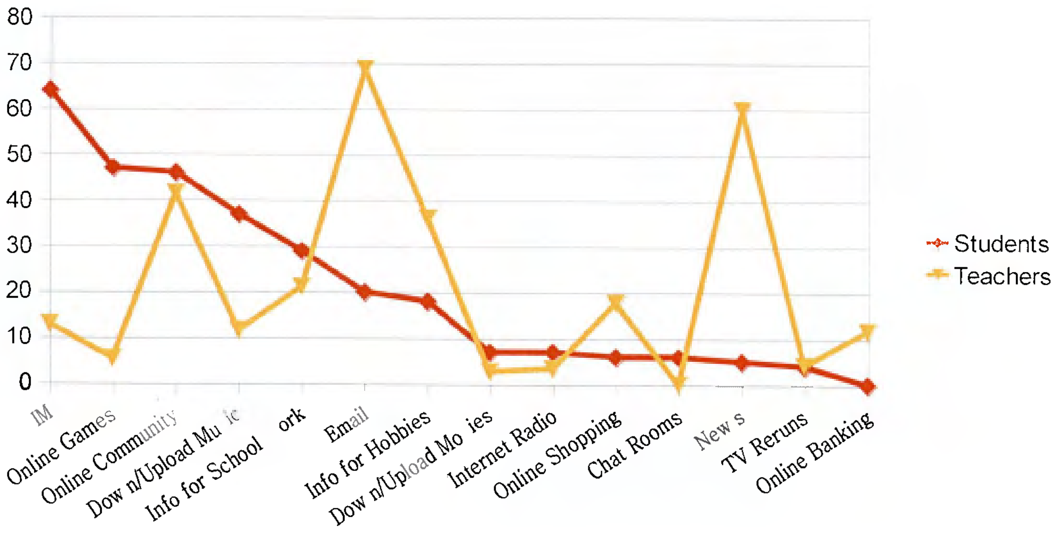

Chart 5.2. The service/functions of the internet that students and teachers use when they are online (%)(Multiple Response)

(Students: N=723, Teachers: N=144 N/A=1)

Generation gap within teachers: Younger teachers frequently use instant messaging, while few of the older teachers said they use this service

There was a difference in internet use between younger teachers (teachers in age group 1, who were 34 years old or younger) and older teachers (teachers in age groups 2 and 3, who were 35years old and older). When looking at the online activities that more than 30% of teachers chose, younger teachers have most in common with students. As for teachers in group 1, 65.2% of them chose taking part in online communities, followed by email (63%), obtaining news (39.1%) and then instant messaging (37%). Teachers in group 2 named emailing (82.4%), reading news (64.7%) and researching information for hobbies (37.3%) as their favourite activities, while the oldest teachers chose getting news (72.8%), using email (61.7%) and researching information for hobbies (44.7%).

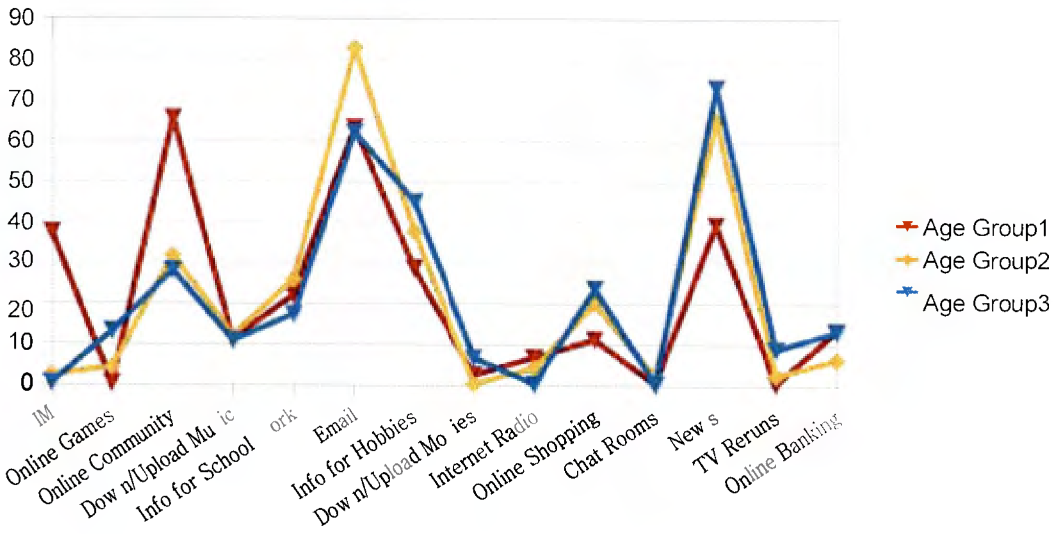

Chart 5.3. The service/functions of the internet that teachers of different age groups use when they are online (%)(Multiple Response)

(Teacher age group 1: N=47, Teacher age group 2: N=51, Teacher age group 3: N=47)

Students spend more time on the internet once they are logged on

Just as students' and teachers' purposes for using the internet are different from each other, the time they spend on the internet once logged on is different as well. The majority of students and teachers said they use the internet for an hour or two once they have logged on. However, more than 20% of students said they use the internet for two to three hours, while 39% of teachers said they use it for less than an hour.

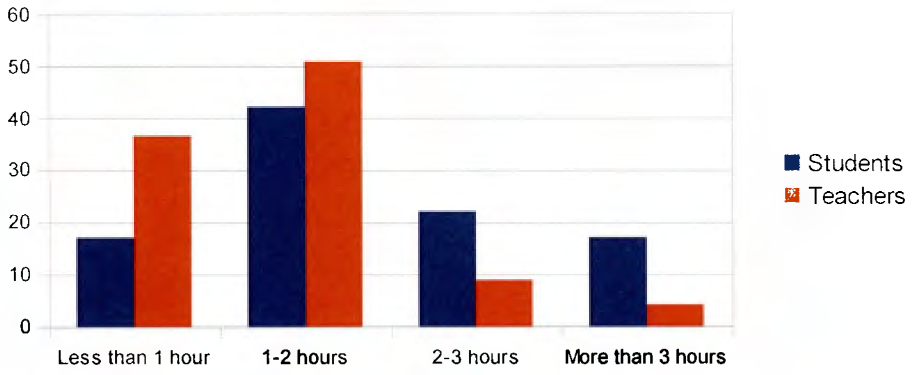

Chart 5.4. How long do you use the internet for once you have logged on? (%)

(Students; N=732, Teachers N=145)

5.2.3. Students' and teachers' use of computers

When using computers students mainly use multimedia software, while teachers mainly use Office tool software

Students and teachers use not only the internet but also computers in different ways. They were asked to choose three features of computers they mostly use from a list of examples. The students' top three choices were: word processor, multimedia software (e.g. Windows media player, Real player etc.), followed by music editing software (e.g. GoldWave, Cool2000 etc.). Functions that less than 10% of the students chose were Excel and video editing software.

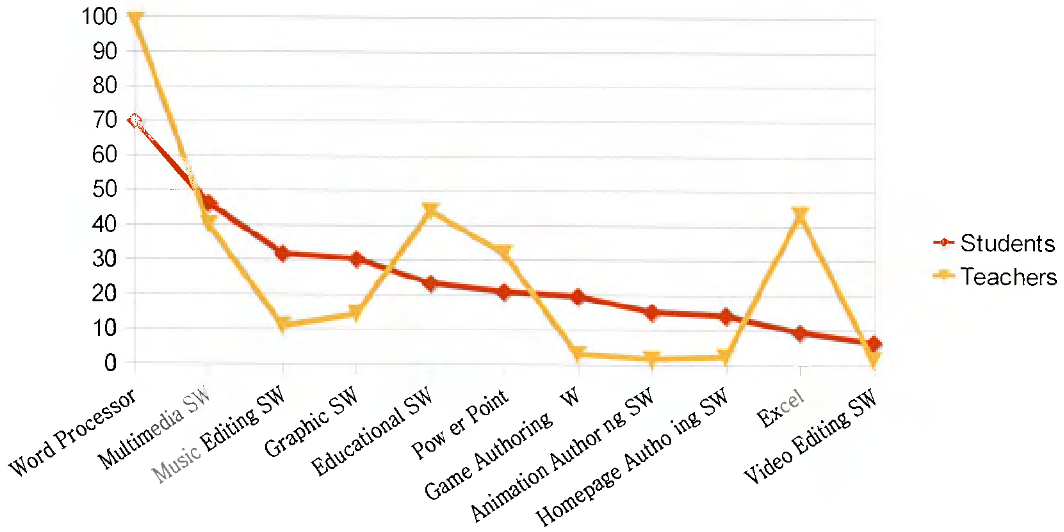

Chart 5.5. The software/function of computers that students and teachers most frequently use (%)

(Multiple Response)

(Students: N=723, Teachers: N=145)

For students, most of their computer uses, except the word processor, were entertainment related. In contrast, teachers' computer use was clearly work related. The vast majority (99%) of the teachers said they use the word processor most when they use a computer, followed by educational software (44%) and Excel (43%). Less than 10% of teachers chose game authoring software, homepage authoring software, video editing software and animation authoring software.

Looking at computer use in terms of teachers' age groups, it appears that teachers of all ages use Office applications such as the Word processor, Powerpoint and Excel most often. However, more than 50% of the youngest teachers and 41% of teachers in age group 2 chose multimedia software while only 21% of the oldest teachers said that they use multimedia software. Here again, younger teachers' computer use had more in common with students' pattern of computer use.

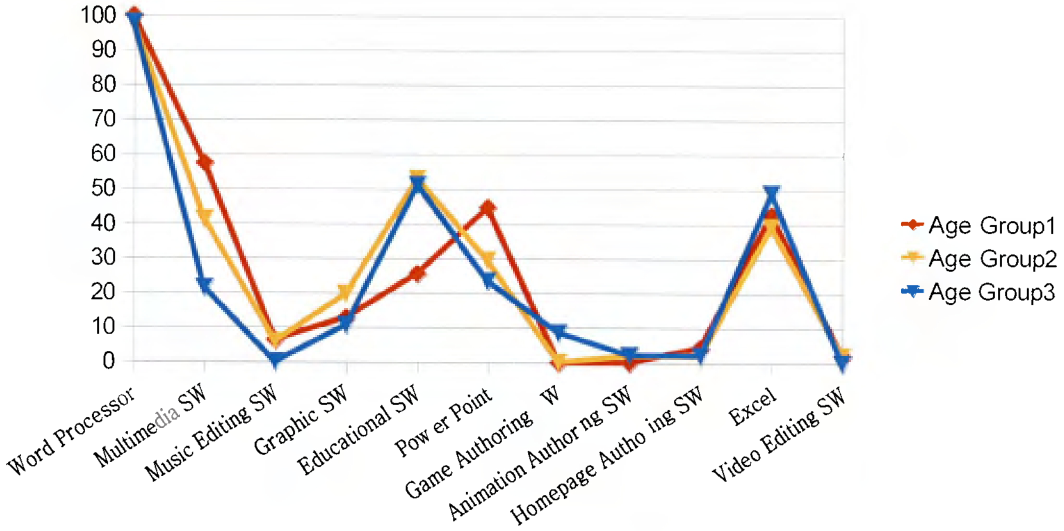

Chart 5.6. The software/function of computers that teachers of different age groups most frequently use (%)

(Teacher age group 1: N=47, Teacher age group 2: N=51, Teacher age group 3: N=47)

Students' and teachers' use of media is home centred, but most of the teachers use the internet and computers at their workplace

As seen from the data above, both students and teachers are active users of new media such as the internet and computers. However, whereas students use both computers and the internet mainly for entertainment, teachers tend to use them for work. This can also be understood in relation to the main places students and teachers tend to use media.

In the questionnaire, there was a series of questions asking teachers and students where they mainly use each medium. The data show that the majority of students use most of the media, except mobile phones and digital cameras, at home. Teachers tend to use most of the media mainly at home as well. However, when it comes to computers and the internet they chose school as the main place of use over home. More than 60% of teachers of all ages said they use the internet at school, and around 80% of all teachers said they use computers at school. As for the students, more than 90% chose home as the main place of their internet use, and more than 85% of both girls and boys said they use computers mostly at home.

5.2.4. Social contexts of media use

Survey data show that students and teachers make choices of what media to use according to various factors such as the spatial context, as mentioned above, or the social context. For example, students tend to choose computers and the internet as the media to share with friends.

More than 40% of students said they mostly use computers and the internet when they are with their friends. This was followed by computer games and mobile phones. Teachers were also asked which media they would use with their friends or colleagues. Teachers younger than 43 (age groups 1 and 2) picked computers and the internet and mobile phones followed by TV.

However, teachers who were 43 and older chose newspapers rather than TV. Their first three choices were computers/internet, mobile phones and newspapers.

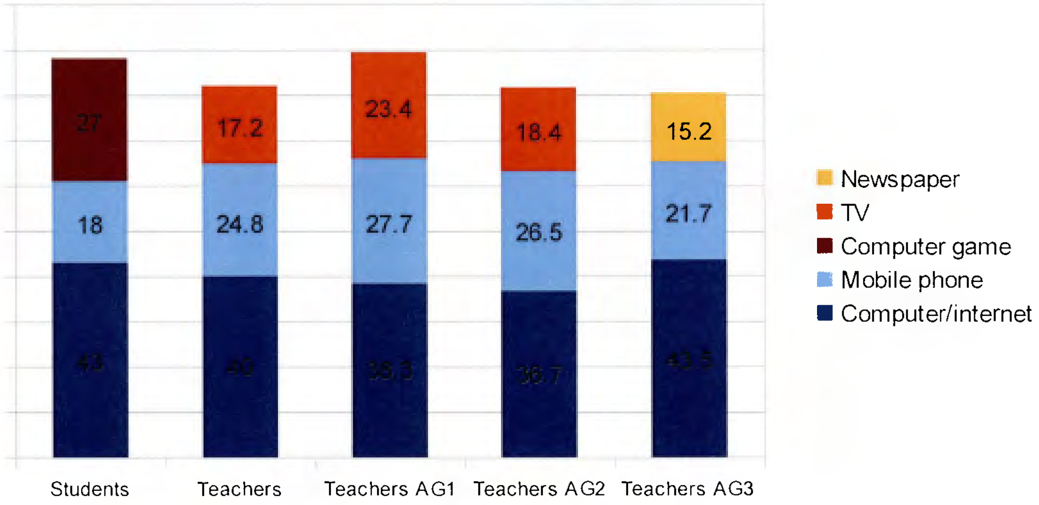

Chart 5.7. Media you mostly use with your friends (‘colleagues’ for teachers’ questionnaire) (First three choices)(%)
(Students: N=723, Teachers: N=145; teacher age group 1: N=47, teacher age group 2: N=51, teacher age group 3: N=47)

On the other hand, when they were asked to choose a medium they prefer to use with their siblings, 40% of students chose TV; and with their parents, 76% picked TV as their first choice. It can be said that TV is perceived as a family-oriented medium for young people. The majority of teachers (83%) also picked TV as a medium they share with their family. This shows that watching TV still tends to be a collective activity where family members can share a common experience.

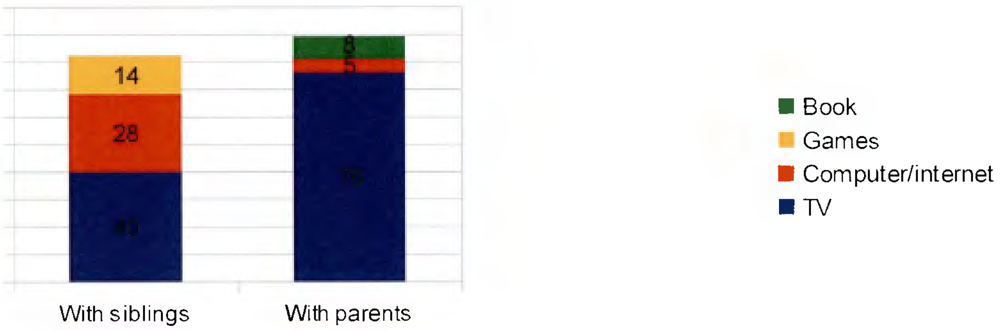

Chart 5.8. Media young people mostly use with siblings and family (First three choices)(%)(N=723)

When asked which media they mostly use on their own, more than 40% of young people chose computers and the internet. The second choice was games (16%), followed by TV (13%). As for the teachers, they also said they would use computers and the internet when they are on their own. Their first three choices consisted of computers and the internet (44%) followed by books (26%) and TV (15%). In terms of the age range within the teacher sample, nearly half of the teachers who are in their late 20s or early 30s (Age group 1) chose computers and the internet as the medium they mostly use on their own, followed by reading books (28%) and watching TV (11%). However, more of the younger teachers than the older teachers in my sample answered that they mostly use computers and the internet or read a book when they are alone. In contrast, more of the older teachers than the younger teachers chose television.

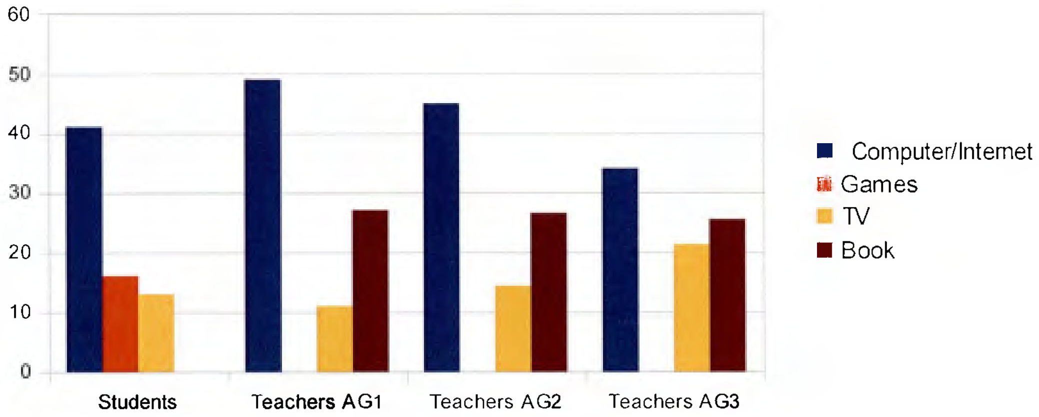

Chart 5.9. Media young people and teachers mostly use on their own (First three choices)(%)

(Students: N=723, Teachers: N=145; teacher age group 1: N=47, teacher age group 2: N=51, teacher age group 3: N=47)

Summary

The 'digital generation' discourses presume that young people (students) prefer new media and adults (teachers) prefer old media. However, teachers and students in the survey responded otherwise. Teachers chose the internet and computers as their most frequently used media, whereas students chose the internet and TV.

Several differences amongst teachers (in terms of age groups) were apparent. The youngest group of teachers (age group 1) showed different preferences compared to older teachers (age groups 2 and 3). Teachers in all age groups chose the internet and computers as their most frequently used media. However, teachers in age group 1 added mobile phones to their choice, while older teachers chose TV. As mentioned in part 1, the data show that teachers and students (or adults and young people) cannot be approached as homogeneous groups that are opposed to each other. This issue will be further discussed in the conclusion.

The data show that the 'media generation gap' is not a matter of teachers using old media and students using new media. Rather, it is seen in relation to what they use the new media for and how they use them. In short, the data suggest that teachers and students use the same media, but in different ways. The 'media generation gap' is not a matter of access to media, but of uses of media, and attitudes towards them.

Thus, students said they use the internet mainly for instant messaging, online games, online communities and downloading/uploading music; teachers said they use it for email, news information and online communities. As for computer use, both students and teachers actively used word processors, but aside from these programs, students' and teachers' preferences differed. Students used computers mainly for entertainment purposes (their second and third choices were multimedia software – 46.4% – and music editing software – 31.6%), and teachers mainly used it for work (their second and third choices being educational software – 43.9% – and Excel – 43.2%). In short, for students, computers and the internet are entertainment-oriented media, whereas for teachers they are work-related ones.

In addition, students tend not to use the features of the internet that were chosen by teachers and vice versa, with the exception of the youngest teachers. Teachers in age group 1 made choices in common with students. There are differences in the percentage of teachers and students who chose the same features of this medium, but both groups said they frequently use instant messaging and visit online communities when they are on the internet (65% of teachers in age group 1 chose online communities, and 37% chose instant messaging; 46% of students chose to visit online communities, and 64% chose instant messaging).

There are also differences between teachers and students in terms of the time they spend on the internet (chart 5.4). Compared to teachers, students tend to spend more time once logged on to the internet.

However, it can be suggested that the contexts (both spatial contexts and social contexts) in which they use the media influence their attitudes towards them and also their patterns of media usage. The data show that students tend to use computers and the internet at home, but teachers' usage of these media mostly took place at schools. Additionally, for students computers and the internet are not only media for individual use, but also for social use. Students chose computers and the internet as the media they mostly use when they are with their peers. It is difficult to pinpoint the cause and effect relationship between teachers' and students' attitudes towards the media and the contexts they are in. Rather, it can be suggested that users (teachers and students) co-construct their new media culture. This issue of co-construction will be further discussed in part 3 and in the conclusion.

5.3. Media orientation

Data discussed in part 1 showed that both young people and adults live in media-rich environments. The second part of this chapter suggested that there is a 'media generation gap' in a sense that students and teachers use the same media, but in different ways. In the last part of this survey chapter, I will focus on students' and teachers' media orientations. I follow Denis McQuail's definition of 'media orientation' as 'a joint outcome of social background and past media experience which takes the form of an affinity for certain media, specific preferences and interests, habits of use, expectations of what the media are good for...' (2010:421). Firstly, the 'media generation gap' will be studied by looking into which medium the respondents say they prefer to use for a specific media activity (e.g. listening to music or getting news information). Secondly, I will look at their media orientations through which media they say they choose for certain gratifications. More importantly, I will investigate the responses given when the teachers and students were asked to predict each other's media orientations. These questions were designed to examine if students and teachers are involved in co-constructing each other's generational identities as either the 'digital generation' or the 'non-digital generation'. As discussed in the theory chapter, identification (both individual and collective) is an internal-external dialectical process (Jenkins, 2008). Therefore, to understand how young people's identity as the 'digital generation' is constructed, it is necessary to study how teachers and students are involved in generational identity construction by 'othering' themselves from one another.

5.3.1. Orientations towards the media

Students and younger teachers selected computers and the internet to listen to music

Data illustrated in previous parts suggest that the 'media generation gap' between students and teachers is not about access to media, but rather about what they do with the same media.

Another set of questions was asked to examine whether teachers and students consult different media (for example, students preferring digital media while teachers rely on old media) for the *same* purpose. For example, the questionnaire asked them to pick the main medium they use when they want to listen to music, or when they want to get news information.

Regarding the use of media for listening to music, students' first choice was computers and the internet, followed by mp3 players. About 60% of young people said they use computers to listen to music. However, it was not the case that students preferred digital media while teachers opted for old media. In the case of the youngest teacher group, the rate of choosing computers and the internet is similar to that of the students.

However, there was a generation gap amongst different teacher groups. More than 60% of teachers in age group 1, the youngest teachers, chose computers and the internet as their main music-listening media. However, the rate of choosing computers decreased as the age of the teachers increased (28% of teachers in age group 2 and 21% of teachers in age group 3). Older teachers (age groups 2 and 3) preferred CD players and radio over computers and the internet. The rate of choosing CD players and radio increased as teachers got older. In addition, 9% of the youngest teachers chose mp3 players as their preferred medium to listen to music, while none of the older teachers mentioned mp3 players.

Students and teachers prefer using old media to watch a movie or TV programme and to read comics

When it comes to watching a movie or TV programme and reading comics, both teachers and students preferred using old media rather than new media such as the internet and computers. In the case of choosing a medium to watch a movie, teachers of all ages preferred going to a cinema. However, the rate of choosing to go to a cinema to watch movies decreases as their age increases. As for the students, 45% of them said they watch movies on TV, and 39% said at the cinema; only 15% of them picked computers as their preferred medium to watch a movie. The reason why students would rather watch a movie on the TV than go to a cinema could be a matter of money or time, or it could be due to the cinema targeting young adults as their main audience.

To obtain news information, teachers prefer using computers and the internet and students prefer watching TV

When they were asked what media they use to access news, the majority of teachers chose computers and the internet as their main source of information. However, the rate of choosing computers and the internet decreases as the teachers' ages increases. More than 50% of the youngest teachers chose the internet as their medium for news information, while 47% of teachers in age group 2 and 34% of teachers in age group 3 did. For other choices, younger teachers preferred TV over newspapers, while older teachers preferred newspapers over TV.

While teachers chose the internet and computers as their prime source of information, students said they mostly obtain news information from TV. The majority of students answered that they use TV to get news information (54%), followed by computers and the internet (32%).

Students' responses suggest that the younger generation is also a frequent user of old media and they tend to rely on TV as their source of information. Teachers' responses show that they prefer old media in general, but in the case of retrieving news information they tend to rely on the internet. Also, there is a generational difference within the teachers' groups. Younger teachers' media use was closer to students' than to older teachers. In this case, the 'media generation gap' is between younger and older teachers, rather than between students and younger teachers. This differs from the existing 'digital generation' discourses which claim a simple binary adults/youth distinction. These findings appear to indicate a greater number of 'generation gaps', or a continuum of generational uses across all students and teachers.

Mutual stereotyping between students and teachers

This part not only examines students' and teachers' orientation towards media, but also what they think of each other's media orientations. Both teachers and students were asked what media they use when they are bored, when they want excitement and when they do not want to be left out from conversations with students (for teachers) and friends (for students). After these questions, they were asked to predict what media their students or teachers would use for the same reason.

Teachers think students would use computers and the internet when they are bored; however, most students chose to go online or watch TV

When teachers were asked what media they think students would use when they are bored, younger teachers' (age groups 1 and 2) first three choices were computers and the internet (85%

of age group 1, 78% of age group 2), a game (75% of age group 1, 86% of age group 2) and a mobile (68% of age group 1, 47% of age group 2). Teachers in age group 3 agreed with younger teachers on students' use of computers and the internet (68%) when they are bored, but they suggested that besides computers and the internet, students would watch TV (70%) or read a book (55%) to relieve their boredom.

Although about 70% of the oldest group of teachers suggested that students would watch TV when they are bored, only a small number of younger teachers (19% of teachers in age group 1, 31% of teachers in age group 2) predicted that students would watch TV to relieve their boredom.

In fact, watching TV was the students' second choice (69%); their first choice (75%) being the computer and internet, as teachers predicted. In addition, 45% of students said they would play games.

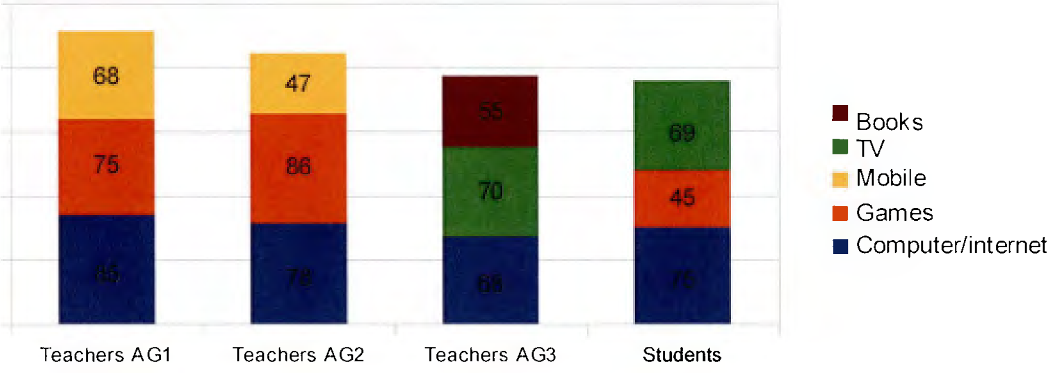

Chart 5.10. Which media teachers think students would use when they bored and which media students actually use when they are bored (first three choices)(%)
(Multiple response; Students: N=723, Teachers: N=145; teacher age group 1: N=47, teacher age group 2: N=51, teacher age group 3: N=47)

Students think teachers would read books when they are bored; however, younger teachers go online, and older teachers read books

More than two-thirds of students thought that teachers would read a book when bored. Their second choice was computers and the internet, followed by reading newspaper. Looking into teachers' responses, the data show that younger teachers (age group 1) said to beat boredom they would use computers and the internet, followed by TV and mobile phones. Older teachers in age group 2 picked reading a book as their first choice, followed by using computers and the internet and watching TV. The oldest group of teachers (group 3) chose TV most, followed by computers and the internet, then books. Contrary to the students' assumptions, only teachers in age group 2 chose reading a book as the activity they mainly do when they are bored. Aside from group 2, computers and the internet, and TV use were the preferred media amongst the teachers.

These data suggest that both students and teachers are mutually stereotyping each other. Teachers assume that students favour new media in all cases, and students say that teachers prefer old media to new media. They are also constructing the perception of a 'media generation gap', which is different from the reality.

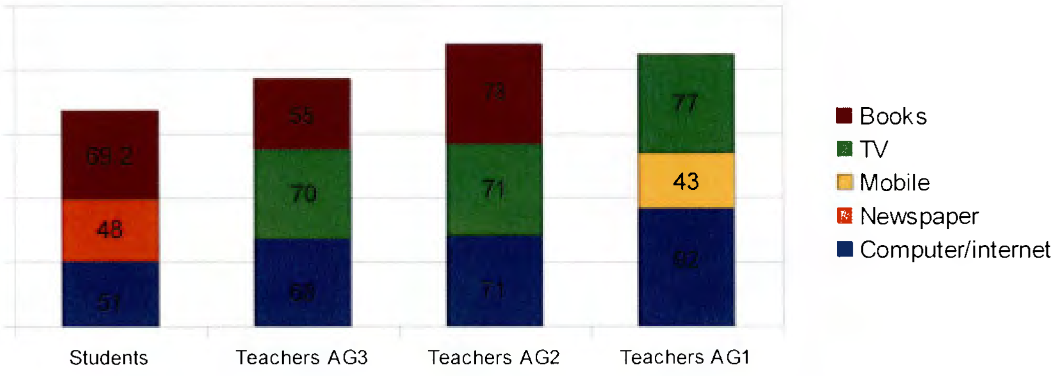

Chart 5.11. Which media students think teachers would use when they bored and which media teachers actually use when they are bored (first three choices)(%)

(Multiple response;Students: N=723, Teachers: N=145; teacher age group 1: N=47, teacher age group 2: N=51, teacher age group 3: N=47)

Summary

Firstly, the data show that it is not the case that young people always prefer new media and adults prefer old media. The data analysed in this part focused on examining students' and teachers' media preferences in the new media environment – an environment in which media convergence had started to prevail. In the questionnaire, there were sets of questions asking which media platform they would choose (e.g. either old media or new media) for media activities which were available in both platforms (e.g. listening to music, watching TV programmes, reading comics and getting news information). By contrast with the 'digital generation' discourses, the data from my survey shows more complicated patterns of media use and preferences. For a certain media activity such as 'listening to music' young people mostly said that they use new media (e.g. computers, the internet or mp3 players), and older teachers said that they prefer old media such as CD players. However, within the teachers' groups age was pertinent: the youngest group of teachers preferred new media over old media. On the other hand, when they wanted to get news information, teachers said that they prefer new media (e.g. the internet) while students said they would rely on TV. It can be suggested that the 'media generation gap' is not a simple matter of young people preferring new media and adults older media, but rather takes complicated forms in relation to their *media orientations*, that is how they approach and relate to both old and new media.

Furthermore, these media activities occur within various contexts. For example, reasons for students preferring new media over old media to listen to music cannot only be because of their preference towards the media, but also due to the ease of access to the music they like. In other words, one of the reasons why older teachers do not readily choose new media for listening to music could be because the content provided by the new media is limited. Therefore, it can be said that both students' and teachers' media usage patterns are not only decided by their preferences towards the media in general, but also by the content available via specific media. As discussed in the theory chapter, the construction of young people's new media culture involves an interaction between young people, media production and media texts; and this is a process in which *content* may well be more significant than the *technology* or the *medium* in itself.

Secondly, a set of questions was asked to see what kinds of media students and teachers rely on for particular emotional and social gratifications. For example, the questionnaire included questions such as 'what media do you use 1) when you are bored, 2) when you want excitement and 3) when you do not want to be left out from conversations?' Another set of questions asked respondents to predict which media other groups (i.e. teachers for students and vice versa) might choose to relieve boredom, for excitement or for conversations with others. In this chapter, only the data corresponding to the first question (i.e. media they use when bored) were analyzed, as the patterns of responses were very similar amongst all three questions. In addition, even though these questions are borrowed from frameworks suggested by uses and gratification theories (e.g. Katz et al., 1973), the purpose of asking these questions in the survey was not primarily to study the gratifications sought by users, but more to examine if there is a difference between the perceptions and reality of each group's media orientations. In other words, I wanted to see if there is a gap between the stereotypes of generational media use and reality. The data show that teachers tend to stereotype students as a digital generation who rely on digital media for excitement and conversation, whereas in reality, students chose both TV and computers/internet as their most preferred media for emotional and social needs. Similarly, students assumed that teachers would mostly choose books, but in reality the first three choices made by the youngest group of teachers (age group 1) were computers/the internet, followed by TV and mobile phones. In contrast to the students' perceptions of teachers' media preferences, teachers in all age groups chose computers/internet as the media they would pick for excitement and conversation.

Conclusion

So, is there a 'media generation gap'? On the basis of this data, my answer would have to be: yes and no. There is a media generation gap, but it is more complicated than the claims made by 'digital generation' discourses (see chapter 1). The 'digital generation' arguments assume that young people's media uses are focused on new media, whereas adults mainly use old media. However, the data in this survey suggest that both students and teachers have a high rate of access to both old and new media, and are active users of new media, especially the internet. The survey data show that the 'media generation gap' between students and teachers is not in rates of access and use, but in the attitudes towards media and in the media orientations of each group. Students tend to use new media for entertainment purposes, while teachers use them mainly for work. For instance, while students mainly use the internet and computer for entertainment and communication, teachers use the internet mainly for work and information searches. On the other hand, by contrast with teachers who identify the internet as their main source for news, young people prefer using TV to watch TV programmes or to get news information. In addition, young people not only perceive the internet and computer as media they use on their own, but also as sociable media that they choose to use when they are with their peers.

However, these differences are not solely due to users' wants and needs. Both students' and teachers' media uses are placed within various contexts - which include technological (e.g. media content and technologies that are available to them), spatial (e.g. home or school), social (e.g. peer-oriented media use) and economic contexts. Various other contexts also influence how they understand and use media, and in turn their media usage patterns affect how the new media culture is developed. Therefore, as suggested in the theory chapter, it can be said that both users and new media are involved in a continuous process of co-constructing each other.

Secondly, the media generation gap is not between adults and young people. Discourses that define young people as the 'digital generation' tend to make a binary distinction between young people and adults. However, in the survey data, there is a consistent difference amongst teachers in terms of their age group. Younger teachers' media orientations or media usage were closer to those of students than to older teachers. Therefore, it can be suggested that the 'media generation gap' is more in the form of a continuum than a binary opposition (e.g. digital natives vs. digital immigrants). In addition, 'digital generation' discourses tend to assume that there would be a complete change (in work, leisure cultures, etc.) when all members of society are people who have grown up with digital media. However, it can be anticipated that the 'media generation gap' will continue to be manifested, not only because the 'gap' tends to take the form of a continuum, but also because the contexts (e.g. technological, social, cultural, etc.) surrounding media use will keep changing.

Lastly, the 'media generation gap' nevertheless exists in the form of perceptions, and both students and teachers are often involved in the construction of these perceptions. In chapter 1, it was suggested that 'digital generation' discourses are based more often on expectations than evidence. Similarly, the survey data discussed in this chapter show that both students and teachers have certain stereotypes of each other's media culture. For example, teachers assumed that students would favour new media for emotional gratification, whereas students assumed that teachers would choose old media such as books. It can be said that students' and teachers' (mis)understandings and perceptions of the 'media generation gap' contribute to the ongoing 'generationing' both of themselves and of others.

Limitations of this survey

As discussed in chapter 1, when young people are categorized as the digital generation, they tend to be essentialized as a homogeneous group. Variables such as socio-economic status, family composition, age and gender were considered when the questionnaire was designed and distributed. In the introduction, I mentioned that the questionnaire was distributed according to area code to see if there were any differences in access to media, especially a digital divide in terms of SES. However, as supported by the national survey conducted by NIDA in 2004, the internet and computer appropriation rate for teenagers in Korea has reached saturation point (see chapter 2 for the data). The data I collected also responds to this point showing that the access rate to new media such as computers and the internet was well over 90%: there were no significant differences between my various fieldwork sites in this respect. In addition, as was seen in my interviews with students, for young people there are also cultural factors such as parental regulation which play important roles in deciding their access and use of media. As for the age difference, the students who responded to the questionnaire were middle school students in the age range of 14 to 16. The Korean school system is divided into three stages: elementary school (age 8 to 13), middle school (age 14 to 16) and high school (age 17 to19). Big changes such as those in peer groups, social expectations of students, or schedules and lifestyles are supposed to occur with these stages when graduating from one school and moving up to another. Therefore, as my focus was on the gap between students and teachers, I decided to look at middle school students as a whole, instead of breaking them up in terms of age or grades. However, for a more detailed survey study, examining the age differences could be meaningful in showing the fine differences within this group of young people.

There are also other limits to this survey, which are related more to the restrictions of the survey method itself. Firstly, as discussed in chapters 2 and 3, when studying young people's new media use, it is important to consider how young people interpret media and also the contexts in which they use them. Although survey data can show general tendencies in reported media use it is difficult to consider the complicated ways in which different contexts may influence how and why media are used in certain ways. Secondly, when measuring the differences between students and teachers, survey data are useful in showing the bigger picture – and hence in identifying broader tendencies towards a 'media generation gap'. Yet, there is a danger of the survey data being superficial. This survey attempted to see how both students and teachers perceive and construct generational differences around the use of media, by asking their opinions on each other's media orientations. However, young people's collective identity constructions could not be studied in any depth in this way.

In order to explore how young people understand and perceive new media, the different contexts influencing their media use, and their identity construction as a 'digital generation' it is necessary to use qualitative methods. Therefore, in the following year, small-group interviews were conducted with students and face-to-face interviews with teachers. Subsequent data chapters are based on the data collected from these interviews. This chapter attempted to answer my first research question, about the existence of a 'media generation gap'. The following chapters will focus on my remaining research questions, which are:

– To what extent and in what ways do young people construct themselves as a digital generation?

– How is the discourse of the 'digital generation' played out in the school setting, both by students and teachers?

Chapter 6. Young people's construction of new media culture

Introduction

The survey analyzed in chapter 5 looked into young people's and teachers' individual preferences and usage of media. As mentioned in chapter 4 (methodology chapter), one of the aims for the interviews with young people was to explore their collective understanding and perception of new media. Following the understanding of culture as a process of 'constant creations, recreations, and negotiations of imaginary boundaries between "we" and the "other(s)" (Benhabib, 2002:8)', this chapter will focus on young people's construction of new media culture. As the first of the qualitative data chapters, this chapter aims to work as a starting point to discuss young people's generational identification related to new media. In this chapter, I will explore the various generational factors that play a part in young people's construction of new media culture and how they generationally identify the media they use.

6.1. Construction of peer group culture based on new media

As I have noted (Chapter 2), one of the most salient factors affecting young people's choice of new media is accessibility to peers (Ling and Yttri 2002; Livingstone and Bober, 2003). In most cases, the young people in the interviews chose communicative media, which enabled them to be co-present with each other, as their favourite medium. Communicative media, such as SMS and IM, were considered as an important part of their daily media use and were also identified in the sorting activity as 'young people's media' (see methodology chapter for further discussion). Young people's use of IM was almost so ingrained that students at G middle school forgot to mention it as part of their daily media use (# 6.1.).

> Q: (Pointing out that none of them put BuddyBuddy[32] on the list of their daily media use.) So you guys don't use BuddyBuddy much?
>
> Hyung-Soon: Oh, that's right. BuddyBuddy... Jae-
>
> Hee: We all use it.
>
> Do-Won: I forgot to mention it, because I get automatically logged in when I turn on the computer.
>
> Interview extract #6.1. G middle school

> Duk-Hyun: At first, I log on to BuddyBuddy and see if there are any friends online. If there are none, I log out and play online games. If I can find some of my friends, I talk with them for a while and invite them to play online games with me.
>
> Interview extract #6.2. C-I middle school

As Duk-Hyun describes (# 6.2.), by logging on to BuddyBuddy (an instant messenger), young people can hang out together while using the computer individually. BuddyBuddy becomes a virtual playground for students who otherwise have little time to be physically co-present. Young people's active use of the communicative new media is also due to the structure of their daily lives. As explained by Byung-Hoon below, the Korean middle school students I interviewed spend the majority of their time at school then at crammers, leaving them with little time to hang out with their peers.

---

[32] A brand of Instant Messenger which is popular amongst younger teens in Korea

> Byung-Hoon: We use BuddyBuddy because we don't have much time to hang out with our friends. We have to go to crammers after school, and there is just not enough time to talk with friends. BuddyBuddy is the only way for us to meet each other after school.
>
> Interview extract #6.3. I-S middle school

In a report on young people's internet use in the UK, Livingstone and Bober (2003) point out that being readily in touch with peers is an important factor motivating children to go online. It was the same with the young people I interviewed. Being able to stay connected with each other, thus being a member of the peer group, was an important reason for their new media use. Talking about why they insist on bringing mobile phones to school when it is not allowed, young people again emphasize the importance of being consistently accessible to peers:

> Q: Then why do you insist on bringing your mobile to school, when you are not allowed to?
>
> Hae-Ryung: Because I have an undying desire to exchange text messages with friends (giggles).
>
> In-Nah: I feel anxious about missing a text message whenever I leave my mobile back at home.
>
> Dah-Hae: Yeah, that's right. The anxiety…
>
> Yu-Jin: I might miss a call from someone…I don't want to miss an important call.
>
> Interview extract #6.4. S-H middle school

> Ja-Hyang: You know, if I accidently leave my mobile behind at home, everything is so inconvenient just because of that. Nothing goes smoothly. Nothing! Arranging a meeting, or meeting someone. Can you imagine, my entire schedule is saved in my mobile, but I don't have access to it! My life is over if my mobile breaks down.
>
> All: (agree)
>
> Yoon-Ji: It's over for you if you lost it during the break. Jung-
>
> Hue: People will think you're dead (laughs)
>
> Interview extract #6.5. E-P middle school

The young people in the interview extracts above commonly claim that they feel anxious if they don't have mobiles with them. It can be said that the anxiety is caused by their concern that they might be excluded from what is happening within the peer group at that moment. Young people's use of media in order to be included in the peer group is also shown in a study by Rich Ling and Brigitte Ytrri. Describing teenagers' use of mobile telephony, Ling and Ytrri (2002) explain that teenagers consider accessibility as an important aspect of their social life and furthermore an expression of their status in the peer circle. The mobility of mobile phone technology further expands the possibility of being within reach of each other, thus facilitating a peer group culture which can happen with little limit of time and space.

By having access to extensive networks of peers, young people construct the space where they can stay together with each other. My respondents claim that new media help them to narrow the distance between friends caused by the hectic life schedules forced upon them. However, looking into the description of their new media use, especially expressed in the form of the ‘warnings’ in their manuals[33], it can also be said that new media not only provide new opportunities but place limits by imposing implicit rules on young people’s interaction with each other. The new media peer group culture, which young people construct based on their collective use of new media, is in danger of becoming a normative culture (Taylor and Harper, 2002).

Discussions of new media, especially those being used collectively, show young people’s tendency to build up norms of use within relationships among their peers. It is important for young people to use the ‘right’ media in the ‘right’ way, so that they can be included in the peer group:

> Soh-Young: I go to Cyworld[34] from time to time, not so often. But even though I have ‘acorns[35]’, it is not fun to be in Cyworld because none of my friends are there. I tend to go for what others kids do. I guess that’s why I mainly hang out at BuddyBuddy.
>
> Interview extract #6.6. I-S middle school

During the interviews, many students compare Cyworld with BuddyBuddy. As both sites provide similar services and are both popularly used amongst young people, they often discuss how they make choices between those two sites when necessary. As Soh-Young explains (#

---

[33] Designing a media manual for teachers was one of the activities for small-group interview with students. See the methodology chapter for detailed description of the activity.

[34] Both Cyworld and BuddyBuddy provide social networking services, though Cyworld focuses on a feature named ‘mini-hompi (mini home page)’ while BuddyBuddy focuses on its IM service.

[35] “Acorn is e-money used for various fee-based services at Cyworld.” (http://common.global.cyworld.com/common/notice/notice_view.aspbbs_no=10000000&number_seq=6&search_cd=0&page=1: retrieved on Feb, 2012)

6.6.), the main reason for my respondents to choose BuddyBuddy over Cyworld is the presence of their peers. For Soh-young, BuddyBuddy is not simply an instant messenger but more the place-to-be if she wants to spend time with her friends. Looking into young people's mobile use, Ling points out that for young people 'owning the correct mobile phone is a way of confirming the correct participation in youth culture' (2004:108). It is the same with the young people I interviewed: being in the right place on the internet was a way of confirming their membership in the peer culture. Furthermore, young people's choice of 'brand' on the internet is also closely related to their generational identity. The way in which young people consider a certain internet service as 'their' generational space and how, in turn, the internet services address young people as their target audience and construct the new media space accordingly will be discussed further in the next chapter.

The young people also discuss the implicit rules ('right ways') expected amongst peers when interacting via new media with one another. For instance, when compared with other communicative new media, BuddyBuddy is defined by interviewees as a medium for building and managing friendship (see interview extract #6.24). Therefore, when young people use BuddyBuddy with peers, it is as important to abide by the rules online as it is in their offline peer relationships. Holloway and Valentine (2003) point out that online relationships share all the characteristics associated with close face-to-face ties such as being frequent, companionable, voluntary, reciprocal and supporting social and emotional needs. As BuddyBuddy is seen as a space of peer culture and a means to manage friendship, there are implicit rules or 'etiquette' (i.e. the 'right' ways of using the medium) that are similar to the norms applied in offline peer relationships.

> Soh-Young: …One thing to be careful of is not to ignore someone sending a message. If so, they could send you loads of messages in one go, asking something like "why on earth are you ignoring me?" So it's better to just tell them that you're busy when you get a message.
>
> Yea-Young: If you don't reply for a long time, you might get into an argument.
>
> …
>
> Soh-Young: If you don't log in for a long time, people put you in the "never online" group or "bad friends" group. You could also have a massive argument over why you don't come online.
>
> Yea-Young: That happened to me once. A friend sent me a message, but I was away for a meal. I did set my status as eating, but my friend didn't see it and she was like, why do you ignore me, and I told her that I went to eat, why did you not see it, and we kept on arguing. Please check the status! (laughter)
>
> Interview extract #6.7. I-S middle school

For example, when designing the manual for BuddyBuddy, Yea-Young and Soh-Young talk about the rules they have to observe and how they can get into arguments with friends if they do not do so. As with offline relationships, it is considered rude not to answer others' messages. Additionally, it is important to spend enough time on BuddyBuddy, thus showing that you are investing your time and care in the peer group. Soh-Young explains that if one does not log into the instant messenger for a long time, others will categorize him/her as 'never online' or as in the 'bad friends' group. These categories are provided as a default by BuddyBuddy (users can change the label of the categories as they wish, but they often defer to the default categories). It can be said that the structure of the medium (or the media text) and the contexts in which young people use it are both involved in the construction of young people's new media culture. (This issue will be discussed further in chapter 7).

These rules of prompt replies and consistent interaction are also applied to young people's use of SMS. One girl in the interview claimed that one should not ignore a text message one has received unless one does not care about the other person. As Ling and Yttri (2002) suggest, young people exchange 'expressive' text messages to confirm their relationship. So it is not right to ignore others' messages, however trivial the content, if one wants to maintain the relationship. However, these rules are more strictly applied to young people themselves, than to members of other generations. For example, when designing the SMS manual for teachers, students of S-H middle school joke about how adults do not always reply to their messages:

> [When discussing what to put in the 'warning' section]
>
> In-Nah: What about this? 'Don't ignore messages'. You know, most of the adults do.
>
> Dah-Hae: That's right!
>
> In-Nah: When I send my mom a text saying 'I love you', my mom doesn't reply. She just says it is a waste of money (giggles).
>
> Interview extract #6.8. S-H middle school

These young people introduce the norms of their new media peer group culture via the manual. They suggest that they benefit from the extension of peer group culture by being able to spend more time with peers thus strengthening their relationships. However, at the same time, it can be suggested that young people are under prolonged or more intensified peer pressure. The use of new media extends peer culture into young people's private space, which used to be a place where one could be free from social obligations. As suggested by many studies looking into young people's new media use, especially those focusing on social networking sites (see chapter 2.2.1.), peer group culture based on new media is often perceived as a form of 'work' or a cause of stress by young people.

6.2. Construction of young people's new media culture within contexts

As I have shown above, young people collectively make meanings of the media they use and construct their peer culture via the new media. Their collective orientations towards, and use of, new media are influenced by the various contexts in which they find themselves. In the interviews, the young people mainly discuss the economic, technological and cultural contexts in relation to their new media use. For example, the young people's decisions about which communicative medium to use are affected by the technical affordances provided by each medium (e.g. asynchrony or immediacy), economic factors such as the price of media use, and cultural contexts (e.g. peer culture, generational labelling of the media). I will start by exploring how the economic context influences young people's new media culture in the following section.

6.2.1. Economic constraints

The monetary issue is an important factor affecting young people's patterns of media use. Various studies describe cases of young people choosing SMS over phone calls due to the price plans (Ling, 2007) or young people illegally downloading mp3 files or movies for free from the internet. The young people in the interviews make their economic constraints clear. They explain about the choices they make between SMS and phone calls, IM and SMS, and about how they rearrange their television viewing schedule according to the availability of free online content. However, the young people also actively use their status as 'economically dependent students' as an excuse when justifying their 'illegal' downloads via the internet. This issue will be discussed further in chapter 8. In this chapter, I will focus on describing how young people's economic situation often limits the scope of their new media use.

Interviewees often refer to the price plan they are on to explain the choice they make amongst various communicative media:

> Byung-Hoon: I don't make calls often, because my price plan only gives me free text messages.
>
> ...
>
> Yea-Young: Well, we need to use it for phone calls anyway. We need to call our friends to make appointments.
>
> Han-Gil: I don't call but send text messages to make appointments. My price plan is a fixed one, so I can't make calls as I please.
>
> Interview extract #6.9. I-S middle school

Most of the young people's mobile phone uses are limited by the price plan they are on. Mobile service providers in Korea offers price plans for teenagers that gave them a package of text messages for a lower price. Compared with this lowered price for text messages, the price to make phone calls is usually higher. Mobile phone service providers claim that they design their monthly price plans for students in full consideration of their preferences and life styles[36]. Whether young people's pattern of mobile use initiated the design of the price plans or vice versa is not clear. However, what is clear is that young people place limits on their use of the mobile phone in order to be thrifty and to stay within the restrictions of their price plan (Ling, 2007).

Having a spending limit, and mainly depending on their parents to pay their mobile costs, puts various limits on young people's use of the mobile phone. Firstly, as most young people rely on their parents to pay their mobile bill, what young people do with their mobile and how much they use it is visible to their parents. In this way, parents gain a means to regulate young people's mobile use, which is not very common in other media.

> Q: Do you have rules on media use at home?
>
> Ji-Min: I am allowed to listen to one radio show per day, but I secretly listen to lots of radio shows. I can watch two television programmes a week, but I usually live by listening to the radio. As I am used to not watching TV, I am not so interested in television anymore. *As for the mobile, my mom told me to use only 35 [text messages] every two days.* I kept to those rules on SMS well for several months, but unfortunately couldn't this month.
>
> Hyo-Jin: I can't watch TV after 11 pm.
>
> Ji-Min: Oh, and also I can't use the computer as much as I want.

---

[36] Press release by KT explains the new price plan for young people that they expect will suit young people's needs. http://www.kt.com/pr/news_01_view.jsp?newsidx=7713 retrieved in Feb. 2012.

Hyo-Jin: For me, I always have to call my mom and ask if I can use the computer. My mom usually doesn't allow more than 30 minutes per day. But I say, I'll use it for half-an-hour and then always use it more than one hour.

Interview extract #6.10. D-S middle school, *my emphasis*

Q: Rules at home?

Hye-Soo: My mom doesn't allow me to use the internet till late, and *for the mobile there are limits because of the price plan.*

Interview extract #6.11. G-N middle school, *my emphasis*

[Media categorizing activity]

Q: Phone call with mobile phone?

All: Teachers'!

Soo-In : Yeah. Students usually go for SMS.

Joo-Young: You get scolded by your mom, if she finds out that your mobile bill is too high.

Interview extract #6.12. G-J middle school

Most of the rules they have at home are about the time and amount they use the media. The young people explain the rules they have at home, but often add that despite these rules they access media behind their parents' backs. However, unlike other media, such as radio, television or even the internet, parents can directly regulate how their children use the mobile by looking at the bill. Young people's mobile phone use can be more easily regulated and monitored by their parents/guardians due to their economic dependency.

Being conscious of their budget does not only apply to the case of mobile phones, however. The young people I interviewed also talk about controlling the length of time they can play computer games, according to the system of payment.

> Yoon-Ji: What is Mah-Bi-No-Gi?
>
> Soo-Bee: It's (an online) game. You have to pay for the hours you play. That's why you can just play it for two or three hours per day. I think lots of kids play it, especially girls.
>
> Jung-Hue: Because the game is pretty and cute.
>
> Soo-Bee: Not because it is pretty and cute. More because the characters are in 3D (three dimensional)[37].
>
> Interview extract #6.13. E-P middle school

---

[37] The dialogue between Soo-Bee (girl) and Jung-Hue (boy) also reflects discourses about the gender gap in media use. As seen in the survey and other studies, online games are often considered as 'boys' media'. When Soo-Bee claimed that 'kids, especially girls', play a particular online game, Jung-Hue labelled the game as 'girly' saying that girls like the game because it is 'pretty and cute'. Soo-Bee instantly resisted this by showing her technological approach to the game, thus opposing the preconception that girls are not good at machinery or technology.

When they discuss online games, Soo-Bee talks about a game called 'Mah-Bi-No-Gi' which is free for the first two hours per day and from then on requires users to pay hourly. She makes it clear that she only plays it for an hour or so to stay within the free-play time.

Young people's economic dependency and spending limits, often imposed by parents, prevent young people from making use of cutting-edge technology. The young people suggest that they are not always able to use all the technical functions provided by the technology and mobile services due to the limits on the money they can spend. The interview with students of D-S middle school particularly shows the gap between young people's knowledge of cutting-edge technology and their actual use of it:

> [Discussing their use of email]
>
> Ji-Min: We don't really use email.
>
> Young-Eun: Just when you register on a website.
>
> Hyo-Jin: To be honest, I used email when I didn't have a mobile phone. But now with the mobile, you can send messages on it without having to turn on the internet.
>
> Ji-Min: You can even use the internet with the mobile these days.
>
> Hyo-Jin: That's true.
>
> Interview extract #6.14. D-S middle school

Talking about their decreased use of email, these students claim that they do not use email as much as before because the process of using email is cumbersome compared to the convenience of the mobile. Ji-Min suggests that their use of mobiles would increase further as new technology enabled them to access the internet via mobiles. It seems that they are aware of and making use of the newest technology (e.g. in this case, a mobile with internet accessibility). This group also made a manual for *Nate-On,* a web browsing service on the mobile phone, which was a cutting-edge technology at the time of the interview:

> <Manual: Using the internet with "Nate-On">
>
> Reason for recommending this media:
>
> The reason for choosing browsing with Nate-On is that most teachers do not know about it and don't use it
>
> How to use it:
>
> Hold the Nate button down for a few seconds
>
> Go on Nate and select the list you want
>
> Select what you want according to the company
>
> Warning:
>
> *The cost depends on the time it is used for - the longer the time the higher the cost*
>
> It takes time to connect so take your time and be patient
>
> Make sure you press the right button on the keypad
>
> Don't panic if the monitor freezes
>
> Use (M) Play On or the Wizard to find and play games

Manual 6.1. Manual of 'Nate-On' designed by D-S middle school students, *my emphasis*

By claiming that the reason they chose to make a manual for ‘Nate-on’ was teachers’ lack of knowledge of it, Ji-Min and others stress their expertise in new technology. Not only the group interviewed in D-S middle school, but also other groups of young people I interviewed tend to position themselves higher than teachers in terms of the hierarchy of expertise in using the new media technology. However, due to their economic situation, a gap is seen between their claimed expertise and their actual use of the cutting-edge technology. While presenting the manual, Ji-Min and Hyo-Jin pick up on the issue of price, which is mentioned in the warning section of the manual:

> Ji-Min: As for 'Nate-on', you have to pay as you use it. Hyo-Jin: The fee is too high...
>
> Interview extract #6.15. D-S middle school

The brief comments of Ji-Min and Hyo-Jin suggest that ‘Nate-on’ is too costly for them to use. This shows that even though young people have more information about new technologies or services, they might not actively make use of them due to their economic constraints. On the other hand, teachers, who are considered as lacking knowledge about the newest technology, are more likely to be able to afford and own the new media. It can be suggested that there is a gap between young people's self-presentation as the media-savvy 'digital generation' and their actual new media use.

In addition, young people's pattern of new media use differs amongst them due to differences in media access and ownership. For instance, even though the majority of the young people say that they tend to multitask on their computers, some interviewees explain that they did not find multitasking practical due to the level of technology they have access to.

> Q: So how do you use BuddyBuddy?
>
> Jin-Hyuk: I turn it on and play online games. Once I get a message I reply while playing the game.
>
> Duk-Hyun I can't do it that way, because my computer is slow and everything gets so complicated if I do it that way. I focus on BuddyBuddy, and when I feel like I have had enough, I move onto playing games.
>
> Interview extract #6.16. C-I middle school

Unlike Jin-Hyuk who can play an online game and chat via IM at the same time, Duk-Hyun tends to use one medium at a time due to the low specification computer he owns. As seen from the two examples above, defining young people as the 'digital generation' often ignores the limits they inevitably have in terms of media access and use due to their social and economic status as young people, and due to the existing digital divides amongst young people.

6.2.2. Technological characteristics of different communicational media

When interacting with peers, young people make a choice regarding which medium to use amongst the various options available. In making this choice, as seen above, they consider the economic context they are in. At the same time, they consider the technical characteristics of each medium and the cultural meanings imposed on the medium. The latter issue (cultural meanings young people impose on the media) will be discussed in 6.3. In this section, I will focus on young people's discussions of the technological features of the new media they mainly use (with a particular focus on SMS and IM).

SMS vs phone calls

Young people's affinity towards mobile phones is widely reported. However, during the media categorization activity, it is interesting to see how they express their preference towards SMS and also differentiate SMS as a 'young people's medium' and making phone calls with a mobile as something for teachers. As discussed above, young people's preference for SMS over phone calls can partly be due to the economic constraints they are under. Yet in addition to the economic factor, there are also technical attributes of SMS that are often linked to their wants and needs as young people.

When the young people explain what they like about SMS compared to making calls via mobile phones, the word 'convenient/comfortable' comes up often.

> [Choosing your favourite media]
>
> Jae-Hee: My mobile phone. To make a phone call and send some SMS.
>
> Q: If you can only choose one function of the mobile?

Jae-Hee: SMS.

Q: Why?

Jae-Hee: I feel sending a text message is more *convenient* than making a phone call anyway. Also I have no limits for SMS.

Q: Do all of you think SMS is more convenient than a phone call?

All: Yeah.

Interview extract #6.17. G middle school, *my emphasis*

The Korean word they use when explaining their preference for SMS over phone calls was 'pyun-ha-da' which can be translated as both 'convenient' and 'comfortable'. For example, during the manual designing activity, Ji-Nah spells out both convenience and comfort as the reason why her group decided to recommend SMS to teachers.

[Explaining why they decided to recommend SMS to teachers]

Ji-Nah: There are lots of advantages when using SMS. You can say things that you might feel uncomfortable saying over the phone. And if you are ever in danger, you can solve the problem quietly if you know how to use SMS quickly (jokingly).

Interview extract #6.18. D-S middle school

As seen in Ji-Nah's explanation, SMS provides young people with a space where they can feel emotionally safe, where they can say things that they wouldn't feel comfortable saying directly 'over the phone'. In addition, for young people, SMS is considered as more convenient than a phone call in the sense that it provides them with technical affordances to be 'quick' and discreet. Unlike Ji-Nah, most students in the interview do not specify if they mean 'emotional comfort' or 'technical convenience' when they use the word 'pyun-ha-da'. When probed what they mean by 'pyun-ha-da', some focus on the convenient side of SMS and others the emotional 'comfort' it provides.

When describing SMS as a convenient medium, young people mention its mobility and asynchrony. Unlike when they try to contact others by making phone calls, with text messages young people can simply send their messages and wait for the other person to reply whenever he/she reads them. Therefore, as seen from the interview extract below, SMS is considered as an unobtrusive medium that suits young people's lifestyle as it provides them with an asynchronous means of communication on a mobile platform.

> [Discussing the manual they designed - SMS]
>
> Q: Why have you chosen to recommend SMS [to teachers]?
>
> Dah-Bin: Say you have to ask the teacher about the homework, isn't it more *convenient* to send a text message than making a phone call every time? *Once you learn how to use SMS*, it is much more convenient.
>
> Q: All of you think that SMS is more convenient?
>
> Hye-Soo: I use SMS, otherwise my mobile fee will be too high.
>
> Ji-young: Yeah. Also your friend might be in a situation where she can't answer the phone, like she might be in a class. In that case, it is better for you to send a text message.
>
> Q: You send text messages during class because you can't make a phone call?

> All: giggles
>
> Interview extract #6.19. G-N middle school, *my emphasis*

Not only is SMS economically affordable for young people (Hye-Soo), it is less obtrusive and thus more suitable for them (Ji-Young). The mobility of the mobile phone and the asynchrony of SMS are well suited to teenagers' hectic schedules. As mentioned before, most teenagers in Korea go to private 'crammer' institutions after school. They carry the mobile with them all the time to keep in touch with their friends and family. Young people can always send a text message which would not interfere with the other person's schedule. Using this technology young people have found a way to communicate with each other constantly and more conveniently.

However, as Dah-Bin explains in the interview quoted above (#6.19), although SMS is a convenient technology, there is also a level of skill that users have to learn first. Both students and teachers in the interviews express this view that knowing how to send SMS requires skills that are unique to young people.

> [Media categorizing activity]
>
> Q: You don't think teachers use SMS?
>
> Soo-Bee: If you consider the frequency...For example, do our parents use SMS? Don't they usually use a phone call?

> Jung-Hue: In the case of parents or teachers, they are not used to sending text messages. They usually just go for the call button and say stuff like 'I am here at blah blah and do you want to blah blah?'
>
> Soo-Bee: Yeah, kids are *faster* like this (pretending to type text messages with one hand).
>
> Interview extract #6.20. E-P middle school, *my emphasis*

Soo-Bee and Jung-Hue also make the point that adults in general would rather call each other than use SMS. Young people identify SMS as a convenient medium, but one that requires a certain level of skill. In their view, adults are missing out on a convenient technology due to their lack of skills. They explain that adults are not used to sending text messages whilst the young people are so used to it that they could text 'faster' than adults and even 'type text messages with one hand'. This description of adults' and young people's new media use reflects that of the popular discourse about the 'digital generation' and 'digital immigrant adults' discussed in chapter 1. For instance, 'fast' was a feature often cropping up in the journalistic discourse defining young people as the 'digital generation'. During the interviews, young people often make use of the 'digital generation' discourse to claim that they have more expertise than adults (i.e. teachers) related to the new media. Another example can be seen in the case of interviewees at D-S middle school (see the discussion of manual #6.1.). As such, young people's self-presentation and positioning as 'experts' is shown throughout the interviews. This issue will be discussed further in the following chapters.

In addition to presenting SMS as a convenient technology suitable to their daily lives, the young people describe it as a 'comfortable' medium as it provides them with an 'emotional buffer' when communicating with each other. The asynchrony of SMS enables young people to maintain a distance without having to confront the other person.

> [Discussing whether they tend to use voice calls or SMS and why]
>
> Q: Why have you picked SMS not phone calls [as a favourite medium]?
>
> ...
>
> Young-Eun: *...I feel more at ease when sending text message than when I make a phone call.* You know, you can say stuff that you can't on the phone by using text messages. Something like...Things that aren't easy to say. For example, if something bad happened to your family, it is a bit awkward to say on the phone. You can say those things using SMS.
>
> Ji-Nah: It is also good when you confess your feelings. (jokingly)
>
> Interview extract #6.21. D-S middle school, *my emphasis*

As in the case of Young-Eun and Ji-Nah, several of the young people in the interviews describe how they can talk about things via SMS that they might not be able to talk about in person. They can avoid the embarrassment or the awkwardness that could be caused by spoken conversation. Based on their interviews with teenagers in Norway, Ling and Yttri (2002) also point out that one of the main attractions of SMS to young people is that there is no need to see the other person, nor is it possible for the object to be intercepted by other friends or one's teacher. They argue that interaction through SMS enables young people to interact more carefully, with a know-how which is not available in face-to-face situations.

IM vs email

Like SMS, the instant messenger (IM), identified by young people as their 'own' medium, is considered as providing young people with an alternative mode of communication. The young people in the interviews often mention that they can communicate more easily via IM using expressive tools such as emoticons.

> Soh-Won: There are things you wouldn't like to say to others' faces. When you talk on BuddyBuddy, you can talk about embarrassing stuff more comfortably using emoticons.
>
> Interview extract #6.22. I-S middle school

Instant messenger gives young people a feeling of talking face-to-face due to its synchrony. On the other hand, unlike face-to-face communication it provides them with a space where they can more comfortably bring up awkward subjects. It can be argued that young people prefer SMS and IM to other communicational media due to their potential to allow them closeness and distance at the same time.

However, despite mentioning these two new media as their own media and their preferred mode of communication, young people perceive there to be differences between SMS and IM based on their economic and technological characteristics. Compared to SMS, exchanged via mobile phones, an instant messenger, operating on the internet (mainly via PC), is considered 'free' (this identification of the internet will be discussed further in chapter 8). Being a free and immobile medium, IM becomes a private space for young people. Unlike SMS, parents hardly control its use on economic grounds. In addition, as Eu-Jin mentions below (# 6.23), due to the synchrony of IM, young people can be assured that the other person will receive their message at the very moment they send it:

> [Explaining the reason why they recommend BuddyBuddy]
>
> Eu-Jin: You know, BuddyBuddy is...For example, with SMS there is a chance you won't get the message, but not with BuddyBuddy. You get the message without any mistakes via BuddyBuddy.
>
> Interview extract #6.23. S-H middle school

As the internet is considered free and the synchrony of IM assures that their peers are online, the young people in the interview point out that IM enables them to 'just drop a line' and 'make small talk' (#6.24), thus enabling them to build stronger friendships. Young people's identification of IM as a medium for 'friendship' becomes clear when looking into the way in which young people differentiate IM from emails.

Instant messenger and email are both communicative new media mainly operating on the internet. However, as discussed by Han-Gil and others below, exchanging emails is not considered as a media practice helping friendships in the way IM does.

> Yea-Young: [M]ost of our friends are online, so it is better to use BuddyBuddy when you just want to drop a line. It is useful when you are making small talk.

> Your friendships get better as well. You can talk for a long time when you talk over BuddyBuddy.
>
> ...
>
> Han-Gil: I use email every day. But to be honest with you, email doesn't have much to do with strengthening relationships with friends.
>
> Yea-Young: I don't use email much, because it is less convenient than IM. Soh-
>
> won: I only exchange email with friends who don't IM.
>
> Q: So you all prefer IM to email? Byung-
>
> Hoon: Yeah.
>
> Q: What would you say is the strength of IM over email? Han-
>
> Gil: That you can exchange messages quickly.

Interview extract #6.24. I-S middle school

Han-Gil says that he prefers IM to email because of the immediacy of it. The immediacy and synchrony of IM are attributes that make IM similar to a face-to-face situation. In addition, as Yea-Young explains, young people consider IM as a space where they can hang out with each other and chat without necessarily having to communicate substantive content with each other (i.e. phatic communication). The phatic characteristics of young people's online conversations are often pointed out in other studies (e.g. Drotner, 2005; Livingstone, 2009). As for email, most of my respondents explain that they do not use email often. As Suh-Young says in the interview extract below (#6.25.), young people consider email as a medium to use when it is necessary to attach files (e.g. images, document files etc.) (#6.27.). This leads them to identify email as a work-related medium and furthermore a 'teachers' medium' (#6.27.).

However, young people's understandings of the media are influenced not only by the technological attributes of the media but also the media environment in which they are situated. For instance, describing the reasons for preferring IM to emails, the young people I met at C-I middle school mention risk as a factor preventing them from using emails more frequently:

[Media categorizing activity]

Q: You've put email under teachers' media?

Sun-Hye: Yes, we use BuddyBuddy or SMS more than emails. Suh-

Young: I just use email when I ask for some files.

Jin-Hyuk: I don't check my email. It is too troublesome to check them and even to delete them. I have about 400 emails piled up in my inbox!!

Sun-Hye: I just log in and erase the first several hundred of them. Duk-

Hyun: I have 547 emails!

Q: So you're saying those are all junk mail? Duk-

Hyun: Yeah.

Suh-Young: You know...Boys. Because they are going through puberty (giggles). So they get tons of that kind of spam mail. But they don't check them.

Duk-Hyun: (with fake sigh) Yeah, those kinds of mail.

Girls: I don't get those.

Jin-Hyuk: I do. But I erase them immediately because my computer might get a virus from them.

Duk-Hyun: Me too.

Interview extract #6.25. C-I middle school

The young people in the interview complain about the amount of junk mail they receive through their email accounts. They explain that the junk mail often included pornographic material which might include a 'virus' that would harm their computers. It can be said that young people's preference for IM over email is influenced also by this aspect of the media environment which leads them to feel safer communicating via IM rather than using their email accounts.

In addition, young people's discussions about 'risks' in this extract gives an idea about the way in which they construct the 'digital generation' identity. Young people in the interviews present themselves as media-savvy when talking about the issues related to their new media use that adults are concerned about. For instance, they ironically present themselves as ‘in the know’ about adults’ concerns related to ‘addiction’ to new media. In the interview extract above, interviewees take a reflexive, often ironic, stance in relation to the risks they encounter when using the new media and how they can deal with them. It can be said that, in relation with adults, young people tend to define themselves as a ‘digital generation’ who are more knowledgable than adults and who are capable of handling the 'risks' adults worry about (Davies, 2008). It is only when they talk about their new media use amongst peers (especially related to the implicit rules they have to keep) that they describe the anxieties or stress they feel.

Co-construction of young people and new media

As seen above, young people define the meanings of new media by considering the technical features of the media and the cultural, economic and media contexts they are in. However, at the same time, young people’s understanding and perceptions of new media influence the development and construction of those media. In other words, young people and new media co-construct each other. An example of this co-construction can be seen in young people's description of their preferred features of BuddyBuddy.

The young people in the interviews consider the asynchronous characteristic of SMS as a feature that suits their everyday life routines. Due to their affinity towards the flexibility provided by the asynchronous communication, BuddyBuddy, an instant messenger popular amongst younger teens, picked up on the asynchronous feature. It incorporated the function of 'sending notes', which allows users asynchrony similar to SMS.

As shown in the figure below, when they use BuddyBuddy, users can either send a note (left) or open up a dialogue window (right). By sending a note, they don't have to keep a window open and wait for the other person to reply. They can send notes to as many friends as they like. Once the person replies to the note, they can start talking within a dialogue window.

THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

Figure 6.1. Online guide to sending notes or opening a dialogue window in BuddyBuddy[38]

Respondents in my interviews point out that the 'sending note' function is a distinctive feature of BuddyBuddy which is not provided by other popular instant messengers such as MSN messenger (see chapter 7 for a further comparison of the two instant messengers).

---

[38] http://messenger.buddybuddy.co.kr/msgr/guide/guide.asp#03 retrieved in Feb. 2012.

> Yoon-Ji: If you use BuddyBuddy when you are in high school, you look immature. My [elder] sister always looks down on it, saying that it is just for kids.
>
> Soo-Bee: But we prefer being immediate and fast. Log-in fast and talk fast. It is better to send a note to everyone you want to talk to than starting up a chat window.
>
> Interview extract #6.26. E-P middle school

When justifying her use of BuddyBuddy, despite it being seen as an 'immature' medium, Soo-Bee points out that young people prefer using BuddyBuddy because it offers 'immediate and fast' communication. Rather than having to 'start up a chat window' and wait until the other replies, they can 'send notes to everyone' who is logged in, then go on with what they are doing till the other person answers the note. This note sending function, unique to BuddyBuddy messenger, is similar to that of SMS in a sense that it allows users time and space to reply as it suits their time schedule rather than having to reply as soon as they get the message.

The fact that BuddyBuddy, which was mainly used by young people, incorporated this asynchronous function shows how users' wants and needs influence the development of new media. This example of social shaping of technology is also pointed out by Livingstone and Bober (2003) when they explain how young people's ways of using the internet for communication between acquaintances rather than strangers, led to the shift of popularity from chat services to IM services.

As seen above, young people collectively interpret the media they use based on the economic, technological and cultural contexts in which they find themselves. In addition, young people put 'generational' markers on these media by differentiating them from the media used by teachers. The following sections will look in more detail at young people's 'generationing' of their new media culture as opposed to teachers' new media use.

6.3. Generationing: Labelling the technology with generational markers

As discussed in chapter 5, my survey data show that both teachers and students were active users of the internet. The 'media generation gap' was not in the media they use, but rather in the purpose of their media use and their orientations towards the media. For instance, young people used the internet as an entertainment-oriented medium, whereas teachers mainly considered it as a work-related medium. During the interviews, I probed the young people's understanding of the new media they define as their own and how they differentiate 'young people's media' from 'teachers' media'.

In the previous section, I discussed how young people expressed their preference towards IM when comparing it to other internet-based communicative media (like email). In the following interview extract, interviewees at G-J middle school put email in the 'teachers' media' category and also explain why they prefer IM to email. However, their interpretations of IM compared to email are not confined to their views of these two media, but rather reflect broader perceptions of how their new media culture differs from that of teachers'.

[Media categorizing activity]

Q: How about email?

Joo-Young: I think email is a teacher's medium.

Yeoh-Bin: Yes, they use it to send pictures.

Soo-In: Teachers use email more to send work files as attachments.

Joo-Young: Students prefer IM to email.

Q: Why?

Yeoh-Bin: You never know when they are going to check their email.

Soo-In: And you also have to write a long piece.

Yeoh-Bin: And you have to memorize/know their email address as well.

Q: Don't you have to know others' BuddyBuddy IDs when you want to talk to them?

Yeoh-Bin: Well, BuddyBuddy IDs are short; it is only six characters long.

Soo-In: With BuddyBuddy or the mobile, you can speak briefly with short sentences just like real conversation, but with email you have to make it long.

Interview extract #6.27. G-J middle school

When explaining why they prefer using IM over email, these interviewees point out several attributes that can be understood as generational markers. BuddyBuddy, which is seen as a young person's medium, is more immediate, easier to use and like 'real conversation'; whereas email, a teacher's medium, is work-related and functional, responses are less immediate than IM, and more like writing ('literacy') than talking ('orality').

However, looking closely into their discussion, it can be said that some parts of young people's understanding of these media are based on their perceptions about the medium rather than on objective criteria. For instance, Yeoh-Bin (# 6.27) claims that email is more difficult to use than BuddyBuddy because one has to 'memorize' others' email addresses. However, when probed if this is not also the case for BuddyBuddy IDs, she says that a Buddy ID is easier to remember because it is made up of only 'six characters', which can also be the case for an email address.

As mentioned above, these generational perceptions or markers young people put on IM and email are applicable to the media they identify as their own and as belonging to their teachers. Firstly, young people argue that their new media are for phatic communication and sociable use, rather than work-related and functional use. As discussed in the first part of this chapter, young people's main purpose in using the new media is to interact with peers and constantly keep in contact with each other. In the report about teenagers and their use of new media in the UK, Livingstone and Bober (2005) suggests that even though the content of their conversation is mostly mundane, being in constant contact with friends is highly valued.

This phatic use of new media by students is not only pointed out by students but also by teachers. For example, Ms Cho, an English teacher in S-I middle school, suggests that using communicational new media, such as SMS, for phatic communication was a distinct 'play culture' of young people (see chapter 9, interview extract #9.7.). In addition, when a group of teachers explains how they communicate with students via mobile phones, they also emphasize the students' phatic use of new media:

> [Teachers talking about young people's SMS use and exchanging messages with students]
>
> Jun: Kids use SMS a lot. Their price plans usually allow them an unlimited number of text messages. In fact, they use text messages more than phone-calls.
>
> Yang: [When talking to them,] I get impatient and just call them 'So, what I meant was…' (laughs).
>
> Jun: Kids automatically go for text messages. I never reply to them. There are some kids who send lots of messages just out of habit.
>
> Lee: Yes, for kids, SMS is more convenient than actually talking in person.
>
> Jun: Yeah, kids…Also it doesn't cost them much.
>
> Lee: But it can also become a means of communication between teachers and students. When a student played truant or ran away from home, I sometimes sent them warm messages [via SMS]. Most of them replied to my message, saying something like 'I'm sorry…' or so on.
>
> Jun: That works on chatting [via BuddyBuddy] as well. I once caught a kid who ran away from home on BuddyBuddy.

Interview extract #6.28. Korean language teachers (media education study group)

Teachers in the interview differentiate their patterns of mobile phone use from young people's. Miss Jun comments that young people send SMS 'out of habit'. It implies that she thinks students do not send text messages because they have anything to say. It is not for purposeful communication, but rather for phatic communication. However, Miss Lee points out the possibility for teachers to communicate better with young people by taking part in young people's new media culture. Her descriptions of how she uses SMS to communicate with students who have problems show how teachers are starting to use young people's media for more intimate communication. Teachers' and students' forms of communication via new media will be discussed further in the next chapter.

In addition to focusing on phatic communication, young people identify their new media use as 'sociable'. The survey data also showed that the young people consider the media they mostly use (internet and mobile phone) as sociable media. The internet is actively used as a sociable medium by young people when they are with their friends as much as when they are by themselves. The internet and mobiles were chosen as the media they are most likely to use when they are together with their friends (see 5.2.4).

Like the survey findings, the interview data suggest that even though new technologies offer users mobility, portability and individualized platforms of use, young people tend to use them not only individually but also in sociable ways. For instance, despite the mobile phone generally being perceived as an individualized communicative medium at the time of the interviews, young people interpreted it as a sociable medium. Young people in the interviews describe their mobile as not only a communicative device, but also as a gadget with functions such as an mp3 player, digital camera and game player that they can enjoy with their peers and also use to kill time (see figure 8.1. and interview extract #9.5.). In addition, at the time of the interviews, not all respondents owned mobile phones. In this situation, they tend to share others' mobile phones, which can also be seen as contributing to their understanding of the mobile phone as a sociable medium.

The young people also use the aspect of ‘playfulness’ to differentiate their new media usage from adults’. For example, they argue that young people themselves usually take pictures for fun, but teachers take them ‘only when necessary’ and in a more ‘serious’ way.

> [During the categorizing activity]
>
> Q: What about a digital camera?
>
> Byung-Hoon: That’s for us.
>
> Han-Gil: I think we both [teachers and students] use it at about the same rate.
>
> Yea-Young: I take lots of pictures using the digital camera with my friends when I travel with them.
>
> Soh-Won: Lots of us carry digital cameras with us as well as mobile phones. The difference is adults only take necessary pictures, while we take pictures for fun. For example, we take pictures like ‘suicide’. You know, setting up a scene where a bunch of us lie down on the desk and act like we are dead.
>
> Interview extract #6.29. I-S middle school

When discussing whether they would categorize the digital camera as a teachers’ medium or a students’ medium, these interviewees make an interesting distinction. They say that teachers and young people both use digital cameras and mobile phones to take pictures. Therefore, the digital camera can be categorized as either a students’ or a teachers’ medium. The difference is in the way they take pictures. As described by Soh-Won above, unlike adults, young people take pictures 'for fun'. For young people, taking a picture is often a fun and collective act amongst peers, where they decide a theme, such as ‘suicide’, and act it out. Young people also often talk about how they have their unique way of taking pictures of themselves using the mobile phone:

> [When presenting the manual for mobile phones]
>
> Yeo-Bin: This is the most important thing. My favourite feature of the mobile, taking pictures. The angle is all that matters. You must take the picture using ‘ul-jjang [slang for ‘most beautiful face’]’ angle, which is 45 degrees. Otherwise, your picture will look exactly like yourself, like you-know-who’s picture (teasing the girl next to her jokingly, all giggle). If you have a bad complexion, you must put it in a brighter mode to cover it up. This way your picture will look much better than you do.
>
> Interview extract #6.30. G-J middle school

As seen from previous examples, young people often define their new media culture as 'fun', even subversive, and not so serious. In the following extract, Yea-Young describes her daily use of media. She talks about how she enjoys reading internet fiction. As several students point out in the interviews, reading internet fiction is discouraged by teachers or parents because it is considered as childish or trivial compared to published fiction. It is interesting to see how she defends her preference for internet fiction comparing it with published fiction:

> [Explaining her daily use of media]

> Yea-Young: I use my mobile with friends to take pictures, or use SMS to exchange messages....I also make calls with my mobile to have a long conversation. As for a book...I read internet fiction a lot. Internet fiction is more interesting, compared to difficult fiction, because it is written in simple language and computer lingo.
>
> ...
>
> Soh-Won: Adults say that they don't understand it and also ask us what the point of reading it is. But for us, it is fun and much better than serious novels.
>
> Interview extract #6.31. I-S middle school

Yea-Young claims internet fiction is 'more interesting', and not as 'difficult' as published fiction because internet fiction is written in 'simple language and computer lingo' that are closer to young people's language ('orality'). Soh-Won also joins in claiming that they read internet fiction because it is more 'fun' and 'better than *serious* novels' ('literacy'). In addition, as in the case of Soh-Won quoted above, young people mention these generational identifications of media when defending their new media culture against adults' disapproval.

In sum, young people generationally identify the characteristics of young people's new media as being used for phatic communication, sociable and playful interactions, and also as being 'fun' and closer to their real lives. They often define the characteristics of their new media culture by opposing them to teachers' media use. This 'othering' of teachers' media culture from young people's new media culture might also reflect a broader opposition between young people's out-of-school culture and school culture. The process of young people labelling their own media culture shows how they approach their own culture as fun and more relevant to their life, while labelling the school culture as 'difficult' and 'serious'.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I looked into how young people construct their new media culture within various contexts, and explored young people's generational identification in relation to new media.

The contextual factors discussed in this chapter (i.e. the economic, technical and cultural contexts in which young people's media use takes place) all contribute to young people's perceptions of, and orientations towards, media and their construction of their media culture. This challenges the technological deterministic stance, showing that young people's new media culture involves their active interpretation of media, and that it is influenced by the social contexts in which it is located. However, the interview data suggest that the orientations towards new media that are agreed upon by peers and the implicit rules that operate in using these media are visible only to young people. The young people in the interviews did not expect adults to follow the implicit rules they mentioned. For instance, they did not expect their parents to respond to their SMS, while responding to messages as soon as possible was a rule frequently mentioned amongst young people themselves. 'Othering' their new media culture from that of other generations (i.e. adults, especially teachers in this case) is one way in which young people construct their generational identities in relation to media.

In chapter 5, I discussed how both students and teachers are involved in constructing the 'digital generation' discourse by mutually stereotyping each other's media use. Interview data analysed in this chapter show the ways in which young people define their new media culture as opposed to that of teachers. Young people tend to put 'generational markers' on the new media they use. For instance, when describing IM as their own media and email as a teachers' medium, my respondents argued that communicating via instant messaging is 'easy', 'fun' and like real conversation ('closer to real life') or talking to each other ('orality'), and is mainly used for phatic communication; whereas email is 'difficult', 'work-related', like writing ('literacy'), 'formal', 'serious' and 'functional'. These characteristics young people identify with IM and email can be extended to their perceptions of young people's new media culture and teachers' new media culture in general (e.g. taking photos to record versus for fun; teachers' valuing 'serious' novels versus young people's preference for internet fiction that is easier and closer to their daily lives). Young people mention these generational identifications of media in seeking to defend their new media culture – a culture that is often devalued (or disapproved of) by teachers (e.g. internet fiction, the language young people use in SMS or IM, etc.).

In addition to their generational identification of new media, the young people often made use of 'digital generation' discourses when discussing their new media use, especially in comparison to teachers'. Young people tend to place themselves higher up the hierarchy than teachers in terms of their knowledge in relation to new media. When my respondents discussed their new media use amongst themselves, they assumed that they all had the necessary skills for media use. Therefore, they tended to focus only on the cultural dimensions of the new media they use (implicit rules they are expected to follow etc.); whereas, when they talked about teachers' use of new media, they tended to emphasize teachers' lack of skills.

However, the data discussed in this chapter show that young people are not always in a situation where they can access and make use of the cutting-edge technology to become more knowledgeable than teachers about new media. The economic constraints placed upon young people prevent them from using new media technology that is introduced at a high price (e.g. features provided by high-tech mobile phones). In addition, media usage amongst young people also varies due to the difference in the level of technology young people own. It can be suggested that teachers generally have economic capital that enables them to own such media; whereas young people claim to have cultural capital (i.e. updated information and know-how regarding new media technology), positioning themselves as the 'digital generation'.

Following this broad-ranging introduction, the following three chapters will focus on three specific media that young people identify as their own. Each chapter will work as a case study of young people's construction of generational identity in relation to media: chapter 7 looks at young people's use of instant messaging, chapter 8 peer to peer networks and chapter 9 mobile phones. In chapter 7, I will examine how young people construct their 'private' space on a public platform (in this case, the internet) by looking at the case of BuddyBuddy.

Chapter 7. Young people's construction of a generationally exclusive space on the internet: the case of BuddyBuddy

Introduction

As mentioned in the previous chapter, young people in the interviews described BuddyBuddy (an instant messaging service that was popular amongst teenagers in Korea at the time of the interviews) as a 'place they go to meet their friends', or the 'space they hang out with friends'. Though the main feature of BuddyBuddy is the instant messenger, it also provides users with their personal spaces (e.g. my homepage, my folder, my favourites, etc.; see 7.1.2. for a textual analysis of the medium) and in this sense is comparable to a social networking site like Facebook or MySpace. Unlike other communicative new media such as mobile phones or emails, BuddyBuddy functions both as a personal communication medium and a shared cultural space amongst young people. When looking into young people's discussions about BuddyBuddy, I focus on how they construct it as their exclusive generational territory in collaboration with media service providers (i.e. at the level of media text and production, as discussed in Chapter 3) and with their peers who agree upon the implicit generational rules.

7.1. Constructing generational boundaries

7.1.1. Young people's interpretation of the medium: the image of BuddyBuddy

Various instant messaging (IM) services, such as MSN messenger or Nate-On (an IM which is linked with the Cyworld service), and social networking sites such as Cyworld are also mentioned by young people during the interviews. However, my respondents tend to identify BuddyBuddy as their own medium (a younger teen's medium), while describing MSN messenger or Cyworld as older teens' or even adults' new media. It can be said that the brand of media they use, in other words, the place they hang out, becomes a means to 'other' different generations and claim their generational membership (i.e. 'generationing'). For instance, when comparing BuddyBuddy with MSN messenger (IM) or Cyworld (SNS), young people describe the image of BuddyBuddy as being 'childish'.

> Suh-Young: BuddyBuddy is for primary students and Cyworld is for secondary students.
>
> Duk-Hyun: That's true.
>
> Q: Why do you think so?
>
> Suh-Young: I mean, BuddyBuddy...it is too 'cho-ding'[39] like.
>
> Duk-Hyun: But we use BuddyBuddy most anyway.
>
> Suh-Young: Yeah. We used it from the beginning. It is too troublesome to switch to another thing now.

Interview extract #7.1. C-I middle school

> Soh-Young: I go to Cyworld from time to time, not so often. But even though I have 'acorns' [a cyber currency used in Cyworld], it is not fun to be in Cyworld because none of my friends are there. I tend go for what others kids do. I guess that's why I mainly hang out at BuddyBuddy.

Interview extract #7.2. I-S middle school

---

[39] 'Cho-ding' is a derogatory word for elementary school students. It comes from the word 'cho- deung' which means 'elementary'. In Korean cyberspace, people who make childish or nonsensical remarks are labelled as 'cho-ding'.

As seen in interview extract #7.1., young people are aware of BuddyBuddy being labelled as 'childish' by others, and agree with this to some degree. However, as Suh-Young (#7.1) and Soh-Young (#7.2.) explain, the possibility of co-presence with peers keeps young people using BuddyBuddy despite the label.

Not only young people themselves, but also other generations are involved in the 'generationing' of a medium. Young people in the interviews often discuss how other generations, especially their elder siblings, view their media use:

> Yoon-Ji: If you use BuddyBuddy when you are in high school, you look immature. My [elder] sister always looks down on it, saying that it is just for kids.
>
> Soo-Bee: But we prefer being immediate and fast. Log-in fast and talk fast. It is better to send a note to everyone you want to talk to than starting up a chat window.

Interview extract #7.3. E-P middle school

Yoon-Ji, like most of the others, talks about the childish image that BuddyBuddy has. Her comment shows how older teenagers attempt to differentiate their media uses from those of younger teens. Soo-Bee, on the other hand, is the only one in the interviews who tries to justify her use of BuddyBuddy by explaining its technical features. Comparing the technical features of two instant messengers, she claims that 'young people's' preference for immediacy led them to choose BuddyBuddy over MSN messenger. Her comments echo the claims commonly made in popular discourses about the 'digital generation' (e.g. the digital generation prefers new media that provide them with immediacy and fast interaction). She uses the word 'we' as representing 'young people', as distinct from adults and older teenagers, as well.

Unlike Soo-Bee, some of the interviewees, for example Doo-Won in the interview extract below, talk about trying to switch to MSN which he considers as a medium for older teens:

> Q: So all of you use BuddyBuddy?
>
> A: Yep.
>
> Doo-Won: I tried switching to MSN once...but couldn't because MSN was too complicated and troublesome.
>
> Interview extract #7.4. G middle school

However, without going into technical details, he simply claims that MSN is too complicated. His comment reflects the tendency of young people to consider an 'adult's medium' as complicated and difficult, whereas a 'young people's medium' is fun and easy, almost 'childish' and silly (see chapter 6.3.).

The young people in the interviews suggest that it is hard for them to move on to another IM because they have grown up with BuddyBuddy and all their friends are still there. However, in their discussion, they often imply that BuddyBuddy is a medium they enjoy now, but a medium that they would eventually outgrow when they become older. The discussion between interviewees at D-S middle school quoted below shows how young people assign different generations to different media.

Ji-Nah: Some teachers use BuddyBuddy, but mainly students use it.

Hyo-Jin: Not just students, young students, students up until middle school.

Ji-Nah: Some high school students use BuddyBuddy too?

Hyo-Jin: But they usually go for MSN when they become high school students.

Q: Why is it so?

Hyo-Jin: Because, it seems like...well, BuddyBuddy is like for children, MSN is for adults.

Interview extract #7.5. D-S middle school

Unlike BuddyBuddy, which is always categorized as a young person's medium, Cyworld is on the border between adults and young people, and is often classified in a terms of a new category of 'university students'. Interestingly, during the interviews, the young people were more critical of people's use of Cyworld compared to their use of their BuddyBuddy homepage, identifying Cyworld as an older teens' medium, thus detaching themselves from the Cyworld culture. This may have enabled them to make negative remarks.

[Discussing Cyworld]

> Soo-Bee: I visit Cyworld only when other friends ask me to leave comments on their homepages. I think they are too obsessed with it anyway.
>
> Jah-Hyang: My [elder] sister is like that too. She repeatedly logs in and out over 10 times.
>
> Soo-Bee: Just to increase the visitor count.
>
> Jung-Hue: People always ask each other to leave a message on their guestbooks.

Interview extract #7.5. E-P middle school

My respondents are aware of the Cyworld homepage and talk about the pressure either they or other users (mainly their siblings) feel when maintaining a Cyworld homepage. In contrast to the example where students tease each other for not having many visitors on their BuddyBuddy homepage (see interview extract #8.18), in this case, they criticize Cyworld users' attempts to increase the number of visitors as an 'obsessive' act.

While criticizing older teens or young adults' use of new media such as Cyworld, young people often talk about being influenced by older teens' (in most cases, their elder siblings') media culture. Mr Yoon, a Korean language teacher I interviewed, suggests that the involvement in a certain website or internet service can be seen as a matter of following the trend. He explains how the younger generation follows a trend which in turn makes older generations move on to another media service:

> Yoon: When Cyworld started to become popular, I mean at the early stage of Cyworld's diffusion, it was mainly [people in their] 20s or 30s who used it. But

> these days, kids use it too. High school students have started to take it over. These days, younger kids started joining in managing and decorating their own mini-hompi. I think the younger generations are using Cyworld as a way to imitate the older generation.
>
> Jun: Older people these days are moving from Cyworld to Blogging such as Naver Blog.
>
> Interview extract #7.6. Korean language teachers (media education study group)

Mr Yoon's point about the generational transfer of cultural capital is supported by Jin-Cheol's comment below. He suggests that his take-up of Cyworld is influenced by his elder brother.

> Dong-Hyun: I have an account on Cyworld, but don't use it often. Jin-Cheol: I use it often, mainly because my [elder] brother uses it.
>
> Interview extract #7.7. S-C middle school

My respondents also mention the use of Cyworld as a proof of being 'trendy'. When discussing whether to categorize Cyworld as a teachers' medium or a students' medium, this notion of taking up Cyworld as an act of following the trend is revealed:

> [Discussing how to categorize Cyworld]
>
> Soo-Bee: I have never seen any over 40s who use Cyworld. Jah-Hyang: Well, quite a lot of them do.

Soo-Bee: It is mainly 20s who use it. Once you consider over 30s, there are not many people who use it. Because, people who follow the trend use it, and those who don't, don't.

Jah-Hyang: So it doesn't really matter how old they are.

Soo-Bee: Well, but younger people tend to try following the trend. Jah-

Hyang: Not many of us use it...

Yoon-Ji: Let's just put it under students'.

Interview extract #7.8. E-P middle school

The interviewees are having trouble categorizing Cyworld. Unlike BuddyBuddy, which is clearly a young person's medium, Cyworld is used by various age groups. They propose that people who are aware of the trend, or who are trendsetters, use Cyworld. Soo-Bee claims that 'younger people' (in their 20s) tend to keep up with the trend, as distinct from 'older people' (over 30). Her comment reveals how young people position themselves or older teens through comparisons with teachers or adults. For them, it is the younger generations (teenagers or young adults) who are keen on being trendy, and thus have more cultural capital and knowledge of the culture compared to older adults. As this suggests, young people's perceptions of the 'generation gap' are more nuanced than the binary approach opposing young people to adults.

Coming back to young people's descriptions of BuddyBuddy, it can be said that the 'childish' image of BuddyBuddy functions as a generational boundary. The implicit label of 'childishness' is used to prevent older generations from trespassing into young people's realm, rather than keeping young people away from it. Teachers also comment that they are aware of BuddyBuddy being a medium for younger teens. This general understanding of BuddyBuddy leads to the exclusion of other generations, especially older generations.

However, these generational boundaries are constructed not only by young people but also with the collaboration of media service providers. In the next section, following the cultural circuit approach (see chapter 3), I will briefly examine the media text and production elements of BuddyBuddy, alongside MSN messenger, which is often mentioned by young people in comparison.

7.1.2. Texts and production of BuddyBuddy in comparison with MSN messenger

As mentioned above, not only the understanding and the use of a medium by young people, but also the intention of producers and the textual design of the medium play important parts in its construction as a generational space. Young people in the interviews often compare BuddyBuddy to MSN messenger when describing its characteristics as 'childish' yet fun and easy to use.

The following images are a snapshot of two IM services mentioned by young people: the left one is MSN messenger run by Microsoft, the right one is BuddyBuddy messenger run by a Korean company named BuddyBuddy Corporation.

THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

Figure 7.1. Snapshots of MSN messenger (left) and BuddyBuddy messenger (right)

Firstly, I will compare the text of BuddyBuddy and MSN messenger by looking at aspects of the textual design such as colour, fonts and avatars. As mentioned in the previous section, young people describe BuddyBuddy as a medium with a ‘childish’ image. When compared to the textual design of MSN messenger (which was defined as ‘for adults’ and ‘a complicated medium’), the difference can be seen in the colours they use and design of the icons and avatars. BuddyBuddy’s main colours are warm colours such as green and yellow, whereas MSN’s main colour is blue. Icons used in BuddyBuddy are rounded and ‘cute’ icons; users could also personalize and animate their avatars (see 1-2 in the image above).

Secondly, comparing the snapshots of the two messengers, it is clear that the target audiences are different. There are advertisement banners (see 3-1 and 3-2) placed at the bottom section of each messenger. The advertisement in BuddyBuddy is for an online game (3-2) whereas MSN messenger (3-1) has an advertisement for a cosmetic brand that mainly targets young adults in their 20s to early 30s.

In addition, the services linked to each messenger (2-1 and 2-2) are different. Linked services to BuddyBuddy messenger are entertainment-oriented services (e.g. games, music, movies), whereas MSN provides links to the stock market, sports etc. This also responds to the tendency of young people to use the internet mainly for the purpose of entertainment (see chapter 5). Furthermore, when looking into the detailed structure of the messenger including the hyperlinks provided by it, the unique functions and textual structure of BuddyBuddy become visible (see figure 7.2. below).

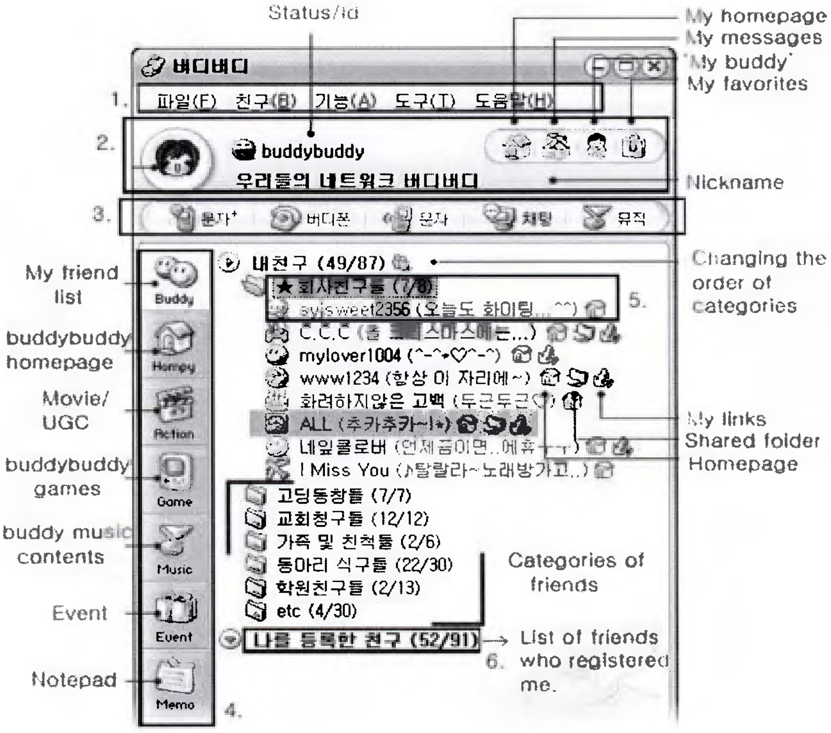
Status/id
My homepage
My messages
'My buddy'
My favorites
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
buddybuddy
Nickname
Changing the order of categories
My friend list
buddybuddy homepage
Movie/ UGC
buddybuddy games
buddy music contents
Event
Notepad
My links
Shared folder
Homepage
Categories of friends
List of friends who registered me.
Buddy
Hompy
Action
Game
Music
Event
Memo
내친구 (49/87)
고딩동창들 (7/7)
교회청구들 (12/12)
가족 및 친척들 (2/6)
동아리 식구들 (22/30)
학원친구들 (2/13)
etc (4/30)
나를 등록한 친구 (52/91)

Figure 7.2. Structure and functions of BuddyBuddy messenger

Number 1 in the figure above is the pull-down menu bar via which users can access menus provided by the messenger. In the profile bar (#2), users can include icons which can link the messenger with ‘my homepage’, ‘my links’ and ‘shared folders’. Users can pick and choose which links they put onto the profile bar. These links give background information about the user to others who register the user as a friend. They can also choose their avatar and nickname and indicate their status (e.g. online, offline, busy etc.) using the icons on the profile bar. For instance, when looking at the profile of a user (#5) whose ID is 'syjsweet2356', it can be seen that he or she decided to put his/her homepage link on the profile, so that others who chat with him/her can visit his/her homepage. On the profile bar (#3) below there are links to the paid services provided by BuddyBuddy, such as sending text messages, making phone calls or purchasing music files. This shows that although young people perceive BuddyBuddy as a free medium, the media company is using it as a commercial platform with advertisements and links to paid services.

When compared to MSN messenger, there are several technical features that are unique to BuddyBuddy. For example, BuddyBuddy has a 'note sending function' (described by Soo-Bee in chapter 6, see figure 6.1. and interview extract #6.26) which enables asynchronous communication. It also has a 'categorizing function' which encourages users to put friends in different categories, such as friends from primary school, family, friends from after-school club etc. It provides users with a default category named 'bad friends'. Users can choose not to use this category, but many students talked about their attempts to avoid being in the 'bad friends' category. In addition, on BuddyBuddy, the user can see not only who she has registered as a friend, but also who has registered her as a friend (#6). This often leads young people to work on self-promotion to other members using BuddyBuddy.

These technical features provided by BuddyBuddy in turn influence how young people construct the norms of their online peer group, or rather the etiquette required from the members of the generational group.

7.1.3. Generational boundaries in terms of the 'right' ways of using new media: reciprocity, self-presentation, self-promotion

The previous section looked at how young people construct generational boundaries around BuddyBuddy, making use of textual characteristics, production elements and also users' and non-users' perceptions of it. Due to its image and textual characteristics, young people assume that BuddyBuddy is used by younger teens who are of a similar age. Besides choosing a right medium for their age, young people also put down other cultural generational markers in the form of implicit rules. These implicit rules or etiquette agreed upon by young people lead to the inclusion of themselves and exclusion of others as members of the generation.

The following manuals for BuddyBuddy are designed by young people at I-S middle school. Manuals designed in the focus group interviews can be categorized into two different types, in terms of their emphasis and tone. (See chapter 4 for further discussion on the types of manuals.) The manual discussed below (manual 7.1.) focuses on the cultural rules that can be applied to young people themselves. Not specifically targeting teachers, it can be understood as a manual targeting a general audience. Unlike the manual specifically targeting teachers, this manual expresses the angst young people feel when using BuddyBuddy.

> <BuddyBuddy>
>
> How to use it:
>
> - Register, then decorate your avatar and homepage as far as your budget allows you to
>
> - Add the IDs of people you know to appropriate groups, let yourself be known and make them add you as a friend
>
> - Scrap photos from other sites and post them, so your homepage won't look not taken care of
>
> - Promote your homepage as much as possible using 'send note to all'

> Warning:
>
> - If you ignore a note, it will come back as a bunch of angry notes and you will be in big trouble (!).
>
> - If you don't log on for a long time, kids might label you as a bad friend

> Manual 7.1. Designed by Yeah-Young and Soh-Young, I-S middle school

In the manual, Yeah-Young and Soh-Young emphasize the importance of self-presentation and self-promotion. They recommend that teachers 'decorate' their avatars and 'let themselves be known' to others, so that others can add them as a friend. To be recognized as a member of the generational group, it is important to invest as much time and money as they can. They should take good care of the homepage, so that 'it won't look not taken care of'. In the 'Warning' section, they focus on the importance of reciprocity. They should always do their best to reply as soon as possible otherwise they would be put into the 'bad friend' category, which is designed by the BuddyBuddy company.

On the other hand, the BuddyBuddy manual discussed below (manual 7.2.) is more of a step-by-step guide for teachers, aiming to teach them about the medium. Byung-Hoon and Han-Gil who designed the manual have teachers'/students' interaction via BuddyBuddy in mind. Talking about the reason they have chosen to make a manual for BuddyBuddy, Byung-Hoon say they want to encourage teachers to use BuddyBuddy with students to create closer relationships:

> Byung-Hoon: We use BuddyBuddy because we don't have much time to hang out with our friends. We have to go to crammers after school, and there is just not enough time to talk with friends. BuddyBuddy is the only way for us to meet each

> other after school. If teachers use BuddyBuddy, they can talk with us and become closer.
>
> Interview extract #7.9. I-S middle school

Their manual starts from how to download and install a program and then moves on to informing readers of what they should be careful about.

> <BuddyBuddy>
>
> How to use it:
>
> - Go to BuddyBuddy homepage first, and join it
>
> - Download BuddyBuddy, install and run it
>
> - Register your friend's ID on the list, then click on the ID of your friend whom you want to talk to. Send a note when a separate window pops up.
>
> Things you should know (Warning):
>
> - You should register as many IDs of your friends as possible
>
> - *Refrain from using code language and slang*
>
> - Promote your ID
>
> Manual 7.2. Designed by Han-Gil and Byung-Hoon, I-S middle school (*my emphasis*)

In this manual (7.2.), young people advise teachers to 'refrain from using slang or code words' in BuddyBuddy. The language issue becomes more apparent when the manual explicitly addresses 'teachers'. For instance, in a manual for internet fiction designed by Suh-Young and Yeah-Young at C-I middle school, the warning section discourages teachers from picking up slang words and expressions and using them too frequently in real life as 'it will seem lame'. In addition, in a manual for SMS, interviewees suggest to teachers that they need to watch their grammar and spelling when sending messages. The fact that language use is mentioned in a manual explicitly targeting teachers suggests that there is a certain line which students do not want teachers to pass when they use young people’s media.

Though young people recommend that teachers also use BuddyBuddy to aid closer communication, it is more difficult for teachers to make active use of BuddyBuddy due to the generational boundaries constructed by the brand image and the media text itself, as well as the meanings young people attach to the medium and the implicit rules visible only to young people. In addition, as seen in the manuals above, young people express their desire to keep teachers at arm's length.

As for the teachers, they talk about their attempts to take up young people's new media to facilitate the communication between teachers and students. However, due to the generational boundaries mentioned above, it is often challenging to teachers to step into young people's new media realm.

7.2. Intergenerational relationships around new media

In this section, I will look at how teachers interact with young people around new media focusing on the new possibility of communication between teachers and students, and also explore the 'risks' teachers face when they actually interact with students via new media and enter the realm where students are considered to have expertise.

7.2.1. Students and teachers' interaction on BuddyBuddy

Several of the young people in my interviews suggest that they could communicate better with teachers if teachers spent more time with them using BuddyBuddy, although they do not mention the fact that teachers might feel awkward in young people's cultural space. Throughout the manual-designing activity, students tend to present BuddyBuddy in an attractive way, inviting teachers into their cultural realm. They encourage teachers to make use of new media and also to share the same cultural space. It can be said that students want teachers to have access to their new media to a certain degree so that they would understand young people's culture. Nevertheless, they want teachers to retain their position as teachers and not become 'one of them'. However, the majority of teachers also want to keep their identities as teachers when communicating with students via young people's new media. Stepping into young people's new media realm might involve certain risks for teachers, especially the subversive use of new media by young people and the danger of confusing professional and personal identities.

When discussing whether BuddyBuddy is a medium for teachers or students, Jah-Hyang below mentions teachers' recent take-up of BuddyBuddy. However, as seen in Soo-Bee's comment, young people are also aware of teachers' intentional use of BuddyBuddy to improve their communication with young people.

> [During media categorization activity]
> Jung-Hwu: Email is mostly for teachers. We go for IM.
> Jah-Hyang: Lots of teachers use BuddyBuddy these days… Soo-
> Bee: That is just to talk with kids.
>
> Interview extract #7.10. E-P middle school

Students in other interviews also talk about their ICT teacher registering on BuddyBuddy and logging on during class 'just to see if other students in his class are on BuddyBuddy during lessons' (which would suggest a more regulatory purpose).

During the interviews, some teachers explain their attempts to use young people's new media such as BuddyBuddy with students:

> Miss Park: I started using BuddyBuddy to talk with my students. At first, they were amazed that an adult like me used their media. It took time to communicate more deeply, but I get to talk with students who were rather shy in class.
>
> Interview extract #7.11. S-B middle school, Korean language teacher

It is not only Miss Park who suggests that teachers might use BuddyBuddy to communicate better with their students. One teacher even claims that it is more effective to consult students on the issue of studying or taking exams using BuddyBuddy than face-to-face (G-J middle school, Ms. Park, English teacher). Many teachers I interviewed agree that it is easier to make students talk about what is on their minds using the media that are closer to young people.

> Miss Lee: Sometimes text messages become a means of communication between teacher and students. For example, if someone misses school, I try to send a warm message to him/her. Usually, s/he always gives me a reply saying 'I'm very sorry' and so on.

> Miss Suh: I think it applies to BuddyBuddy too. I once found a student who ran away from home using BuddyBuddy. I talked him into coming back and solving the problem face-to-face.

Interview extract #7.12. Korean language teachers (media education study group)

Clearly, one of the reasons that brought about closer communication between the teachers and students is the teachers' time and care spent on individual students. As Miss Lee said, she sometimes sends 'a warm message' to her students. On the other hand, as in the cases of Miss Lee and Miss Suh, it can be said that it is not only the contents of the message or the personal care teachers showed, but also the medium through which they choose to approach the student, that brings about a closer rapport between them.

However, when teachers are asked whether they think that using new media help teachers to form closer relationships with students, their opinions vary:

> Q: Do you feel that you've got closer to students due to the new media?
>
> Yoon: I feel...I think it is more about my attitude towards them offline. It is not really an effect of new media?
>
> (The teachers did not respond immediately, but paused while they thought.)
>
> Yoon: Don't you think it is your relationship with students that makes the difference?
>
> Yang: I give out my email address to almost all students, even though I don't really meet some of them in school or know them personally. I do it because I think that once I let students know that I am accessible via email and start exchanging email

> with them to give warm advice, the atmosphere in class changes a bit. I think they feel like 'that teacher cares for me'. I feel as if some kind of bond of trust is formed between us... (She explains a specific case of a student in detail)... As in this case, I realized that email or this kind of media are very important. It is difficult to share personal problems in school, isn't it? (Teachers express agreement except for Mr Lee). I can tell them things like, 'I love you, you idiots' via new media, and students like it.
>
> Lee: The relationships between teachers and students are mostly one to many and teachers are supposed to be stern with them. But when we exchange text messages or email with students, I think that students feel it is easier to communicate with teachers.

Interview extract #7.13. Korean language teachers (media education study group)

Mr. Yoon is sceptical about the argument that new media enable close communication between students and teachers. For Mr. Yoon, if there is a change of relationship, it is more a reflection of the change in the offline schooling culture. Unlike Mr. Yoon, Miss Yang is an advocate of the benefits of new media in helping personal communication between herself and students. She has many experiences of the change in teacher-student relationships due to the emails they have exchanged. It can be said that for Miss Yang, new media such as email are a tool to express her feelings more freely towards students (her argument is similar to that of young people who identify new media as providing them with an emotional buffer), and a tool that enables her to care for them more personally. Showing students that she is approachable via new media and that she is willing to listen to their personal problems, she describes how she feels a 'bond of trust' is formed between her and her students.

During their discussion, Miss Lee makes an interesting comment about how teachers' identities and expected roles can differ in different spatial contexts. For her, new media enable a different mode of communication that is not available in the traditional school setting. As Miss Lee says, the traditional relationship between teacher and students is 'one to many'. In this setting, it is easy for students to consider what teachers say as impersonal. By using email or IM, teachers can talk individually to students, taking on the identity of personal carers. A similar claim is made by Ms E-K Kim in another interview:

> Q: Is it easier for you to communicate with students than before [digital media were commonly used]?
>
> E-K Kim: It goes without saying. I get really close to students. For instance, I used to chat on BuddyBuddy with students of the broadcasting club [after-school club which she was in charge of], but not anymore. Because they often invited me to the exclusive chat room they'd set up around 11pm. That's the time when they might have finished their studies for the day and feel relaxed, but it is the time when I feel extremely sleepy! They go on chatting with me there nodding off. Actually, it is very nice really. They always ask me 'are you going to be in Buddy today?' They share their secrets with me, stuff like who fancies whom and so on. *I am usually seen as a strict teacher at school, but in BuddyBuddy I am a good listener and adviser. They feel closer to me than to their classroom teachers.*
>
> Interview extract #7.14. Y-R middle school, Korean language teacher *(my emphasis)*

Ms E-K Kim is in charge of the broadcasting club in her school and considers herself as an expert in media production. She also describes herself as an active user of new media. She talks about making use of young people's new media to send out notices about events or even getting apology letters via email. However, what is interesting about her description of new media use is the change in her identity depending on the media context. She suggests that even though she is seen as a 'strict teacher' at school, in BuddyBuddy she is seen as a 'good listener and adviser'. As many students suggest when they recommend BuddyBuddy to their teachers, she says that she can get closer to students as a result of spending time with students on BuddyBuddy.

The young people I interviewed also considered teachers who use new media as being closer to them, as they share common cultural capital. As mentioned in the previous section (7.1.), when young people discuss teachers' use of 'young people's new media', they often differentiate between teachers based on their age. For example, as seen in the extract below (#7.15.), young people put teachers in different categories such as 'younger' and 'older' teachers (trainee teachers are usually in their 20s). For students, the cultural capital related to new media is that of younger people:

> [During media categorization activity: Cyworld and BuddyBuddy]
>
> Duk-Hyun: Teachers don't tell us their Buddy ID, or their Cyworld homepage address.
>
> Sun-Hye: Trainee teachers often use BuddyBuddy, but school teachers rarely do. Maybe just one or two teachers per school?
>
> Jin-Hyuk: Some teachers do tell us their Cyworld address.
>
> Duk-Hyun: Yeah, we can see their photos and stuff.
>
> Sun-Hye: I feel comfortable around them. It seems they are closer to us.
>
> Interview extract #7.15. C-I middle school

As discussed above, students often claim that they feel more 'comfortable around' teachers who are accessible via Cyworld. They feel closer to those teachers because they can see teachers in private contexts. However, even though many teachers agree to the positive effect of using BuddyBuddy to communicate with students, some teachers point out that there is a difference between giving out their BuddyBuddy ID and circulating their Cyworld address to students. Some teachers say they do not share their Cyworld homepage address because it is a personal space where they can be their private self, not necessarily taking on the identity of a teacher (e.g. Miss Park from S-B middle school and Ms Jin from J-N middle school). It can be said that teachers also draw a line between their personal and professional roles in terms of deciding how much of their private space they choose to open as a public space.

While young people try to keep the public space private by allowing teachers to trespass only to a certain degree, teachers also talk about their unwillingness to allow students to visit their personal spaces such as homepages. This implies that teachers' uses of BuddyBuddy or of sharing their personal homepages with students are part of their performance in their role as teachers.

7.2.2. Risks teachers face when stepping into students' cultural realm

When teachers go into students' media space to communicate with them, it is not only a matter of teachers giving extra care to students or sharing their personal lives with them, but also a matter of relinquishing the teacher's traditional position as an authority in school. It can be suggested that the change in hierarchical positions is one of the factors that contribute to the close communication between students and teachers. This change of power relationship does not come easily for teachers. They often talk about the risks they have to take when using young people's new media, due to their lack of skills and cultural capital related to these media. On another level, teachers often face students' reluctance in bringing in their cultural enjoyment into the area of learning and teaching.

As discussed before (7.2.1), teachers are not always aware of the implicit rules used amongst young people when taking part in young people's new media environments such as BuddyBuddy. It is hard for them to 'pass' as a member of the generational group, due to their lack of knowledge about the ways to interact or speak. Young people willingly communicate with teachers via BuddyBuddy, but at the same time, they keep their own generational territory to themselves. As discussed by Miss Yang and Miss Jun below, teachers often face risks because they are not used to the technical functions of BuddyBuddy; although these are risks that young people might face as well.

> Yang: I once used BuddyBuddy. But it is difficult to find out other's IDs on BuddyBuddy. You can track another person's ID when you are using MSN, you know. When I was using BuddyBuddy with a student, he/she made an obscene joke...
>
> Jun: That is too much!
>
> Yang: I didn't use BuddyBuddy after that.
>
> Jun: That's true. Lots of incidents like that and also too many spam messages. That's why I don't like using BuddyBuddy.
>
> Interview extract #7.16. Korean language teachers (media education study group)

As we have seen, teachers are often thought of as having less expertise in new media compared to young people. This tendency is claimed not only in popular discourses, but is also mentioned by both students and teachers in the interviews. For example, when talking about the issue of regulating mobiles in schools, both students and teachers explain how their different level of knowledge about the medium affects the negotiation process between them. (This issue will be discussed further in chapter 9.) Therefore, teachers often try to pull the new media back to teaching and learning, their areas of expertise, in order to regain authority.

For example, when asked if she comments on young people's media culture, Ms Choi, a Korean language teacher at S-G middle school explains how she uses young people's popular culture in her classroom:

> I mainly refer to students' media use when it is recommended in the curriculum. The new curriculum recommends lesson plans using newspapers, moving images or advertisements. For instance, we have a unit titled 'Think about the [daily] use of Korean language'. As examples of inappropriate language use, I often use clips from TV talk shows to indicate the wrong language use of the host or guests of the show. Also, with students, I try to fix the case of language used wrongly on the internet. In this process, students get to know the importance of the proper use of the Korean language. This will lead them to reflect on their daily language usage. I think it is the teacher's expertise that motivates students and brings out students' potential learning ability well. And to bring in language used in the media or internet is an effective way to do it.
>
> Interview extract #7.17. S-G middle school, Korean language teacher

Using popular culture or students' internet culture in the classroom, Ms. Choi argues, is an effective way of motivating students' learning. However, unlike Mr. Shin (interview extract #7.20.), she mainly approaches young people's media culture as an object to be corrected. This might be due to the guidelines given in the Korean language curriculum. Ms. Choi claims that it is teachers' role to use their expertise to 'teach' and make students 'learn'.

However, as seen in chapter 6, students also try to dismiss school-centred culture (defined in terms of literacy) opposing it to their own 'fun' culture (defined as orality). What is interesting is not that teachers face risks in relation to the 'safety' issue, but that teachers and students are involved in a power negotiation in terms of claiming expertise in and emphasizing the value of the culture with which they are familiar.

In addition, when teachers make use of 'students' new media' or popular culture enjoyed by young people, they often find themselves in a situation where they are at the edge of their understanding or risk being perceived as uncool and clumsy. As seen in previous sections, students tend to claim that younger teachers share similar cultural capital with them. This was also explained in section 7.1.1, in terms of young people's aspiration towards young adults' cultural capital. In addition, for them, teachers who are interesting and 'funny' have a tendency to understand their culture better. In other words, if the teachers are seen as 'stiff', 'boring' and part of the 'older generation', the cultural gap between them and their students is thought to be wider. The label of being 'relatively young' is related to being 'funny' or 'understanding young people's culture'. Thus, the generation gap between teachers and students is not only about the age difference, but also about the degree to which their cultural capital is shared:

Yeah-Young: I think younger teachers watch a lot of entertainment programmes on television.

Suh-Young: Yeah, like 'X-man' (the title of a popular entertainment show at the time of the interview)

Jin-Hyuk: I think 'new generation' teachers watch them...like our Chinese language teacher, he is very funny.

Interview extract #7.18. C-I middle school

The young people in other interview groups also mention teachers who attempt to copy catch phrases used in entertainment shows which are well known amongst students. They say they do not like it when teachers use them because it appears too clumsy:

[During the media categorization activity]

Q: How about TV entertainment programmes? Soo-

In: Students mainly watch them.

Q: Do teachers sometimes mention these programmes?

Joo-Young: Sometimes they do. But kids don't like it. They try to imitate comedians, but always very clumsily.

Interview extract #7.19. G-J middle school students

During the interviews with teachers, I asked them whether they share their experiences of media with students: did they talk about the media culture enjoyed by students (e.g. online games, TV shows) or even about their own favourite media in lessons or just within conversation with students?

> Shin: Yes, I think I talk with students about [media] quite often. Students can be interested in lessons, if teachers implement cultural phenomena that kids enjoy within the lesson. For example, in my class, I talk with students about popular catch phrases, contents of music videos or advertisements, or lingo (shortened words) they use on the internet or mobile phones. And I am always willing to talk about it with students any time.
>
> Q: Can you tell me why?
>
> Shin: I wouldn't claim that I am doing it to see the world through the student's eyes. But, I think, at least, teachers and students need to communicate, and for communication, teachers need to use things that are closer to students' everyday lives and especially media that students use every day. And through this communication, there is a possibility that kids will feel, even vaguely, that teachers are similar to them after all. Most of all, if kids feel there is a possibility of communication with teachers, it means that that experience of communication can be changed into a sense of trust between teachers and students. That's why I try to bring in students' media experiences, or media enjoyed by them, into the classroom, even though lots of times I feel awkward.

Interview extract #7.20. I-S middle school, Moral education teacher

Mr. Shin argues that, by acknowledging the culture enjoyed by young people and showing students that they are willing to talk about it, teachers can communicate with students and possibly develop a 'sense of trust'. When talking with the students of Mr. Shin's class, they said that he knows very much about young people's culture and they enjoy talking about it with him. It is interesting to realize that even though his students perceive Mr. Shin's attempts positively, Mr. Shin says that he often feels awkward when he tries to make use of young people's popular culture in classes. It can be suggested that for teachers to engage with young people's culture – a domain of which young people are considered experts and can often become quite defensive – in the classroom is not always easy, especially because of their traditional role as experts in knowledge.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the ways in which young people construct generational boundaries around the media they use. Examining young people's use of BuddyBuddy, an instant messaging service used by Korean teenagers at the time of the interviews, this chapter shows how young people actively put generational markers on internet spaces in order to keep their online peer-group culture private, and also how young people and service providers collaborate on defining these boundaries.

In the first part of this chapter I looked at how young people construct generational boundaries around BuddyBuddy, making use of the textual characteristics, production elements and also users' and non-users' perceptions of it. Due to its image and textual characteristics, young people consider BuddyBuddy as a space frequented and preferred by younger teens who are of a similar age. In addition, they explain that there are implicit rules (e.g. to do with the importance of self-presentation, self-promotion and reciprocity) applied to this peer-oriented space, which are visible and applicable only to young people.

In the following part, I focused on young people and teachers' perspectives on the intergenerational relationships around new media. I looked at how teachers interact with young people around new media, focusing on the new possibility of communication between teachers and students, and also explored the 'risks' teachers face when they actually interact with students in these spaces and enter a realm where students are considered to have expertise. Young people often welcome teachers to join in their new media practices: they describe how using youth-oriented new media can enable them to communicate more closely with teachers, as they feel teachers care for them and try to understand their culture better. Yet, at the same time, they tend to keep teachers at arm's length, expecting them to keep their identity as teachers/adults rather than attempting to ‘pass’ as one of the younger generation. In addition to discussing young people's reluctance to bring their cultural enjoyment into the area of learning and teaching, and to accept adults’ continuous presence in their generationally exclusive space, teachers also describe the risks they face in relation to their perceptions of young people as the 'digital generation'. In young peoples' cultural realm, teachers argue, the change in hierarchical positions between young people and teachers is inevitable. Teachers suggest that they often have to take risks when using young people’s new media, due to their lack of skills and cultural capital in this sphere.

Chapter 8. New economies: Young people's economic practices online

Introduction

In chapter 6, I mentioned that for young people, especially those who are students with little disposable income, finance is an important factor influencing how they organize and manage their media usage. In the interviews, the young people often discuss how they decide which media to use and how to use them in relation to how much money they are willing or able to spend. In addition, new media, such as mobile phones or social networking sites that are frequented by young people, entail certain economic practices. These practices are not only related to monetary capital but also to young people's accumulation and exchanges of social, cultural and symbolic capital, in Bourdieu's sense (see chapter 3 for further discussion). Bourdieu's concept of capital is useful in examining young people's new media practices, yet his concepts do not address the economic activities of 'children'. Children or young people, who are not legally allowed to work, are generally not considered as active participants in economic activities. However, there are studies showing children do take part in economic practices, albeit informally, by producing, distributing and exchanging capitals within households, peer groups and other organizations (e.g. shops and schools, etc.) (Zelizer, 2002; Buckingham, 2011).

From the interviews, it can be seen that young people take part in a range of economic practices which are applicable in new media spaces. I suggest there are new economic practices being engaged in by young people in the new media spaces on which they base their youth culture. These new economic practices are made possible by new media, and in turn influence the forms of new media themselves. In addition, young people bring their generational identity into the construction of these new economies. Therefore, I argue that young people's generational identification ('generationing') related to new media is also an economic phenomenon.

In this chapter, I will start by discussing how economic factors limit or shape young people's new media use; then move on to new economic activities which take place in young people's new media spaces, especially those based on the internet. I will focus on young people's peer-to-peer network use and their description of rules applied to social networking sites, as instances of the new economies emerging online.

8.1. Young people's media management and consumption

During the interviews, the young people talk about various cases of managing their new media use according to their budget. In the interviews discussed in chapter 6, young people mention the price plan of their mobile phone as one of the reasons they prefer SMS over phone calls (see 6.2.1 for the relevant data and discussion). They also control the time they spend playing online games according to the payment system (see interview extract 6.13 in which Soo-Bee talked about limiting the time spent on an online game called 'Mah-Bi-No-Gi' to a maximum of two hours per day to stay within the free play time offered by the game company).

The fact that young people's media use is influenced by financial factors stands against popular expectations of the 'digital generation's' media usage patterns. In early discussions about the ‘digital generation’ (e.g. Don Tapscott's definition of young people as the 'Net generation' in 1998), it was claimed that the ‘digital generation’ preferred narrowcast media (e.g. the internet) to broadcast media (e.g. TV). They were even expected to prefer watching television programmes on the internet due to the flexibility of time and their preferences for the medium. However, for the students in the interviews, the cost was the prioritized issue in their choice of which platform to use for watching television. Interviewees at D-S middle school explain how they tend to arrange their television viewing schedules according to the availability of free content online:

> Q: Do you watch television programmes on the internet?
>
> Ji-Min: Sometimes. I use ‘re-run’ services on the website of each broadcasting company. But not very often. Only for the programmes that I really, really want to watch.
>
> Hyo-Jin: I try to avoid watching stuff on SBS, because it is not free. Ji-
>
> Min: Yeah, I mainly go for KBS ones.
>
> Ji-Nah: In my case, it is only when my schedule does not allow me to watch a programme on TV that I use re-run services on the internet.
>
> Young-Eun: Yeah, for example, you go for re-run on the net, when you want to watch both programmes that are on air at the same time.
>
> Interview extract #8.1. D-S middle school

As a publicly owned broadcasting service, KBS (Korean Broadcasting System) provides a re-run service of television programmes it airs for free via the homepage. Apart from KBS, all other broadcasting companies charge users per programme or per viewing time. Young-Eun in the interview extract above and many other interviewees suggest that they prefer watching programmes on television rather than paying money to watch them on the internet. However, according to the young people in the interviews, official websites of broadcasting companies are not the only place they access television programmes:

> Jae-Hee: I don't really watch TV programmes on the internet. Well, unless I really want to.
>
> Eun-Ik: I try to avoid things that are not free. Do-
>
> Won: Yes, everything but paid-for content.
>
> Jae-Hee: And you can watch television programmes at places like online cafés [online communities].
>
> Interview extract #8.2. G-I middle school

The young people say that they often visit online communities where members upload popular television programmes to share with others. As seen from the survey data, for students the internet is a medium of entertainment where they often download and upload various kinds of media content (see chapter 5.2.2.). During the interviews, it also appeared that young people's file-sharing practices are mostly around entertainment content such as music, movies or drama files.

When describing their daily media uses, the young people in the interview talk about various file-sharing activities, ranging from the files related to homework to movie files, which they download to enjoy on their computers. The young people explain various routes to share files on the internet, mostly for free. For instance, Da-Bin and Hye-Soo below describe how they can find television programmes and films from online communities and download music files using peer-to-peer network services such as *Pruna*:

> [Describing their daily media use]
>
> Da-Bin: …I watch movies on my computer.
>
> Q: Do you download them?
>
> Da-Bin: Sometimes I do or I can stream it on a website.
>
> Q: What about watching TV on the net (referring to the list she made)? Do you have to pay for it?
>
> Da-Bin: Not really. You can find television programmes for free on online communities. Besides KBS does not charge you for watching re-runs on its website.
>
> Q: What about music? Hye-
>
> Soo: I download it.
>
> Da-Bin: Yes, from *Pruna*[40].
>
> Q: Do any of you use paid-for content or services on the internet?
>
> (All shake their heads)
>
> Q: You can get it all for free?
>
> All: Yeah (smile with shame).
>
> Interview extract # 8.3. G-N middle school

In addition to using a peer-to-peer network service, the young people I interviewed at I-S middle school discuss how they browse and read books via a search engine, and watch television programmes via their peers' web pages.

---

[40] Pruna "is a Korean version of eMule produced by Merker' www.emule-project.net http://www.pruna.com/Guide/View.asp?cMenu=4&cMainCate=17&cSubCate=0&iMasterSeq=18&iListSeq=27 retrieved on 05 August 2008

> Q: If you can use only one of these media?
>
> Han-Gil: [I will go for the] internet site where I can search for books. You can read books without borrowing on those sites. And I assume there will be lots of content because it is the internet.
>
> Soh-Won: I would choose others' internet homepages. I can visit my friends' homepages and say hi, and also watch the television programmes they uploaded on their homepages.
>
> Interview extract #8.4. I-S middle school

When asked which medium he would choose if he could only use one, Han-Gil said that as he enjoys reading books he would go for the internet site through which he can search and read books. He describes how he can read books on the internet through the links acquired via the search engines. As the digitized contents they access on the internet are diverse (e.g. television programmes, music, movies, comics and so on), so are the routes/platforms through which they share the files.

As seen in Han-Gil's comment above, this media environment encourages young people to view the internet as a space where they can access most of the content they want and need for free. The young people in the interviews mention their financial dependency as a reason to justify their file-sharing practices. Not spending monetary capital becomes an important factor determining how young people use the internet. This pattern of internet use and active file-sharing practices is based on young people's perception of the internet as a 'free' medium.

This perception is twofold. Firstly, on the surface, it can be said that young people do not consider the connection or maintenance fee of the internet as their spending (e.g. as seen in the example of students preferring to use IM over mobile phones when they want to spend time with each other). As mentioned in chapter 2, the diffusion rate of broadband internet in Korea was near saturation point in 2005, when the interviews took place (NIDA, 2005). The young people in the interviews all had broadband connections at home. In most cases, the internet service fee was paid by their parents, and although most of them were limited in how long they could be online, this was due to their parents' regulations rather than financial reasons. Therefore, in most cases, the young people I interviewed could access the internet without paying any money, except when they go to internet cafés to play online games or for other uses.

Secondly, and more importantly, young people's understanding of the internet as a free medium is based on the technological characteristics of the internet. My respondents approach the internet as an open platform where they can acquire and share information and media content with other users for free. They are also experiencing a different type of media production process (sometimes termed 'social authorship'), that is enabled by the internet technology, where they take part in various forms of collective production by sharing, commenting on, rating and promoting creative materials. Therefore, it can be argued that young people's approach to their internet use, especially their file-sharing practice online, is shaped by the broader social and technical contexts in which it occurs (i.e. young people's economic status and the technological characteristics of the internet). In the following sections, I will explore how young people define the meaning of their file-sharing practices, focusing in particular on the social and technical contexts in which they take place.

In Korea, when the interviews took place, young people were bombarded by popular discourses blaming the illegal downloading of music files for the downfall of the music industry. *So-ri-ba-dah*[41], which is a peer-to-peer program equivalent to Napster, was forced to become a paid-for service where users pay a monthly fee to exchange music files. Users of *So-ri-ba-dah* moved onto *Pruna,* which remained a free service (*Digital Times*, 05 Dec 2005). Most of the young people in the interviews explain that they often use peer-to-peer programs even though they consider sharing music files or movies as illegal acts.

However, when looking into young people's claims about their peer-to-peer file-sharing, practices of 'generationing' can be seen. Young people tend to justify their file-sharing practices with reference to their financial dependency (i.e. youth as a socio-structural generation) and to the social norms and expectations to do with their understanding of the technology, in this case the internet (theory pointing to the co-construction of media and users). The following interview extract, in which interviewees of C-I middle school discuss their use of peer-to-peer networks to download music files, illustrates how young people legitimize their file-sharing activities:

> Q: Is it illegal to download files from *Pruna* or *So-ri-ba-da*?
>
> Suh-Young: Yes.

---

[41] So-ri-ba-da 'offers legal file-sharing services by subscription, with royalties paid to the rights holder by the companies'

> Q: What will you do if your parents or teachers tell you not to download files as it is illegal?
>
> Suh-Young: I would say, 'Okay, I'll buy a CD' and then I'll download mp3 files behind their backs.
>
> Q: Why? Because it costs less?
>
> Suh-Young: Of course. And besides, all the stuff we need is there [on the internet].
>
> Duk-Hyun: To be honest with you, if we want to do all these [pointing to the cards they've made stating what kinds of media they use] we really can't afford it, because we don't have much money. We are students, you know. And when you spend money in real life, it is just spending money...but I feel like I am wasting my money when I spend it on the internet. I don't know exactly why, but that's how I feel...
>
> Sun-Hae: I know it is illegal...but as Yeah-Young said, it is not like the police can track down thousands of people who are doing it.
>
> Interview extract #8.5. C-I middle school

First of all, as discussed in the previous section, young people's understandings and perceptions of the technology, in this case the internet, influence their file-sharing practices. In the interview extract above, Suh-Young say she can access all the content she needs on the internet, and Duk-Hyun claim that he can't quite explain why but he feels he is 'wasting [his] money when [he] spends it on the internet'. It can be said that their file-sharing activities are based on their understanding of the internet as a platform to freely share information and files. They are also oriented by their view of the media environment, in which they can get hold of most of the files they want on the internet. This understanding of the internet is related to the technological affordances and ethos on which the internet is based. The technical contexts of young people's file-sharing will be further discussed in the following section.

Secondly, the students' discussion above shows how young people's generational identity contributes to this pattern of peer-to-peer use. As seen in Duk-Hyun's comment, most of the interviewees justify their file-sharing by referring to the fact that they cannot afford to pay for all the media content they want, because they are still financially dependent on their parents. In addition, for young people file-sharing is a forbidden fruit, which they engage in mainly 'behind their parents' back' (Suh-Young) even though they consider it to be 'illegal'. Sun-Hae claims that it is almost impossible to track down and punish all the peer-to-peer users for their illegal file-sharing. In sum, even though they do not have accurate information about the legality of file-sharing, for young people file-sharing is a typical and legitimate practice of their generation.

In addition to these justifications of file-sharing, there are broader social and technical contexts that influence young people's media practices. File-sharing by young people was brought to light mainly by representatives of the music industry who were concerned that their main target audience was being 'socialised in a culture of piracy' (Schwartz, 2001 as cited in Taylor et al, 2002). The concern expressed by the music and movie industries stirred popular discourse blaming young people for the decline of culture much more broadly (Keen, 2007). However, the legality of file-sharing for non-commercial purposes is not a clearly defined matter. File-sharing is practiced in various forms and with various purposes. Examining the music piracy culture of young people, Ian Condry (2004) points out that 'the boundaries between piracy, promotion, and sharing are far from clear'. As for the purposes of file-sharing, Lawrence Lessig (2005) explains that internet users download files which are not available offline, which are not copyrighted anymore, to sample a file in order to decide whether to make a purchase, or to replace purchasing; only the last case can damage the market. Condemning young people's file-sharing as an illegal and immoral act (e.g. Keen, 2007) without considering the various forms of file-sharing practices on the internet can be seen as another form of 'media panic' in relation to young people's new media culture. Majid Yar (2008) also points out the tendency to link youth with 'crime', which led the debate about online piracy to focus particularly on young people.

For a more nuanced discussion about young people's file-sharing, it is necessary to consider the technical context in which file-sharing takes place. Obtaining music or other creative products without paying for them can be seen as 'stealing' in some sense, but also as 'exercising a feeling that there is a public domain within which things are free' in another (Balnaves et al., 2009). Many technological historians point out that the internet was built upon a libertarian or collectivist ethos of sharing and taking part in social authorship (Atton, 2004; Lessig, 2005). Chris Atton (2004) uses the term 'usufruct' to explain the forms of social authorship enabled by web technology. Using examples from music, he argues that internet technology has enabled collaborative creativity to a greater extent. Internet users exercise social authorship by practising activities such as sharing, commenting on and rating original content, and also modifying and distributing the content to others. Some authors even suggest that when audiences distribute music or comment on it, it promotes awareness of the musicians and stimulates cultural production, thus being helpful to the musician's career (e.g. Yar, 2008).

However, as discussed in the theory chapter, technology is not neutral but socially constructed. The technical affordances provided by services on the internet are limited by how the media space is structured. For instance, there were also peer-to-peer networks (Gnutella and Freenet in 2000) designed to promote alternative forms of cultural production and to change 'capital-driven, scarcity-based models of production and distribution' (Atton, 2004:110). At the same time, there are other peer-to-peer networks which are not concerned so much about social authorship. In addition, the way users interpret the technology (e.g. of peer-to-peer networks) varies: even though the logic behind file-sharing is that of social authorship, users might just use peer-to-peer programs for personal gain without making any productive contribution.

Atton (2004) compares the case of Napster with the closed communities of peer-to-peer networks studied by Cooper and Harrison (2001). Unlike the online communities in which members practise file-sharing based on 'friendship, trust and cultural capital', the Napster network, which only required users to open their 'library' to others, tended to function based on a 'selfish desire to obtain, rather than to share'. (2004:109). As discussed in chapter 6, it should be noted that users and media, in this case young people who use peer-to-peer networks and the peer-to-peer technology, co-construct each other.

Young people's use of the media in relation to their 'generational' identity

As seen above, young people's file-sharing activities are conducted in the technical context of web technology which facilitates sharing, and a social context in which young people are blamed for illegal media use. Within these contexts, young people tend to support their file-sharing practices by emphasizing their status as 'young students' (i.e. young people who are financially dependent) and by positioning themselves as a 'digital generation' with the skills and knowledge to acquire data or information they want on the internet.

Though young people present their financial dependency as the main reason for file-sharing, it is not the case that they only look for free content online and do not pay for products anymore. In the interviews, young people emphasize that they try to purchase media content if they think it is worth buying. Based on the interviews, it can be suggested that they are developing carefully thought-out patterns of consumption:

> [During the media categorizing activity]
>
> Do-Won: Students mostly go for mp3s.
>
> Q: Students don't buy CDs often?
>
> Jae-Hee: Few of us do.
>
> Eun-Ik: We do, if we like the artist.
>
> Jae-Hee: For example, we buy the CD if it is a rare one, or if we really want to own it.
>
> Eun-Ik: Yes, to collect.
>
> Do-Won: Only ones that give you a feeling of achievement when you own the CDs.
>
> Interview extract #8.6. G middle school

As described above, young people differentiate between instances when they want to buy an actual CD and instances when they are satisfied with acquiring an mp3 file instead. For young people, a compact disc is a product on which they spend money when it is worth keeping or collecting:

> [During the media categorizing activity]

Q: What about CDs?

Sun-Hye: Students listen to them too.

Suh-Young: I try to buy the CD if it is by one of my favourite artists.

Jin-Hyuk: I agree. But a CD is a bit expensive for me. I go for a [cassette] tape.

Interview extract #8.7. C-I middle school

As in the case of Suh-Young and Jin-Hyuk, young people in the interviews emphasize that they would pay for media content when they want to support the artists. The young people tend to present themselves as 'discerning consumers' who make judgments on whether the media products are worth spending money on, and who are willing to spend money to support the artists they like. Studies of young people's file-sharing culture also show that young people take account of the interests of the artists and their livelihood when making decisions on downloading and sharing files (Condry, 2004; Palfrey et al., 2009).

However, as the interviewees at C-I middle school briefly mention, young people tend to explain that they 'download music files behind parents' and teachers' backs'. It can be argued that perceiving file-sharing as forbidden fruit often adds to young people's attraction to the practice. All of my respondents categorize peer-to-peer network services as their 'own' media as opposed to 'teachers' media'. They argue that even though teachers know how to use such services, teachers would not make use of them because they are 'illegal' or 'unethical'. By contrast, they claim that as young people, they are in the situation where they need to, and more importantly are able to, share files. During the focus group interviews with students and face-to-face interviews with teachers, I could see that there was a difference in the level of their actual use of and their knowledge about the use of peer-to-peer networks. Some students were not familiar with file-sharing via peer-to-peer networks, and some teachers talked about how downloading files is part of their daily activity. Students were also aware of cases when teachers download films from the internet and bring them into the classroom for lessons. However, when discussing their peer-to-peer use in terms of their collective culture, students define file-sharing in generational terms, not only as their own culture but also as a practice based on the new media knowledge that young people in particular have.

As mentioned before, young people assume teachers would not take part in file-sharing as it is considered 'illegal'. They also argue that, in addition to the legality of file-sharing, lack of skills and knowledge prevent teachers from using peer-to-peer network services. Interviewees at G middle school discuss one of the popular peer-to-peer programs *eDonkey*, and define file-sharing as a 'young people's activity' as opposed to adults'/teachers':

> Do-Won: Teachers don't download mp3s or other software on the internet. Eun-
>
> Ik: They don't know much about the peer-to-peer service.
>
> Jae-Hee: When they talk about the peer-to-peer service with us, I have a feeling that they are aware of it, but don't use it often.
>
> Do-Won: Downloading music files or movies are mainly students' activities.
>
> Interview extract #8.8. G middle school

As explained by Jae-Hee, young people consider that most teachers are aware of the possibility of file-sharing on the internet but not many of them actually know how to use peer-to-peer services. By claiming that teachers 'don't know much' about peer-to-peer programs whereas they do, young people are putting themselves higher up the hierarchy in terms of digital literacy.

In their discussions about peer-to-peer network use and in the manuals for *Pruna*, young people explain the skills/knowledge necessary when using peer-to-peer network services (see Manual #8.1)

In addition, as it was important for students to be thrifty in their media use, young people consider it important to know where to go to get files for free:

> Song-Yi: I listen to mp3s.
>
> Q: Have you used peer-to-peer sites like *So-ri-ba-da*?
>
> Song-Yi: Yes. There is stuff you can get for free and stuff you have to pay for when you use *So-ri-ba-da*.
>
> Joo-Young: You know, you are dumb if you pay for it.
>
> Interview extract #8.9. G-J middle school

As Joo-Young bluntly puts it, knowing how to get free content from the internet is considered as essential knowledge amongst young people. However, not only knowing how to use the peer-to-peer programs, but also knowing which peer-to-peer programs to use or which online communities to visit to get the files they need is considered as necessary knowledge.

> [Discussing mp3 downloads]
>
> Eun-Ik: I mainly download them for free.

Hyung-Soon: Me too.

Do-Won: I go to *eDonkey* and download a bunch of them. Jae-

Hee: *Pruna*, for me.

Eun-Ik: When you use *So-ri-ba-da*, you spend one point for each file you download, and get 0.5 points for each file that other people download from your folder.

Hyung-Soon: Though there are lots of fake files on peer-to-peer sites, I use them because I can get an unlimited number of files for free.

Interview extract #8.10. G middle school

Like this group of students in G middle school, many of my participants talk about various peer-to-peer sites they use and how they work. They are aware of the technical side of the program in terms of how to search and download or upload files and what they should expect from different services as users (e.g. which peer-to-peer sites have more music files than others, or more TV drama files than others). In addition, they often mention how peer-to-peer sites tend to change their ways of working (e.g. *So-ri-ba-da* changing from a free site to one that requires monthly fees), and how they can close down entirely without any notice to users. Therefore, knowing where to go to get hold of the files they want (for free) and knowing how to make use of those sites becomes a key aspect of the knowledge and cultural capital of young people.

Secondly, young people talk about the skills they have, related to 'risks' they encounter when using peer-to-peer networks. While designing the manuals, interviewees explain the risk of downloading fake files, thus wasting time and risking the safety of their computers. For instance, they explain that they are at risk of accessing adult material even though they do not intend to. Accessing pornographic material unintentionally (e.g. via spam mail etc.) is a common risk often mentioned by young people in the interviews. They explain how they attempt to avoid these risks by using both technical and social features provided by peer-to-peer network services:

> You can download movies, TV dramas and music for free on *Pruna*. But it takes a long time to download. There is also lots of fake stuff. Use the preview program to see if it is a fake before downloading.
>
> The good thing about using *Pruna* is that you can watch television dramas if you've missed them on TV, and you can see the movie you want easily whenever you want.
>
> Manual #8.1. *Pruna* (peer-to-peer service) by G-N middle school students

In this manual for *Pruna*, students of G-N middle school advise teachers to use the preview program before downloading the file to check if it is the correct one. This is a technical feature provided by the peer-to-peer network provider to minimize the flow of counterfeit files on the network. However, this technical function is not always effective. Therefore, in addition to this technical feature, users of the peer-to-peer network contribute to the communities by sharing comments about the file:

> Q: Any of you have an experience of downloading a fake file?
>
> All of them: I have.
>
> Q: How can you know if it is a fake or not before downloading it?

Ji-Young: You know when you click to see it.

Gab-Sun: People write a comment saying that it is a fake. Hae-

Soo: Like, this one is fake, don't download it.

Ji-Young: It is really some porn stuff (students giggle).

Interview extract #8.11. G-N middle school

As described by Gab-sun and Hae-soo, peer-to-peer network users are expected to support each other by leaving comments and ratings on the files they have downloaded from the network. These comments or ratings function as a guide for other users. Using Yochai Benkler's term, this type of activity can be understood as a form of peer-production of knowledge, which works as an alternative source of guidance providing users with credible and reliable information and leading them to content they are looking for (2006): in Benkler's terms, such activities serve as 'non-market, peer-produced alternative sources of filtration and accreditation' which can replace 'the market-based alternatives' (2006:12).

However, sharing comments and rating the files does not only contribute to the construction of peer-produced knowledge, but also to an individual's accumulation of 'capitals' online. For instance, when a user who has uploaded files gets many positive comments and high ratings from others, he/she gains credibility and status amongst the network users. The economic activities of gaining social capital and higher status within the online community by investing temporal capital and sharing cultural capital is a normative practice which can be observed in many online communities (see Cooper and Harrison's (2001) discussions on the formation of hierarchy within audio piracy communities). These new economies are a key part of young people's construction of their new media culture online, as will be discussed in more detail in section 8.2.

Returning to the 'risk' issue, it is not the case that young people only talk about their knowledge of how to avoid accessing risky material. Throughout the interviews, students express their awareness of the 'risk' discourse and adults' concerns related to their new media use. They present themselves as capable of handling this 'risk', using their status as both the media savvy 'digital generation', and as 'youth' who are naturally interested in risky/subversive culture. The previous example of G-N middle school students shows how they present themselves as capable of staying safe from the risks. The following interview extract with C-I middle school students is an example of the latter case, where young people boast about their know-how to get through the age barrier to access adult content they 'accidentally' downloaded from *Pruna*:

> Jin-Hyuk: When you click on it, it asks you to prove your age [by putting in one's national ID number, which indicates one's age]
>
> Duk-Hyun: Oh that, you can get through if you have your mom's ID number (laughs).
>
> Jin-Hyuk: Yeah, I memorized my mother's number too.
>
> Seo-Young: (jokingly) Your computer takes you to the dark place…
>
> Interview extract #8.12. C-I middle school

In the interview extract above, Jin-Hyuk and Duk-Hyun talk about how they get through the age block using their parents' national ID number. The young people in the interviews tend to claim that they have skills both to avoid adult material and to access it if they want without being influenced or being harmed. Yet, during the interviews, the young people's discussions only covered issues related to their know-how in accessing material that was not approved, without talking further about their experiences of watching such content. One of the reasons for that could be because I did not probe further on this issue due to concerns about the young people's privacy. However, it was clear that they did not present watching risky material in itself as 'their' culture, but rather presented their *skills* in accessing or getting through the age barrier as knowledge unique to the 'digital generation'.

As seen above, when young people present themselves collectively, especially in the activity where they are asked to categorize the media into students' and teachers' media, they put peer-to-peer networks into the category of 'students' media'. In addition, they position themselves higher in terms of the knowledge hierarchy related to file-sharing via peer-to-peer networks. However, there are differences in the level of knowledge related to peer-to-peer services amongst young people. In the following interview extract, students of C-I middle school teased each other about their lack of knowledge related to file-sharing:

> [media categorizing activity: 'watching a movie on the computer']
>
> Jin-Hyuk: I watch them illegally.
>
> Duk-Hyun: I can't watch it, because I don't know how to. Sun-
>
> Ye: I don't know either.
>
> Jin-Hyuk: (teasingly) She doesn't know how to use the computer. The only thing she knows is going to an online café.

Sun-Ye: I do BuddyBuddy too!

Interview extract #8.13. C-I middle school

Though young people generally identify peer-to-peer use as young people's culture, some interviewees admit they do not really download files because they do not know how. As seen in Jin-Hyuk's comment teasing Sun-Ye for knowing only how to use online communities, in the interviews the young people describe their uses of new media as practices requiring a different level of knowledge or skills. For my respondents, visiting online communities and using IM services are day-to-day media practices which do not require specific skills, but other forms of new media usage such as file-sharing are seen as more complicated. It was not the case that all students had knowledge about various peer-to-peer networks:

[media categorizing activity]
Q: *So-ri-ba-da/eDonkey/Pruna*?
In-Nah: *So-ri-ba-da* is our medium, isn't it? Eu-
Jin: What are *eDonkey* and *Pruna*?
Da-Hye: I've heard of *Pruna*...
Interview extract #8.14. S-H middle school

However, throughout the interviews, there are often cases when interviewees teach each other about *Pruna* or other peer-to-peer services and what they can do with them. When they are asked to pick two of their favourite media from the media list they made, three out of four interviewees at C-I middle school choose peer-to-peer networks. Listening to their reasons for choosing the specific medium, it becomes clear that their perceptions about the medium are influenced by their peers:

> Jin-Hyuk: ...And for *Pruna*, you can download the Excel program or other stuff and do whatever you want to do. You only have to wait for a day for the new programs to be uploaded on *Pruna*.
>
> Sun-Ye: I will choose SMS and *So-ri-ba-da*...As for *So-ri-ba-da*, they (pointing to other students in the group) said that you can do whatever you want if only you have *So-ri-ba-da* or *Pruna*. That's why I chose it.
>
> Interview extract #8.15. C-I middle school

It can be suggested that one of the reasons why young people present themselves as knowledgeable as opposed to teachers, despite the difference in levels of individual knowledge, is that they are used to an environment in which they can easily learn from one another about new media, and also by trial and error. However, there are limits on what they know about peer-to-peer network services and file-sharing practices. During the interviews, I noticed that young people are not clear about the legality of file-sharing, and they did not know about the commercial aspect of peer-to-peer sites (e.g. the economic mechanism of peer-to-peer sites, the technical design of peer-to-peer networks, etc.). As discussed in the previous chapters, young people present themselves as a media-savvy generation especially as opposed to teachers and adults. Yet the level of digital literacy they have does not always match their self-presentation.

As discussed above, young people consider the internet as a 'free' medium, in which they can acquire files without paying. However, looking into the description of students' file-sharing experiences, it can be said that these entail exchanges of capitals, if not monetary, then temporal, social and cultural capital (cultural capital as knowledge in this case). Young people's description of their peer-to-peer network use shows that they spend and risk temporal capital to download the files. They are also expected to share comments and ratings to guide other users. These comments and ratings also work as the symbolic capital confirming the status of the file-sharer in the peer-to-peer community. Therefore, besides the ethos of social authorship in the internet community, users are motivated to share what they have, expecting an accumulation of feedback from others in return. These new economic rules that apply to peer-to-peer networks are also applicable to young people's interaction within internet spaces such as social networking sites, IM and homepages, which will be examined in the following section.

8.2. Young people's accumulation and consumption of capitals on the 'free' internet

As seen in previous chapters, young people often use new media for phatic communication. For them spending time together and exchanging messages (i.e. gift-giving practices) are important parts of their new media culture. Studies of young people's mobile or SNS use show that exchanging messages as gifts is an important part of young people's new media use (e.g. Ito, 2005; Bryant et al., 2006). On the other hand, there are other studies showing that the practice of gift-giving becomes a stress or pressure for young people, which is strengthened by the perpetual connectedness of peers and the extended peer networks enabled by the technology

Taylor and Harper, 2002). However, based on the interviews, I suggest that young people's exchange of messages, which happens in these peer-oriented new media spaces, is an economic activity rather than a voluntary gift-giving practice as argued by previous studies. In addition, as young people's collective new media culture is based on internet spaces that are relatively generationally exclusive, they can build their own rules and ways of accumulating capitals with less involvement from adults (or the capitals they are provided with offline), albeit in ways that are constrained and influenced by the structures of the media themselves.

In chapter 7, I looked at students' discussions of the implicit rules they are expected to follow in peer-based new media spaces. The common norms mentioned by young people can be summarized as follows: 1) reciprocity, 2) self-presentation and 3) self-promotion. These three norms are all related to young people's accumulation of social capital and acquisition of status in these internet spaces. The following manual on 'blogs'[42], designed by G middle school students, shows that the norms (or 'etiquette') suggested by young people are commonly applied to various internet spaces (i.e. social networking sites provided by diverse companies):

> <Blogs (personal homepages – e.g. Cyworld, Daum planet ...)>
>
> * Characteristics of a blog: unlike major portal sites, blogs are two-way media, authored by and led by users themselves. Most blogs require people to use their real names so they are good for finding people.
>
> * How to use it:
>
> 1. Register and start a blog page
>
> 2. Personalize your blog (decorate your main page, post things on the forum, advertize to other bloggers and visit other blogs)

---

[42] Unlike other groups of students discussing their use of specific social networking services (e.g. BuddyBuddy or Cyworld), students of G middle school designed a manual for 'blogs'. Judging from the manual, it can be said that by 'blogs' they meant weblogs provided by commercial media companies, which are part of Social Networking Services. This also shows that young people are often limited in terms of their digital literacy.

* Warning:

Take care of your blog regularly.

Put effort into visiting other blogs.

Save as much money as possible when decorating your blog.

Manual #8.2. 'Blogs' designed by G middle school students

Firstly, in the 'warning' section of the manual, interviewees at G middle school advise teachers to 'put effort into visiting other blogs'. They are not only required to take care of their blogs by regularly updating material, but also expected to visit others' blogs leaving comments/messages. In addition, when they receive a message from others or when others visit their homepages, they are expected to return the favour. This rule of reciprocity is applied not only to social networking sites (SNS), but also to mobile phones or IM services (see chapter 6).

In addition to visiting peers they are closely acquainted with, it is also expected that young people will try to promote their homepages to others. The manual advises users to 'advertise to other bloggers and visit other blogs'. Students are used to the idea of promoting their homepages, thus advertising themselves to other users, whether they already know them or not. By promoting their homepages, young people expect to gain social capital in the form of messages/comments. Young people's tendency to show off their cultural capital using friends' lists and displaying messages from interesting people they have met through social networking sites (SNS) is reported in other studies as well (Boyd, 2007).

During the interviews, the young people often found opportunities to promote their homepages to the interviewer and others:

> Q: So Soo-In, Yeoh-Bin and Joo-Young, three of you have a Cyworld mini-homepage?
>
> Soo-In: Yes, please come and visit my homepage often!
>
> Interview extract #8.16. G middle school

When promoting oneself to other users, a young person's homepage will be a space where they express their interests and display their social and cultural capital. Therefore, the homepage can function as an indicator of one's status in the online community. To attract other users they are not well acquainted with, young people express their need to post content that will interest others and display their capitals well. For that reason, it is important for young people to 'take care of [their homepages] regularly' and display all the capitals they have on the homepage (e.g. 'decorate your main page, post things on the forum'). In addition, as interviewees explained, a well-presented homepage shows one's willingness to take part in the peer community. Therefore, when designing the manual for BuddyBuddy, young people also talked about the importance of logging into the IM regularly to show they are active members of the group.

Presenting a well-decorated homepage and being an active homepage host who visits others' homepages often will in turn lead to having many return visitors. It can be said that the need to be accessible to peers, but also the desire to be perceived as a 'popular' member of the online community is an important factor affecting young people's new media use. By following the implicit rules set up by themselves (i.e. reciprocity, accessibility) and by presenting themselves well within the boundary of the resources they have available, they can build up their own social capital and status as a member of an online community, in other words their own identity online, which can be different from their offline identities.

Yet, at the same time, young people's economic dependency leads them to emphasize the need to be thrifty when spending money to decorate or promote their homepages. In the manuals, the young people advise readers to 'save as much money as possible when decorating your blog'. In the manual for BuddyBuddy (see chapter 7, manual 7.1.), Yeah-Young and Soh-Won suggest to teachers that they should 'decorate the homepage within the budget they can spare'. The economic status of young people and their perceptions of the internet as a 'free' medium become the basis for young people's economic practices in these internet spaces, which often entail exchanges of temporal capital with other capitals (e.g. social, cultural and symbolic capital). These rules related to the new economic practices are acknowledged by young people as the implicit rules applied to and shared amongst peers.

However, it should be noted that young people's economic practices on internet spaces are influenced and constrained by the commercial structure of social networking sites (SNS) and also the technical characteristics of the internet. As explained by the interviewees, social networking sites (SNS) which are frequented by young people and designed based on a commercial model structure, lead users to display all the capitals they have acquired online and encourage them to promote themselves to gain higher status in the peer network/online community. For instance, the list of friends or number of visitors on one's homepage is visible both as a result of the 'recordability of the internet' (Boyd, 2009), and by the features purposely implemented by the media companies such as a 'friends' list' or 'visitors counter'.

Personalized homepages (or weblogs) provided by BuddyBuddy or Cyworld also have indicators that measure and show a user's 'popularity'. Cyworld has a counter above the user's profile showing how many people have visited the homepage each day. It also has a section on the main page where their 'cyber-relatives' leave a one-line comment about the user. Not only Cyworld, but most of the weblogs provided by commercial companies have the 'visitor counter' function by default. In the case of BuddyBuddy, my respondents said that the number of visitors, list of friends and a regularly updated guestbook are all proof of one's 'popularity' and therefore one's status in the online peer community. The young people I interviewed at G middle school talked about their attempts to manage time when being part of the peer group on Cyworld:

> Q: Eun-Ik, you said that you don't use Cyworld anymore. Why is that so?
>
> Eun-Ik: Because it is troublesome and I got exhausted...
>
> (others laugh sympathetically).
>
> Q: How do the rest of you manage Cyworld? Hyung-
>
> Soon: I log on once a day.
>
> Eun-Ik: I used to log on two or three times a week. Doo-
>
> Won: Same here.
>
> Q: What do you mainly do once you log in?
>
> Hyung-Soon: I spend a lot of time there once I log in. I surf Cyworld *il-chon* (first-degree wave[43]), visit amateur photographers' homepages to have a look at the photos they've uploaded.
>
> Jae-Hee: I check my guestbook and visit others' homepages who've left message on mine, and look at their photos.

---

[43] In Cyworld, users can ask each other to be their cyber-relatives or 'first-degree friends'. Once they become first-degree friends, their IDs are shown in each other's friends list. Users usually visit all their first-degree friends on their list once in a while. This activity is known as 'surfing the first-degrees' amongst Cyworld users.

Doo-Won: Last time, I was there until 5am to upload my pictures. Eun-Ik: That's why I've closed down my photo album.

Interview extract #8.17. G middle school

As Eun-Ik says, and others sympathize, sometimes managing one's homepage becomes a troublesome job rather than a fun activity. The young people explain that they often feel obliged to spend time in Cyworld or other social networking sites (SNS) paying visits to their friends and leaving messages, as a means to manage their online social capital. In addition, interviewees talk about the stress they feel when they end up spending more time than they intended once they log onto Cyworld. To avoid spending too much time, they often control the functions provided by the weblog. For instance, Eun-Ik says that he disabled the photo album section of his web page, as it took him too much time and effort to manage. It can be said that the way they use and manage their homepages is closely related to the quantity of resources, economical or temporal, they have and are willing to spend on their homepages.

The young people often critcized members of other generations (mostly elder siblings or younger siblings) for being obssessed with the accumulation of online social capital (see Chapter 7, interview extract #7.5.). However, it is not the case that everyone in the interview could take a detached stance from the common practices related to social networking sites (SNS):

Song-Yi: I have a BuddyBuddy homepage.

Q: Do you spend much time on it?

Song-Yi: Not really! I've disabled all the functions. I just keep it closed.

Joo-Young: I just log onto my home-pi once a day.

Yeoh-Bin: (in a teasing tone) You only have one visitor per day, don't you?

Interview extract #8.18. G middle school

Like Eun-Ik (#8.17.) Song-Yi (#8.18.), many students in the interviews describe their attempts to control the way they use social networking sites by choosing the features they think are important and disabling others. However, it is evident that they risk loss of contact with their peer group if they do not keep it active, even though they are not willing to do so. In the interview extract above, Yeoh-Bin teases Joo-Young saying that she would not have many visitors (or Joo-Young herself will be the only person who visits her homepage) if she does not spend much time logging on and checking out her web page.

Similar concerns are expressed by the young people who discuss their use of BuddyBuddy. On the BuddyBuddy messenger, young people can categorize their friends and display the categories for others to see, activities which are hardly possible in real life relationships. Therefore, as Yeah-Young and Soh-Won say when presenting the manual for BuddyBuddy (see interview extract #6.7.), it is important to regularly log into BuddyBuddy and spend time exchanging notes with others. If they do not log in for a long time, they are in danger of being categorized under the 'bad friend' list or the list of those who are 'never online'. Such media structures lead young people to spend as much time as possible online.

In addition, social networking sites provided by commercially-based media companies encourage users to spend money on their websites. One of the important functions of the homepages designed by Cyworld or BuddyBuddy is that of decorating them with paid-for items, such as background music, icons or wallpaper. Both Cyworld and BuddyBuddy have their own online shops where users can purchase items to decorate their homepages or buy cyber money (e.g. 'acorns' in Cyworld) for future purchases or for gifts to send to others.

> Q: Is it just So-Won who uses Cyworld? What about the rest of you?
>
> So-Won: None of them use it.
>
> Han-Gil: It is not free.
>
> Q: Are you talking about the acorns? You can make your homepage without them, right?
>
> Han-Gil: Yes, we can. But if you don't buy it, you know...Cyworld is all about having fun decorating. You need acorns to decorate your homepage.
>
> Interview extract #8.19. I-S middle school

As Han-Gil points out, the culture of Cyworld encourages users to consume virtual items sold by the company. The young people often claim that one of the reasons they are not keen on using Cyworld is their unwillingness to spend money. They can use their homepage without spending any money, but lack of decoration will easily make the homepage look as though it is not taken care of. Furthermore, they would not be able to engage in the 'fun' provided by Cyworld.

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the economies of young people's new media culture. By focusing on young people's discussions of their peer-to-peer network use, I suggest that young people's new media practices are related to building up capital and buying authority within the virtual world. In this chapter, I examined how economic factors limit or shape young people's new media use; how young people's identity as 'economically dependent students' and/or the 'digital generation' contribute to the new economies on the internet; and I looked into young people's economic practices in these new media spaces.

The first part of this chapter focused on young people's online file-sharing practices. Young people's file-sharing practices are perceived as 'piracy' and as one reason for the 'decline of culture' cited in popular discourses. On the other hand, some argue that young people are leading participants in internet culture, a culture which is seen to emphasize the importance of sharing and 'social authorship'. In this chapter, I argue that young people's file-sharing practices need to be understood in such social and technical contexts. In addition, I suggest that young people's construction of their generational identity also influences their use of the internet for file-sharing.

In chapter 1, I looked into the popular discourses defining young people as the 'digital generation'. The approach to young people's use of new media within these discourses is frequently contradictory. On the one hand, young people are celebrated as a media savvy generation with innate skills in using digital technology; yet on the other hand, they are seen as being at risk and also as risky, due to the new media environment in which they are growing up. The young people in the interviews reflected this dual approach when talking about their file-sharing practices. They presented it as a skill they have, by contrast with adults, and also conformed to the popular discourse blaming them for 'illegal' file-sharing. However, they tried to legitimize their file-sharing practices using their financial dependency, their discerning practice of consumption and also their status as young students as factors that entitled them to engage in such 'subversive' uses of new media.

As this chapter has suggested, the construction of youth identity online is also an economic phenomenon. Young people's media practices on the internet have distinctive characteristics as economic practices. Due to their economic dependency, young people say they try to avoid spending much money online. Instead their economic activities involve the exchange of other forms of capital (e.g. temporal, social and cultural capital). Young people accumulate and exchange these capitals on the internet, often investing extensive time and effort to gain status or social capital. These media practices are strongly influenced by the forms and structures of online media and by the commercialized media culture more broadly.

Chapter 9. Young people's 'private' new media culture within 'public' spaces

: the regulation of young people's mobile phone use in the school setting

Introduction

Previous data chapters examined young people's new media culture mainly based on the internet. At the time the interviews were conducted, mobile devices that provide internet access were not commonly used, especially amongst young people. Therefore, their use of the internet and their peer culture based on internet platforms mostly took place outside school (e.g. at home, a friend's house or internet cafés). However, when the interviews took place, growing numbers of young people had started to own mobile phones[44], and bring them into school. At the time of the study, it was the mobile phone that made young people's new media culture most visible in schools. In this, the last data chapter, I bring the focus back to the school, looking at how young people's 'private' new media culture becomes subject to regulation within the public space of the school and how the 'digital generation' discourse plays out when teachers and young people negotiate the regulation of mobile communications in schools.

Regulating private media use in public spaces has been a recurring social issue (du Gay et al., 1997; Ito et al., 2005). In their comprehensive study of the 'Sony Walkman', Paul du Gay and other authors (1997) examine social attempts to regulate a private medium when it comes into the public space. They point out that the regulation of the Walkman (a portable music player) was mainly due to the perception of it as an 'out of place object' that blurs the boundaries between the private and the public worlds. In addition, the authors describe that the need to socially regulate the use of the Sony Walkman was emphasized due to its association with anti-social youth. A similar finding is shown in the study of young people's mobile phone use in Japan. Ito and others (2005) point out that the regulation of the mobile phone was not a social issue in Japan when its main users were seen as business people. It was only after mobile phones were taken up by young teenage girls that the need for social regulation of the mobile phone was raised. It can be said that it is not only the potential of portable media to blur the boundaries between the private and public worlds, but also the social identification of the medium with the younger generation that seems to provoke calls for social regulation.

---

[44] According to a report published by the National Information society Agency (NIA), in 2005 about 70% of young people, aged between 14 and 19, owned a mobile phone

As mentioned above, at the time of the interviews the majority of young people had only recently started to have access to mobile phones. The social identification of young people's mobile phone use was complicated. On the one hand, young people were identified with new media technology (in this case, the mobile phone), and celebrated as having innate abilities to make use of these media (see chapter 1). On the other hand, young people’s 'subversive' or 'risky' use of mobile phones (e.g. cheating in an exam, or bullying etc.) were frequently reported, stirring up a negative image of young people and mobile phones (i.e. a media panic). In this social context, young people's mobile phone use started to become subject to concern and regulation in schools. The dual approach to young people's mobile phone use, and the difference between teachers' and young people's identification with the medium, brought about constant changes and negotiations of school regulations.

In addition, school regulations are bound to be actively negotiated due to the particular characteristics of the school as a 'semi-public' space (Drotner, 2005). Unlike other public spaces (e.g. public transportation, a library etc.), in which regulations are mostly implemented in the form of common etiquette (Haddon, 2006), in the school setting, stricter regulations can be applied.

In this chapter, I will discuss how students and teachers negotiate the extension of young people’s private world into the 'public' realm of school which is caused by young people's use of mobile phones. With the main focus on the regulation of young people's mobile phone use in schools, I will start by considering the 'media generation gap’ in teachers' and young people's orientations towards the mobile phone. Then I will focus on how young people construct their generational identities in relation to teachers by ascribing symbolic generational meanings to the mobile phone in the school-setting, within the interactions between teachers and young people, and amongst young people themselves. Lastly, I will consider the way in which young people construct a 'generationally exclusive' private space in the school setting via their mobile phones.

9.1. The gap between young people's and teachers' perceptions of the mobile phone

Before looking into young people’s mobile phone use in the school setting, I will start with teachers’ and young people’s attitudes and orientations towards mobile phones as observed during the interviews. As discussed in chapter 5, the survey data suggest that the ‘media generation gap’ between teachers and young people is more apparent in the different orientations and attitudes towards media rather than in access to media. In this case, the interview data also illustrate that teachers and young people’s interpretations of the mobile phone as a medium differ from one another.

For instance, when talking about their own use of mobile phones, teachers mostly describe it as a medium for communication, or rather a portable medium they use in place of a landline telephone. Ms. Jin, an English teacher I interviewed at J-N middle school, explains what she looked for in her new mobile phone. She makes it clear that for her the main purpose of using the mobile is to make and receive voice calls:

> Ms. Jin: I bought a mobile without the camera function on purpose.
>
> Q: Why?
>
> Ms. Jin: Because it is more compact and handy. I rarely send text messages. I just receive them, but I feel like I need more practise to send text messages. I prefer to only make phone calls with my mobile. Even SMS is not an important option for me. Therefore, taking pictures is not really what I would consider doing...For me, it is enough if the mobile has good reception when making a phone call.
>
> Interview extract. #9.1. Ms. Jin, English teacher, J-N middle school

At the time Ms. Jin purchased her mobile phone, the camera function was embedded in most new mobile phones. However, she decided to choose an older version without the camera, as she felt it was an unnecessary function for her. She chose to buy a mobile phone with a compact design that provided ‘good reception’. Additionally, as in the case of Ms. Jin, teachers in the interviews tend to explain that they need to ‘learn’ how to use other subsidiary functions of the mobile phone and ‘practise’ to get used to them. It can be suggested that this understanding of the mobile phone leads to their perception of young people's mobile phone use as a 'skill'.

Unlike teachers, young people require more than 'good reception' from their mobile phones. During the ‘media categorization activity’, Soh-Won describes what young people consider important in their mobile phones:

> Soh-Won: Adults say it is just fine if [the mobile phone] works well. They say you only need to make a call, ask what’s the use of taking photos with a mobile? But I think for us, the mobile needs to be pretty because we carry them around, and it also needs to have nice functions.
>
> Interview extract. #9.2. I-S middle school

For young people, a mobile phone is more than a communicative medium they can make phone calls with. Soh-Won explains that the mobile phone needs to have a good design and provides users with ‘nice [subsidiary] functions’. Interviewees of S-H middle school give similar answers:

> [While designing the manual]
>
> Q: What do you think we should consider when buying a new mobile phone?
> All: Functions!
> And the design!
> Who is promoting it in the adverts.
>
> Interview extract. #9.3. S-H middle school

Young people in S-H middle school identify three factors as important criteria for a mobile phone. They explain that they need to consider the functions provided by a mobile phone, the design and the celebrity who promotes the product in its advertisement campaigns. Young people valuing the exterior design of the mobile phone and their practice of decorating their mobiles or downloading ringtones as means of expressing themselves has been monitored in previous studies (e.g. Katz and Sugiyama, 2005). In his study of young people's use of mobile phones, Rich Ling (2008) argues that for young people the mobile phone is an object signifying the style and status of its user. However, during the interviews, I noticed that the factor mentioned more often and more distinctly by my respondents was the 'functions' of a mobile phone rather than its design. When they say ‘functions’, they are referring to the subsidiary functions provided by the mobile phone[45] such as a camera, mp3 player, scheduler and even a calculator. Young people's emphasis on the 'functions' is for two main reasons. One is the role mobile phones play in young people's peer culture, and the other is the way that young people identify their mobile phones as gadgets.

Firstly, young people's mobile phone use becomes a part of their peer culture. As discussed in the previous chapters, interviewees suggested that there is a 'right' type of medium to use in the 'right' ways when interacting with their peers. In the case of mobile phones, young people emphasize the need to own a mobile phone with the 'right' functions in order to be part of the peer culture. For instance, the young people interviewed at G-J middle school claim that they consider a ‘camera’ as a necessary function in their mobile phone. In addition to that, there are specific ways of using the camera function that are considered to be unique to young people:

---

[45] This can be understood as equivalent to the free applications (or ‘apps’) one can download on a Smartphone these days.

[When presenting the manual they designed for a mobile phone]

Yeo-Bin: This is the most important thing. My favourite feature of the mobile, taking pictures. The angle is all that matters. You must take the picture using 'ul-jjang' [prettiest person] angle which is 45 degrees. Otherwise, your picture will look exactly like yourself, like you-know-who's picture [teasing the girl next to her jokingly, all giggle]. If you have a bad complexion, you must put it in a brighter mode to cover it up. This way your picture will look much better than you do.

Interview extract. #9.4. G-J middle school

During the interviews, young people state that their new media culture is 'fun' and 'playful' whereas teachers' media culture is 'difficult' and 'serious' (see chapter 6). As described by Yeo-Bin, taking a photograph with a mobile phone is more of a playful practice than a functional one (e.g. taking a picture for recording events). It can be suggested that young people feel the need to have access to a camera phone to take part in this media practice which is commonly enjoyed in their peer culture. In the previous chapters, I discussed how young people's peer-oriented new media culture can function as a constraining factor on young people's new media use. Young people's emphasis on peer-oriented culture can explain the reportedly mundane or 'banal' qualities of young people's new media practices, such as the apparent preoccupation with phatic communication (Facer et al., 2003; Holloway and Valentine, 2003; Livingstone and Bober, 2005).

Secondly, young people focus on the functions provided by a mobile phone due to their identification of the medium as a personal 'gadget' as well as a communicative tool. The image of the mobile phone that interviewees of D-S middle school included in their mobile phone manual illustrates the diverse functions that young people expect from a mobile phone.

THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

Figure 8.1. Image of a mobile phone drawn by the young people of D middle school

When presenting the manual her team designed (figure 8.1.), Soo-Jin explains it as follows:

> I'll tell you the various functions our mobile phone has. First, you can use it as a mirror. You might not have enough time to go to the bathroom after lunch to check if you have something between your teeth. I recommend you to use a mobile as a mirror to avoid embarrassing situations.
>
> Also, even teachers probably like to play games. So there's also a game function. There are also teachers who like to listen to music, so we've added in an mp3 player function. And also 5 mega-pixel, 7 mega-pixel (others joining in saying '7 mega, 7 mega!') cameras are included.

> For teachers who are worried about oversleeping, there's an alarm in there. And also if you don't know the meaning of some words while teaching, it's embarrassing, so we've included an electronic dictionary function.
>
> We've also put in the most important telecommunication function, making phone calls and texting. And in case you've left your oyster card and have no money, you can swipe the built-in transport card in the phone. There's no need to top-up; you just pay as much as you've spent. Apart from an oyster card, there's also a credit card. And calculator. And organizer. People who like internet surfing or who want to watch the news can use the internet. A recording function can be used too.
>
> Interview extract. #9.5. A student explaining the mobile phone manual they designed

I asked the young people in the group to design a manual for a medium they identify as their own, in order to help out teachers who are not so familiar with it (see chapter 4). However, in the case of the manual introduced above, the description is a mixture of how their mobile phone looks and what they consider as cutting-edge technologies that a mobile phone could provide in the near future. For instance, subsidiary functions of mobile phones such as mp3 players, games, educational applications (e.g. an English dictionary) and digital recorders are commonly seen in the models of mobile phones that young people usually own. However, they also include cutting-edge technologies which were not available in the mobile phones used at the time. When Soo-Jin describes the camera included in the mobile phone, she gives its resolution as 5 megapixel and the others in the group join in, claiming it should be 7 megapixel; whereas most of the camera phones young people own do not provide as high a resolution as they claim.[46] In addition, the credit card download service via mobile phones was introduced by SKT (a telecommunication company) at the end of 2005 (Lee, 2005), while the interview took place in May 2005. It can be said that young people in this group designed a manual of their 'ideal' mobile phone.

---

[46] In 2005, the young people I interviewed mostly used 2G handsets which had 1.3 or 2.0 mega-pixel resolution.

In this manual, young people explain that mobile phones can be used for communication, entertainment (mp3 player, camera, internet, game), information searches (dictionary, internet) and have other useful personal tools (recorder, alarm, calculator, transport card, credit card and a 'mirror'). Making phone calls and exchanging text messages are only a part of the various features for which they could use their mobile phones. For young people, a mobile phone is a personal gadget which provides them with various practical and entertainment functions, therefore it is considered as a private medium to which they grow attached.

As young people consider their mobile phone as a personal gadget, it can be suggested that they come to rely on their mobile phones for diverse purposes. Quoting the sociologist Christian Licoppe, Ling (2008) explains that the mobile phone is being understood as ‘an extension of its owner, a personal object constantly there, at hand’. Young people’s approach to the mobile phone is compatible with this explanation. For young people, a mobile phone is a personal object which they spend time with and rely on. This understanding of the mobile phone triggers the conflicts between young people and school regulations that mostly try to minimize the presence of young people's mobile phones in schools.

Many interview participants claim that they bring mobile phones to school and use them discreetly despite school regulations. One of the reasons for this is related to young people's daily schedules. As Eun-Ik argues in the interview extract below, young people claim that they need their mobile phones in schools as they spend much of their time there. Mobile phones can help them beat the boredom and manage the frustration they often feel in school. They identify the mobile phone as a private medium of relaxation and play:

> Q: So that [a blanket ban] is the school rule? Do most of the teachers practice it in the classroom?
>
> All: Yes.
>
> Hyung-Soon: Well, some teachers tend to turn a blind eye to it.
>
> Q: Would you say you keep the rules well?
>
> Jae-Hee: You mean now?
>
> Do-Won: I did at first, but now...
>
> Jae-Hee: I didn't bring it to school at first. But some kids started to bring their mobiles to school, and now everybody does.
>
> Eun-Ik: The mobile phone is like...For us, if we don't have it, we feel frustrated and bored. We need to spend hours in school. It is so difficult if we don't have mobiles with us.
>
> Interview extract. #9.6. G middle school

Young people in Korea spend much of their time in school and private institutions. For that reason, they tend to consider 'school' as not only a public space for learning, but also a private space where they spend time with their peers. The young people in the study approach the school as a multifaceted space, mostly according to the timetable. They differentiate between lessons (i.e. public, adult-controlled) and the school space during breaks and lunchtime (i.e. private, peer-centred). The young people's definition of public and private space in the context of school differs from that of teachers. Teachers in the interviews tend to identify school as a work place, therefore a public space, considering home as a place for their private media use. This gap between teachers and students is also reported in the study by Domitrek and Raby (2008) in their study of cell phone regulation in Canadian schools. These authors argue that there is a gap between school administrators and students in the ways they understand the school space: whereas students think of it as multifaceted, school administrators tend to approach it as homogeneous.

These gaps in young people and teachers' interpretations of the mobile phone and their identification of the school space bring about conflicts and the need for negotiation in relation to how young people's mobile phone use should be regulated in schools. However, during the interviews, I recognized that there was a growing understanding from the teachers' side about what the mobile phone means to young people. Teachers' understanding of young people's mobile phone culture is likely to lead them to be more flexible in regulating mobile phone use. Ms. Cho, who teaches English in S-C middle school, describes young people's use of mobile phones as a part of their 'play' culture. She understands that young people in school often rely on their mobile phones to beat boredom, especially when they have to spend a large part of their time there:

> Q: Are there any rules related to students' mobile phone use in school?
>
> Ms. Cho: Principally, students are not allowed to bring mobiles to school. In unavoidable cases, they are expected to turn off the mobiles when they are at school. Once they get caught using their mobile phone, the rule is for teachers to keep it and return it after having a meeting with the parents. But, in fact, many

students bring mobiles to school and keep them on during classes. They mainly use them during the break to beat boredom, playing games on them and so on. Very often I can hear students' SMS alerts going off during class (she laughs briefly).

...

I think it is a part of their 'play' culture. It is the same with my kid. He continually exchanges text messages with his friends. It is clearly young people's culture. I don't think we can completely ban students from using mobile phones, because it is another pattern of communication for them. Just as we get together during the break and chat a little...Young people are used to having a chat via mobile phones (smiles).

Interview extract. #9.7. Ms. Cho, English teacher, S-C middle school

Reflecting on her son's mobile phone use, Ms. Cho considers young people's constant use of the mobile phone to communicate with each other as 'another pattern of communication' which is unique to young people these days. Therefore, she suggests, banning young people from using mobiles in school is the same as banning a route of communication that is taken for granted by young people. Mr. Shin, who teaches moral education in I-S middle school, goes one step further, drawing attention to the anxiety young people feel when they are prohibited from using mobile phones:

[Discussing how teachers enforce the school rules concerning mobile phones]

Shin: It varies depending on teachers. Some teachers criticize students harshly or confiscate them when they spot students using mobiles in class. As for me, I try not to confiscate their mobiles. I know how important mobiles are for students. When I confiscate a mobile, I make it a rule to return it after a day or two, on the condition that the student behaves well. In other words, I encourage students to do good

> deeds in exchange for retrieving their mobiles earlier than the school regulation indicates. In fact, I often turn a blind eye when they are not intentionally using mobile phones.
>
> ...
>
> I know what mobile phones mean to students. When it is confiscated, students feel anxious, which often makes them stressed. Just taking their mobile away from them for a day or two will give them enough time to reflect on their behaviour. My aim is to make a clear point to students that using the mobile during class is wrong.
>
> Interview extract. #9.8. Mr. Shin, Moral education teacher, I-S middle school

For Mr. Shin, taking away young people's mobile phones for a long time is not an efficient way of regulating students' behaviour in class. As the mobile phone is a meaningful part of young people's everyday life, he argues that it would cause them too much stress if teachers confiscated mobiles for a long time.

In addition, parents' emphasis on the mobile phone as a medium for micro-coordination (Ling and Yttri, 2002) and a technology to ensure young people's safety when they are out in public also affects teachers' regulation of young people's mobile phones. Social and parental concerns about young people's safety in public spaces (or outside the boundary of the home) have led to young people's growing ownership of mobile phones (Matsuda, 2008). During interviews, many teachers argue that it is difficult for them to strictly follow the rules due to parents' concerns over young people's safety:

> Yang: Some students don't have enough time to drop by their home before they go to cram schools. Those students usually keep their mobile phone in their bags, and turn them on as soon as they leave school to arrange a pick-up time with their parents or with their friends. Mobiles are necessary to maintain their social lives.
>
> Jun: Some mothers tell kids to carry mobiles with them to track them down using the GPS.
>
> Yang: We can't stop them from keeping mobile phones in their bags.
>
> Lee: Especially in the case of boys. Parents get worried about their whereabouts. If they have mobiles with them, mothers can locate them wherever they are.
>
> Jun: Yes, the mobile is an important tool for parents because of the safety issues.
>
> Interview extract. #9.9. Korean language teachers (media education study group)

It is difficult for teachers to ban young people from carrying mobiles to school when it is related to a safety issue. A similar point is made by Ms. H Kim who teaches at C-I middle school. She describes how, even though the school does not allow students access to mobile phones in school at all, students keep bringing them to school insisting that their parents are worried about their safety when they have to go to the crammers straight from school. Young people's mobile phones are used as a medium connecting young people to parents and also as a medium of surveillance for parents (Matsuda, 2008).

As seen above, the mobile phone gains various identities within the interactions amongst young people, teachers and parents. Young people generationally identify the mobile phone as a personal gadget they feel attached to, a private medium they can use to kill time in school and a medium parents equip them with for safety and surveillance. These perceptions of the meaning of the mobile phone differ from those of the teachers. Therefore, when teachers attempt to regulate young people's mobile phones at school, they inevitably go through negotiations with young people about its meanings.

When teachers, either officially or unofficially, negotiate the regulation of mobile phones in schools with their students, they often make use of the 'digital generation' discourse - as do young people. In the following section, I will examine how the 'digital generation' discourse plays out in school in relation to mobile phone regulation. In addition, I will focus on the 'symbolic' meanings young people's mobile phones gain in relation to their teachers and peers.

9.2. Symbolic meanings of young people's mobile phones in schools

During the interviews, it could be seen that young people continue challenging the rules, by bringing mobiles to school and sometimes using the mobiles during class 'discreetly', trying to prevent teachers from noticing. Some teachers say that they tend to turn a blind eye to young people's mobile phone use when they are being discreet about it. Besides teachers' growing understanding of young people's reliance on mobile phones, there are other factors that make it difficult for teachers to regulate young people's use of them.

Firstly, teachers describe how they often feel reluctant to regulate young people's mobile phones in the classroom, due to their perception of young people as the 'digital generation'. Young people as the 'digital generation' are thought to be more skillful and knowledgeable in terms of the new media technologies:

> Jun: Besides, [students] all have camera phones. Only teachers carry non-camera phones.
>
> Yoon: That's why teachers don't know much about how to use camera phones. It is a difficult situation for many teachers. Even though they spot students openly taking pictures of teachers or other students, they don't know how to check it. They just give up if there is any password or lock set up by students.
>
> ...
>
> Jun: During the mid-term exam, there were students who attempted cheating using their mobiles. I am not sure if they were all successful. Anyway, everyone who was involved in the cheating plot was punished. After that incident, the no-mobile-at-school rule got enforced really strictly. I never dreamt that students would really do those things. Talk about their skills!
>
> Yoon: As you see, teachers don't know much about how to use mobiles besides making calls and sending texts. For kids, they have brand new mobiles with cutting-edge technology. They are much quicker in terms of getting information about mobiles. They get used to new tech really fast. Otherwise, why would they be called 'thumb-princess' or 'thumb-prince'?
>
> Interview extract. #9.10. Korean language teachers (media education study group)

Teachers in the interview extract above share their experiences related to young people's 'subversive' or 'risky' mobile phone use. It is evident in their discussion that teachers focus on the 'skills' or 'knowledge' of young people when talking about their subversive practices using media. They define young people as a group equipped both with cutting-edge technologies, and with knowledge that teachers lack.

Young people's mobile phone use has a unique aspect due to its association with the social discourse celebrating young people as the digital generation. Young people are subject to regulation and control in relation to their mobile phone use, yet they are considered to be higher than teachers in terms of the hierarchy of expertise in using new media. This challenges teachers' regulation of students' mobile phones, often leading them to turn a blind eye to young people's use of mobile phones in schools. In many cases, young people are left to self-regulate their mobile phone use (the issue of self-regulation will be discussed further in the following section).

In addition, the social implications put upon young people's relationships with new media empower them and grant their mobile phone a symbolic meaning. By having a mobile phone, a visual symbol is available to young people, implying the potential for young people to have more knowledge than teachers in the school setting, which is a space where teachers traditionally have authority over students in terms of knowledge. Therefore, it can be said that young people's mobile phones become a symbol of 'power' within their relationship with teachers. For instance, students exchanging text messages during class is often considered as a modern form of passing notes. However, I suggest that young people's practice of exchanging texts during class gains a different meaning due to the social implications surrounding young people and their new media use.

In the interviews, I recognized that young people often make their mobile phone use visible as a means to challenge teachers' authority. In a situation where teachers are reluctant to strictly regulate young people's mobile phone use in the classroom, young people's intentional display of it brings about conflicts between teachers and students. For instance, students of E-P middle school describe the type of class in which they mostly attempt to use their mobile phones:

> Q: So you are saying most of the students use mobile phones during the class. Yoon-Ji: Yes, mostly sending text messages.
>
> Jung-Hue: When you're in a boring class, you can see everyone texting on their mobiles under the desk.
>
> Soo-Bi: Yeah, because you get told off if you chat with each other.
>
> Jah-Hyang: There are some teachers who lead the class really well, but there are some who don't. When the teacher is not a good attention holder, students do whatever they want to do. Before the class begins, they even prepare their mobiles, turn the power on to use during the class.
>
> Interview extract. #9.11. E-P middle school

Jung-Hue and Jah-Hyang justify their use of mobile phones during class by pointing out some teachers' inability to hold the class's attention. According to their descriptions, young people do not make an effort to be discreet in using their mobile phones when they think the teacher is not capable of managing the class well. The visibility of young people's mobile phones during class can be a challenge to a teacher's authority. Hyo-Jin describes the case of her maths teacher who decided to enforce the school rule and confiscated students' mobile phones because he felt that students' use of mobiles during his class was a sign of them being disrespectful of his authority:

> Hyo-Jin: Kids use mobiles mostly during maths class, because our maths teacher tends not to confiscate mobiles. But one day, he got really mad and took all the

> mobiles away, saying that he's going to keep them for a month as the school rule says. I think he got mad because he thought that we were taking advantage of his softness.
>
> Interview extract. #9.12. D-S middle school

For teachers, young people's use of mobile phones in class can be understood as a sign that they are not focusing on the lesson, which is often considered as a challenge to teacher's authority. It also symbolizes young people's non-presence in the classroom. As discussed by Ling (2008), the mobile phone takes part in communication as a physical object. Ling describes how the presence of the mobile phone can function as an indicator that one is not interested in the communication. Other studies of mobile phone use illustrate how mobile phones are used to build up an invisible fence enabling users to claim their own private space despite their physical presence (see Geser, 2004; Fujimoto, 2005). By intentionally using mobile phones during class, and often making their mobiles visible, young people are sending messages that they are not present in the classroom but rather present in the peer-oriented space constructed via the mobile phone network (this issue will be discussed further in 9.3).

However, young people's mobile phones gain symbolic meaning not only in relation with teachers, but also in relation with their peers. During the interviews, some teachers express their concerns saying that students' mobile phones as commercial objects can be symbols of 'economic/cultural capital' and inevitably cause feelings of deprivation amongst some young people who cannot afford to own one. Due to young people's economic dependency on their parents (or guardians), young people's possession of mobile phones is seen as a reflection of their parents' economic status. Mr. Yoon says that he is concerned about young people's economic status being visible in the classroom via the mobile phone model they own and that this is a source of visible power amongst peers:

> Yoon: The economic status of students varies in my school. Some live in newly built spacious flats, and there are always two or three students who can’t even afford tuition. In addition, mobile phone companies in Korea try to tempt people into updating their mobile to a newer model after a very short space of time. In a situation like this, for kids, just having a brand new model becomes a form of power. This would be okay if they just kept it to themselves, and used it only when necessary, like when they have to talk with their parents to arrange a pick-up schedule and only when they are at cram schools or private libraries. But it is not the case. That’s why our school does not allow students to bring mobile phones to school at all. It has become our school’s tradition. That way, students can’t help but be discreet about their mobile phone use at school.
>
> Interview extract. #9.13. Mr. Yoon, Korean language teacher

Mr. Yoon’s school practices a blanket ban on young people's mobile phone use. According to his explanation, the main reason behind this regulation is because of the materialistic nature of the mobile phone. Mr. Yoon argues that as the media messages surrounding young people identify them with the 'newest' media, they are under constant pressure to catch up with the trend and purchase the newest model.

Mr. Yoon’s comment on young people’s ownership of mobile phones represents teachers’ concerns about young people's vulnerability to commercial culture/materialistic culture.

He implies that young people are bombarded by media and social messages that the mobile phone is a must-have ('necessity') for them these days. Such social and cultural messages describing young people as a collective group that actively uses mobile phones, make it difficult for young people not to participate and become mobile phone users. This concern was echoed in a different way by another group:

> Q: Can students from poor areas afford to own mobiles?
>
> Jun: It [their economic situation] doesn't really matter. They all have one.
>
> Lee: They can't afford to pay for school lunch, but they have mobiles.
>
> Yang: There are even students who apply for financial aid to pay their tuition fee, but still have brand new mobiles and go to cram schools.
>
> Jun: Besides, they all have camera phones. Only teachers carry non-camera phones.
>
> Interview extract. #9.14. Korean language teachers (media education study group)

However, some teachers argue it is not always the case that young people's ownership of expensive mobile phones reflects their economic status. Teachers (e.g. teachers in the media studies group and Ms. Jin of J-N middle school) mention the cases of young people who are not affluent yet own expensive mobile phones. They point out that a young person's consumption of a mobile phone is often more about their expression of identity and is influenced by their priorities when making decisions of what to consume. Ms. Jin elaborates on the issue and discusses how the sense of deprivation young people can feel complicates the relations between economic affordability and ownership of mobile phones:

> Jin: It is not the case that kids from rich backgrounds have mobiles and kids from the poor areas don't. If you are rich, you can always buy any mobile phone whenever you want to. Having or not having a mobile doesn't really affect kids who can always afford one. But if it is not the case, you might feel deprived by the fact that you can't even afford a mobile when the rest of your friends have one. I think that is why, some parents, even though they are not affluent enough, try to buy their kids mobile phones when they think it will make their kids feel satisfied. When I first saw kids whose families were on benefits and couldn't even pay for their lunch had expensive mobile phones, I thought it didn't make sense. But now, I sort of understand. Owning a mobile can have different meanings to them compared to their rich classmates.
>
> Interview extract. #9.15. Ms. Jin , English teacher, J-N middle school

Based on her observations of students' patterns of mobile phone consumption, she makes it clear that it is not a simple case of young people with more economic resources gaining power over students who can't afford to own a mobile phone. Nevertheless, as Ms. Jin suggests, it can be said that young people's mobile phone consumption is closely related to their self-presentation and identity.

However, for the young people I interviewed, it is more important to have the 'right' type of mobile phone (as discussed in part 1) than the most expensive one. Rather than going for the cutting-edge, expensive models, which concerned teachers, they are keen on having mobiles that support them to take part in peer group activities. It can be said that for young people, their mobile phone functions as a 'symbol of connection'. Owning or having access to the mobile phone means they are taking part in the peer culture based on the new media (Geser, 2004). This importance of connection is often brought up by young people in the interviews to justify their need to carry mobile phones to school despite school regulations. For young people, it is important to be continually co-present with each other, despite the physical, temporal distances amongst their peers. Some of them describe the feeling of 'anxiety' they have, whenever they forget to bring their mobiles with them:

> [When discussing their use of mobiles in school]
>
> Q: Then, why do you insist on bringing mobiles to school, when you are not allowed to?
>
> Hae-Ryung: Because I have an undying desire to exchange text messages with friends (giggles)
>
> In-Nah: I feel anxious about missing a text message whenever I leave my mobile back at home.
>
> Dah-Hae: Yeah, that's right. The anxiety...
>
> Yu-Jin: I might miss a call from someone...I don't want to miss an important call.
>
> Interview extract. #9.16. S-H middle school

> Ja-Hyang: You know, when I forget to bring my mobile with me, it has an effect on me all day long. Everything becomes so inconvenient, nothing goes smoothly. I have difficulties meeting my friends. I can't access all my schedules which I saved on my phone, but if I lose my mobile phone, I will consider my life is over.
>
> (others agree)
>
> Jung-Hue: Especially, if you lose it during the school vacation, it's the end of it.
>
> Soo-Bi: Others will think you are dead (laughs)
>
> Interview extract. #9.17. E-P middle school

Based on their discussions, it can be said that their anxieties are not only about 'missing an important call' or not being able to access information they have saved on their mobile phones, but also about being disconnected and excluded from the peer network, even for a short while. In the case of these interviewees, the friends they mention are often within close physical proximity. However, what their discussions imply is the existence of on-going peer culture that happens via young people's mobile phones. It can be said that within the school setting, another layer of 'virtual' space, which is constructed via young people's new media, is continually present.

9.3. Young people's practice of constructing a generationally exclusive space via the mobile phone: the blurring of private and public worlds

As seen in the previous sections, young people's mobile phones are considered as a carrier of their private culture, or rather a form of young people's private culture itself. In addition, the use of mobiles is often identified as a form of 'subversive' youth culture by teachers. The regulation of young people's mobile phones in school is not only about keeping the 'medium of distraction' out of the classroom, but also about preventing young people's private culture from intruding into the public space of the school. However, young people's mobile phone use in the school setting has a different aspect compared to the regulation of private media in public spaces (e.g. see the Sony Walkman study by Paul du Gay and others (1997)). Young people's mobile phones are not only a private medium in the public setting, but also function as a node of a private network due to their connectivity.

When the interview participants discuss which personal media are subject to school regulation, Yeah-Young pinpoints the connectivity of the mobile phone to explain the reason why it is more strictly regulated compared with other portable and personal media such as mp3 players:

> [Discussing the school regulations related to the media young people use]
>
> Q: How about mp3 players?
>
> Suh-Young: That gets confiscated as well.
>
> Duk-Hyeon: Not really. Teachers don't say anything even though I carry it around with me.
>
> Yeah-Young: Some kids play truant together from school after contacting each other via BuddyBuddy. I think we are not allowed to use mobile phones in school, because we can do it [meaning contacting each other without being noticed by teachers and playing truant etc.] with the mobile phone. That's why teachers are suspicious of our mobile phone use. But in the case of mp3 players, it is just used to listen to music, so that's why it's fine to bring them to school.
>
> Interview extract. #9.18. C-I middle school

Yeah-Young supports her point by citing an instance of her school friends contacting each other using instant messenger in school and playing truant together. As she recounts, communicative new media provide young people with the means to connect with each other under the teacher's nose. Young people can construct a peer-network using their mobile phones. It can be said that this peer network exists as a separate 'private' sector within the established school space. Together with the social implication of young people as a 'digital generation' (see 9.2), this 'privateness' of their mobile phone use explains teachers' reluctance to actively regulate young people’s mobile phone use in schools. As discussed in the previous chapters, the peer-network constructed by young people via new media is often 'private' due to its ‘generationally exclusive’ characteristics. Young people express their wants and needs to keep teachers at a certain distance when interacting with each other via new media. They are reluctant to allow their new media use to be regulated by teachers, shunning teachers’ intrusion into their spaces.

Therefore, the burden of regulation falls upon users (i.e. young people), requiring them to self-regulate. In the interviews, young people often talk about the risks they face when using their mobile phone (e.g. being led to use paid-for content without knowing, receiving spam mail with pornographic images) – risks which are not really being dealt with by teachers/adults, but by themselves. When they talk about these risks, they often present themselves as a ‘digital generation’, claiming that they can deal with the issues on their own or with the help of their peers. It can be suggested that the ‘digital generation’ discourse and the ‘privateness’ of young people’s new media culture make it difficult for adults/teachers to get involved in young people’s new media culture, let alone to regulate it (also see Livingstone and Bober, 2003).

However, due to the increasing portability and convergence of the new media technology, young people’s new media inevitably have a growing presence in the school setting. It becomes ever more difficult for teachers to avoid dealing with young people’s new media culture. During the interviews, teachers say that they are asked by their students’ parents to be involved in regulating and controlling young people’s everyday mobile phone use. For instance, Miss Jun, a Korean language teacher, describes parents’ expectations of teachers' involvement in controlling or protecting young people in relation to their new media use:

> Jun: In my school, students are allowed to bring mobile phones. But if it rings during class, it will be confiscated. They can use the mobile during lunch break or recess.
>
> ...
>
> I had a student who was caught using her mobile for the third time. According to the rule, her mobile had to be confiscated for a month. But, in fact, her mother called and asked me to confiscate the mobile till the end of the term, saying that her daughter's mobile phone use was getting out of control.
>
> Interview extract. #9.19. Miss Jun, Korean language teacher, member of the media education study group

As seen from Miss Jun's case, the teacher's role in relation to young people's new media culture is often ambiguous. School rules encourage them to keep young people's mobile phone use out of sight as much as possible, but at the same time, they are expected to pay attention to young people's use of mobile phones and protect them from risks related to mobile phone use. Some teachers claim that this is young people's private realm and it is the role of parents if young people's private culture needs to be regulated. A few teachers recognize that it is necessary for teachers to pay attention to what young people do with their mobile phone and furthermore what types of media content and services young people are exposed to:

> Ms. Kwon: The mobile phone these days comes with the new technology such as DMB (Digital Multimedia Broadcasting) and Wibro (Wireless Broadband). We can search information or watch media content on the mobile phone now. What I am worried about is that in the case of computer-based internet, we can monitor what our children are doing, but as for the mobile phone, it is impossible to follow young people everywhere and monitor what they do.

> ...
>
> You know the mobile companies allow content providers to sell inappropriate material like nude pictures of models via mobile phones. Whenever I read news articles about a certain celebrity earning lots of money after publishing nude pictures on mobiles, I feel sad and distressed as a teacher and parent. I think as teachers we need to deal with this issue.
>
> Interview extract. #9.20. Ms. Kwon, Social studies teacher

During the interview, Ms. Kwon argued that as a teacher she feels the need to know more about what young people can do with their mobile phones and actively protect them from the 'risks' they are exposed to. However, teachers' attempts to protect young people inevitably confront young people's self-presentation as a media-savvy 'digital generation', and also their refusal to accept adults trespassing into their new media realm.

Conclusion

In this last data chapter, I brought the attention back to the school, looking at how young people's 'private' new media culture become subject to regulation in the public space of the school and how the ‘digital generation' discourse plays out when teachers and young people negotiate the regulations.

I discussed how students and teachers negotiate the expansion of young people’s private world into the 'public' realm of school which is caused by young people's use of mobile phones. With the main focus on the regulation of young people's mobile phone use in schools, I looked at how the mobile phone is perceived by teachers and young people, the symbolic meanings the mobile phone takes on within the interactions between teachers and young people, and amongst young people themselves, and young people's construction of the 'generationally exclusive' private space in the school setting.

Firstly, there was a gap between young people's and teachers' interpretations of the mobile phone. While teachers tended to approach it as a communication tool, young people considered it as not only a communicative technology but also as a personal gadget and a social tool with which to participate in the peer culture. Hence, when designing the manual for mobile phones or discussing about their mobile phone use, young people paid attention to the subsidiary functions embedded in the mobile phone they use.

When young people's mobile phone use takes place in schools, it inevitably raises the issue of regulation. It is often mentioned by teachers that there is a gap between the school rules and the actual practice of regulation. This gap is due to various reasons, such as teachers' growing understandings of the meanings of mobile phones for young people. In addition, it is due to the 'symbolic' meanings young people's mobile phones gain in relation to teachers. As mentioned in previous chapters, young people are considered as more knowledgeable in terms of skills and information about new media. Teachers discuss cases when they had difficulties in regulating young people's mobile phone use due to their lack of knowledge.

Young people also make use of their generational status when interacting with teachers. They argue that some of their peers deliberately use mobile phones during class to express their lack of interest and boredom in class. In addition, young people's discussions of their mobile phone usage in schools imply the existence of an on-going peer culture that happens via the mobile phone. It can be said that within the school setting, another layer of 'virtual' space which is constructed via young people's new media, is constantly present.

Chapter 10. Conclusion

Introduction

The dominant generational discourse defines young people as a 'new' breed that differs from previous generations due to the technology with which they grew up. However, what is lacking in this discourse is the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of young people's new media use, and the generational identifications of young people themselves. In this research, my focus is on what young people *say* they do rather than what they *actually* do with the new media. By looking at how young people perceive, understand and orientate themselves towards the new media they use, I have set out to study how young people take part in the construction of their generational identity in relation to new media within the context of their relationships with teachers and peers.

In this chapter, I will discuss the overarching themes and findings raised from the data chapters. By looking into young people's new media use and the ways in which both teachers and young people perceive and understand it, I have explored the process of 'generationing' around the technology. The examination of how young people, teachers and various contexts contribute to the 'generationing' process points to the complexity of the relations between young people and new media, and suggests that we need to move beyond simply categorizing them as a 'digital generation' with innate abilities to use new media and natural preferences for the newest technology. I have summarised my key findings as follows.

1. Same media, different uses: The media generation gap between young people and teachers is not so much about their access to media, but more about their orientations towards media

Based on the data I collected, I argue that there is indeed a 'media generation gap' between young people and teachers. However, this 'media generation gap' is more complicated than is suggested in the 'digital generation' discourses discussed in chapter 1. For instance, the digital generation arguments assume that young people's media uses are focused on new media, whereas adults mainly use old media. By contrast, my survey of Korean middle school students and teachers' media use shows that both young people and teachers have a high rate of access to both old and new media, and are active users of new media, especially the internet. The main finding from the survey I conducted (chapter 5) is that the media generation gap between students and teachers is not in the rates of access and use, but rather in the attitudes towards the media and in the media orientations of each group. For instance, young people tend to identify new media as entertainment-oriented, while teachers use them mainly for work. With the exception of games (which are more strongly youth-oriented), the differences here are not primarily to do with *which* media are used, but rather with what the different groups use them *for*. It can be said that, for much of the time, they use the same media but for different purposes.

In addition, the 'media generation gap' is not simply between adults and young people. Discourses that define young people as the digital generation tend to make a binary distinction between young people and adults. However, in the survey data, there is a consistent difference amongst teachers in relation to their age group. Younger teachers' media usage and media orientations were closer to those of students than of older teachers. It can be suggested that the media generation gap might more accurately be seen as a continuum, rather than a binary opposition (e.g. digital natives versus digital immigrants).

Secondly, the popular discourses about the digital generation take technically deterministic views, assuming that young people make use of all the technical possibilities enabled by new media technology. However, when focusing on young people's explanations of their new media use, it can be said that young people's interpretations of the new media play an important part in constructing their new media culture. Young people engage with media within various contexts, economic, technical and cultural (see chapter 6). For example, in economic terms, their new media practices are framed by their economic dependence; technically, they are framed by the media contents and technologies that are available to them; and culturally, they are framed both by the peer-oriented new media culture and by parental regulation. These contexts influence how young people approach and understand the new media, and in turn their media usage patterns affect how the new media culture develops. Young people and new media are thus involved in a continuous process of co-construction.

The ‘media generation gap’ also exists in the form of perceptions, and both young people and teachers are involved in the construction of these perceptions (for example, through mutual stereotyping). The survey analyzed in chapter 5 shows that both students and teachers have certain stereotypes of each other’s media culture. For example, teachers assumed that young people would favour new media for emotional gratification, whereas students assumed that teachers would prefer old media such as books. In addition to the mutual stereotyping of each other's media culture, young people and teachers take part in 'generationing' young people in relation to both old and new media.

2. Young people's participation in 'generationing' around new media technology

When discussing the construction of social identity, Jenkins (2008) argues that identification is an internal-external dialectical process. This process can be seen in young people's generational identification around new media: they take part in 'generationing' by differentiating their new media usage from those of teachers, and establishing implicit rules amongst their peers. This occurs in various ways.

2.1. Young people put generational labels on the media they use

As mentioned above, both young people and teachers are active users of new media. However, when asked to categorize a range of media into 'teachers' media' and 'young people's media', the young people I interviewed tended to define new media culture as belong to them rather than to teachers, by putting 'generational markers' on the new media they use. For instance, when describing IM as their own media and email as belonging to teachers, my respondents argued that communicating via instant messaging is 'easy', 'fun' and like real conversation ('closer to real life') or talk ('orality'), and is mainly used for phatic communication; whereas email is 'difficult', 'work-related', like writing ('literacy'), 'formal', 'serious' and 'functional'. The characteristics young people identify with IM and email can be extended to their perceptions of young people's new media culture and teachers' media culture in general (e.g. taking photos as a record versus for fun; teachers valuing 'serious' novels versus young people's preference for internet fiction that is easier and closer to their daily lives). The young people tend to mention these generational identifications of new media particularly in seeking to defend forms of new media culture that are devalued or disapproved of by teachers (e.g. internet fiction, the language young people use in SMS or IM, etc.).

In this respect, it can be suggested that young people's identification of new media as 'fun', 'easy' and closer to their daily lives represents a situated claim about their generational identity. As discussed in chapter 1, young people's new media use is approached in terms of both culture and skills, and this dual approach is seen in the young people's explanations about their new media use as well. When they discuss new media use practices amongst their peers, the cultural aspect is emphasized; whereas when they discuss it within the frame of teachers and students, they tend to focus on the skills and knowledge that are needed to make use of the new media.

2.2. Young people present themselves as 'media-savvy', especially in comparison to teachers

When discussing the risks involved in their new media use, young people also tend to draw upon the 'digital generation' discourses. They present themselves as 'media-savvy' youth in response to adults' concerns about their new media use. For instance, young people claim that they are aware of adults' worries in relation to their new media use, such as the dangers of internet addiction, being exposed to media content that is inappropriate for young people, and taking part in 'illegal' online file-sharing and 'online piracy'. The young people argue that they are aware of the risks and they are capable of dealing with them, often sharing know-how and even purposefully taking part in the subversive use of new media (e.g. describing file-sharing as 'forbidden fruit'). It can be said that they take a reflexive, often ironic, stance in relation to adults' concerns about the new media by defining themselves as a digital generation who know more about new media than adults.

Young people's status as the 'digital generation' is picked up on within the school setting. Both young people and teachers tend to argue that young people are more knowledgeable and skilful in terms of using new media and more likely to possess information concerning cutting-edge new media technologies. This understanding of young people and new media leads young people to place themselves above teachers in the hierarchy of new media knowledge. It can be said that the dominant hierarchical relations between teachers and students in schools in relation to knowledge are reversed when it comes to new media. This perception about the reversed hierarchy hinders teachers from actively regulating young people's new media use in schools (e.g. teachers' regulation of young people's mobile phones in schools, as discussed in chapter 9), and it often makes teachers feel at risk when they attempt to interact with young people using new media (e.g. in the case of BuddyBuddy messenger, as discussed in chapter 7).

However, the growing commercialization of new media had started to produce a different dimension in the relations between teachers and students, in terms of their knowledge about new media. The economic constraints placed upon young people prevent them from using some new media technology as it is often introduced at a high price (e.g. the features provided by high-tech mobile phones). Based on the interviews, it can be suggested that teachers have *economic* capital that (potentially) enables them to own such new media; whereas young people claim to have *cultural* capital (for example, updated information and know-how regarding new media technology), thereby positioning themselves as the ‘digital generation'. Yet, at the time of the interviews, it could be seen that it was more difficult for young people to gain access to some commercialized new media technologies and more difficult for them to claim expertise over teachers in these areas.

2.3. Young people emphasize their need to be in the 'right' place and function in the 'right' ways to take part in the peer-oriented new media culture

Young people's generational claims can be limiting (e.g. amongst peers) as well as empowering (e.g. within their relations with teachers). While presenting themselves as 'media-savvy' youth in comparison to adults, when discussing their media practices as part of peer-oriented culture, young people describe their new media use partly as a form of 'work', in which they have to invest time and effort. Their existing desire and need to be included in their peer group (or the fear of being excluded or disconnected from it) is magnified by new media technology that enables them to be in 'perpetual contact': this is seen both as an advantage of new media and a source of stress for young people.

As new media are mostly used as platforms for peer culture (e.g. chatting on BuddyBuddy was described as an act of friendship management), there are implicit rules which function as markers of generational membership. For instance, when describing their new media culture, young people discuss the importance of using the 'right' media in the 'right' ways if they are to be included in the peer group. Thus, owning a mobile phone that provides the 'right' functions (those that are necessary if one is to take part in peer culture), symbolizes their membership in their peer group; they also tend to 'hang out' on the IM platform that is used by most of their peers (i.e. BuddyBuddy, see chapter 7). In addition, young people talk about the implicit rules (‘etiquette’ such as reciprocity, quick responses, self-presentation and self-promotion) when communicating via new media: they know that they are expected to respond rapidly and frequently, and also make timely and appropriate excuses using the technical features provided by the medium (e.g. status indicators) when they cannot. When making use of the personal homepages on social networking services, they explain that it is important to take care of your homepage consistently, and present and promote yourself. The interview data suggest that these implicit rules in using the new media are visible only to young people. The young people in the interviews did not expect adults to follow the implicit rules they mentioned. For instance, they did not expect their parents to respond to their SMS, while responding to their own messages as soon as possible was a rule frequently mentioned amongst young people. It can be suggested that these implicit rules function as indicators for generational membership, but can also work as constraints that limit more diverse new media practices.

Young people construct generational boundaries around the new media by sharing common new media platforms and acknowledging the implicit rules agreed upon by generational members. However, the generational boundaries are not just formed by young people themselves. Rather, young people and media service providers collaborate on defining these boundaries. For instance, as seen in chapter 7, young people's interpretation of BuddyBuddy as a private 'generational' space is supported by the textual features of the platform itself (features that are described as 'childish' by young people) and the service provider (for example, in providing functions and links that are seen to be more attractive or relevant to younger teenagers). In addition, the implicit rules mentioned by young people are reinforced by textual features and forms of functionality that enable or rather encourage users to manage how they present themselves and actively promote themselves to others.

2.4. Young people attempt to construct a generationally exclusive space that is free from adult regulation

The generational boundaries defined in collaboration between young people and new media lead young people to perceive their peer-oriented new media spaces as private and generationally exclusive even though they are based on a public platform (e.g. an internet site that has open access). Within these spaces, they practise new economies (as discussed in chapter 9) which are not necessarily influenced by their offline economic status, and communicate with peers based on the 'etiquette' implicitly shared by the generational members. Due to the generationally exclusive characteristics of young people's new media culture, adults have difficulties in regulating or controlling young people's new media use. At the same time, it can be said that young people attempt to construct exclusive new media spaces (a 'private' space for youth) in order to be free from adults' regulation and surveillance. As a result, it can be suggested that young people actively and intentionally take part in maintaining and often strengthening the media generation gap.

3. Teacher-student interactions around new media

As mentioned above, young people's new media culture tends to be generationally exclusive. Yet young people’s and teachers' interactions around new media can be seen in schools. Teachers talk about their usage of new media that are more familiar to young people (e.g. communicating via BuddyBuddy rather than the more usual MSN messenger, or exchanging text messages via mobile phones rather than making phone calls). They purposefully use media that are identified with young people in seeking to improve their communication with them. Young people are also aware of teachers' attempts to make use of the new media that are more familiar to them. On one level, they appreciate teachers' efforts as they demonstrate that teachers acknowledge and care for them and their culture. However, as seen in the media manuals designed by the young people, they tend to draw a line when inviting teachers into their cultural realm. Advising teachers to pay attention to their language (e.g. do not overuse slang) or to use the new media in moderation, the young people expect teachers to keep their identities as adults/teachers and not to try to ‘pass themselves off’ as one of them. It can be said that they want to keep teachers at arm's length when interacting around their new media culture.

Furthermore, when young people's new media come into the school setting, teachers and students face the issue of regulation. For instance, at the time of the interviews, growing numbers of young people had started to bring their mobile phones to school. Most of the schools were beginning to address this by introducing rules and regulations through a process of trial and error; teachers and young people were, albeit informally, negotiating the actual practice of the regulations. In these negotiations between teachers and students, the ‘media generation gap’ between them appears again, in terms of their interpretations of the media (for example, teachers approaching the mobile phone as a communicative tool, and young people focusing on it as a personal gadget and a means to take part in peer culture). In addition, due to the symbolic meanings of the mobile phone (which are supported by the 'digital generation' discourse), teachers often express their feelings of disempowerment and incompetence when they try to regulate young people's use of mobile phones in the classroom.

Teachers point out their ambiguous role in regulating young people's new media use, especially when young people's private media culture encroaches into the school setting. They explain that as young people's new media culture is becoming more visible in schools and as it takes up an important part of young people's daily lives, they are expected to be involved in young people's new media culture as educators. However, as mentioned above, due to young people's tendency to construct a generationally exclusive new media culture and the ‘digital generation’ discourse that puts young people above teachers in the hierarchy of new media knowledge, teachers are prevented from actively being involved in this new media culture. This situation leaves young people to self-regulate their new media use without the support of teachers.

Looking back to the digital generation of 2005

The young people I interviewed in 2005 were aged between 14 and 16 at that time. They are now young adults in their early twenties. Did they grow up to be completely different from the adults of previous generations, as the ‘digital generation’ discourse claims? It has been more than ten years since Don Tapscott described young people as the ‘Net generation’. Still younger generations are labelled as new kinds of ‘digital’ generation, albeit with different titles. Who are these ‘new’ generations?

Technology changes rapidly and young people often tend to follow these trends. Young people these days might not use the new media that were enthusiastically described by the students in these interviews. However, looking carefully at the construction of the so-called ‘digital generation’ in 2005, various factors that make up the concept and identity of that generation can be seen. The findings discussed above show that young people are not only influenced by the new media environment they grew up in, but also they themselves actively construct and influence the new media culture.

The social discourse that categorizes young people as a 'digital generation' is in danger of putting young people in a kind of blind spot, assuming that they have spontaneous, innate ability to use the new media. The 'digital generation' are seen as experts in new media, who are automatically knowledgeable and media literate. Yet, what they know about new media and the difficulties they experience in the new media realm are not clear to teachers. In addition, the digital divide amongst young people persists. In the interview data, it was seen that the level of technology young people have access to varies according to their family's values (and hence forms of parental regulation) as well as their economic status. In addition, the perceived hierarchy between young people and teachers may be reversed due to the growing commercialization of new media: in time, this may enable teachers to have more cultural resources related to new media than young people, while young people's new media use will tend to be limited due to their peer-oriented culture and their economic dependency. In this respect, the position of young people as a ‘digital generation’ may well prove to have been a passing historical phenomenon (see Herring, 2008).

I have argued in this thesis that the construction of the ‘digital generation’ needs to be approached as one aspect of young people's ‘generationing’ related to new media technology, and that often the ‘media generation gap’ is actively constructed by young people as well as adults (in the case of my study, teachers). In the theory chapter, I argued that when considering the construction of the 'digital generation' from the theoretical perspective of 'generationing', the focus needs to be on both the macro level (i.e. the changes in young people's new media environment) and the micro level (i.e. the generational identification of young people themselves around the technology).

‘Generationing’ on the macro level has been examined by surveying the differences between young people and teachers' media environment. As discussed above, the ‘media generation gap’ between young people and teachers is not so much in their access to media, but more in their orientations towards media and their uses of media. In addition, the break is not between young people and teachers, but more in a form of a continuum (differences present amongst young people and also between elder and younger teachers). It can be said that the construction of the ‘digital generation’ is more evident on the micro level than on the macro level.

On the micro level, young people generationally identify themselves in relation to new media within the context of their relationships with teachers and peers. As Jenkins (1996) explains, the process of social identification is an 'internal-external dialectic' in which the self-image of a social group is as important as its public image. Young people take part in ‘generationing’ in relation to new media by agreeing upon implicit cultural rules amongst their peers (i.e. constructing the self-image) and also by differentiating their new media usage from that of teachers’ (i.e. constructing its public image).

When discussing their peer-based new media use, young people tend to focus on the cultural aspects. As discussed in this chapter, they emphasize their need to be in the 'right' place and function in the 'right' ways in order to take part in the peer-oriented new media culture. In this way, young people attempt to construct a generationally exclusive space that is free from adult regulations. This ‘generationing’ does not only involve young people’s interpretations of the new media they use but also the co-operation of media production. This suggests that the 'new media' in discussion here (that is, the media environment, the new media texts and productions young people use) need to be approached as social entities that are co-constructed both for and by young people.

In addition, young people’s ‘generational identification’ around new media entails the differentiation of their new media use from that of teachers. In this process, young people often refer to the digital generation discourse and present themselves as 'media savvy' youth. When discussing their interactions with teachers around the media they mainly use, young people tend to approach their new media uses as practices that require skills and knowledge (i.e. cultural capital) that teachers often lack. Young people often present themselves as 'media savvy' youth and position themselves higher in the hierarchy in terms of knowledge and skills (which was traditionally seen as teachers' prerogative). At the same time, teachers also refer to the digital generation discourse, expressing their lack of confidence in dealing with young people's new media use in schools (mostly in terms of 'regulation' but sometimes when teaching ICT or new media related topics).

Historical specificity of the study and implications for further research

The fieldwork for this study took place in the particular context of the mid-2000s in South Korea. Since then, the fast pace of technological change has brought about changes in the media environment which inevitably influence what young people can do with new media and how they make use of them. The generational identity of young people in relation to new media, and the generation gap between young people and adults are bound to acquire different characteristics in different social and cultural settings (not least because of the media environment and social structure in which young people are located). It can be assumed that the generational identity constructions of the young 'digital generation' now and in other countries will be different from those discussed in this thesis.

However, as seen in the literature review chapter, the issues raised by the study (e.g. young people constructing peer-oriented culture and generationally exclusive space via new media; issues of regulations and negotiations between teachers and students concerning young people's digital practices, etc.) are still relevant in the youth and new media research. Findings from this study can provide unique insight into subsequent developments in the ways in which young people engage with digital technologies and media globally. Furthermore, in arguing here for a more nuanced understanding of young people as a 'digital generation', I suggested that it should be looked at from both aspects – in terms of 'generationing', which considers young people's new media practices within the context of their relationships with teachers and peers; and in relation to the co-construction of young people and new media. This theoretical framework which combines 'generationing' and 'co-construction of young people and new media' could be applied to examine the 'digital youth' of diverse times and cultural contexts.

This study focused on what young people *say* about their new media use. One way forward would be to observe and examine young people's individual as well as collective media practices. In this thesis, I raised the issue of the gap amongst young people in terms of their accessibility and use of new media as well as their skills and knowledge related to new media. A further study that examines the actual skills and competency of young people related to new media (i.e. digital literacy) will be useful for teachers who are expected to educate the digital youth.

References

Aarsand, P. A. (2007). 'Computer and video games in family life: the digital divide as a resource in intergenerational interactions'. *Childhood*, 14(2), 235-256.

Alanen, L. (2001). 'Explorations in generational analysis'. In L. Alanen and B. Mayall(Eds), *Conceptualizing child-adult relations*. London: Routledge.

Alanen, L. and Mayall, B. (Eds) (2001). *Conceptualizing child-adult relations: the future of childhood.* London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Alliance_for_childhood (2004). *Tech tonic: towards a new literacy of technology.* Alliance for Childhood.

Arafeh, S. (2002). *The digital disconnect : the widening gap between internet –savvy students and their schools.* Washington DC: Pew Internet and American Life project.

Atton, C. (2004). *An alternative internet: radical media, politics and creativity.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Balnaves, M., Donald, S., & Shoesmith, B. (2009). *Media theories and approaches: A global perspective*. Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Benhabib, S. (2002). *The claims of culture : equality and diversity in the global era.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Benkler, Y. (2006). *The wealth of networks: how social production transforms markets and freedom.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Bennett, S., Maton, K., & Kervin, L. (2008). 'The 'digital natives' debate: A critical review of the evidence'. *British journal of educational technology*, 39(5), 775-786.

Blair, C. R., & Czaja, R. (2005). *Designing surveys: a guide to decisions and procedures.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Boyd, D. (2007). Social network sites: Public, private, or what? *Knowledge Tree*, 13(1), 1-7.

Boyd, D. (2009). 'Friendship'. In M. Ito (Ed.), *Hanging out, messing around and geeking out.*

Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Bourdieu, P., & Thompson, J. B. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brown, J. S. (2000). Growing up digital: how the web changes work, education, and the ways people learn. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 32(2), 11-20.

Buckingham, D. (2006). 'Is there a digital generation?' In D. Buckingham and R. Willett (Eds), *Digital generations: children, young people and new media*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Bryant, J. A., Sanders-Jackson, A., & Smallwood, A. M. K. (2006). 'IMing, text messaging, and adolescent social networks'. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11(2), 577–592.

Buckingham, D. (2007). 'Digital media literacies: rethinking media education in the age of the Internet.' *Research in comparative and international education*, 2(1), 43-55.

Buckingham, D. (2008). 'Children and media: a cultural studies approach'. In K. Drotner and S. Livingstone (Eds), *The international handbook of children, media and culture*. LA: Sage.

Buckingham, D. (2009) '"Creative" visual methods in media research: possibilities, problems and proposals'. *Media, Culture & Society*, 31(4), 633-652.

Buckingham, D. (2011). *The material child*. Cambridge: Polity.

Buckingham, D. and J. Sefton-Green (2004). 'Structure, agency, and pedagogy in children's media culture'. In J. Tobin (Ed.), *Pikachu's global adventure: the rise and fall of pokemon*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Bragg, S. (2007). *Consulting young people: a review of the literature*. London: Creative partnerships literature review.

Cheil Worldwide. (2002). *The Lifestyle and Characters of the P generation*. Seoul: Cheil Worldwide.

Coffey, A. and Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data: complementary research strategies.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Cohen, S. (2002). *Folk devils and moral panics : the creation of the Mods and Rockers*. London: Routledge.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Morrison, K. (2002). *Research methods in education.* (4th edition). London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Condry, I. (2004). 'Cultures of music piracy : an ethnographic comparison of the US and Japan'. *International Journal of Cultural Studies,* 7(3), 343-363.

Cooper, J. and D. M. Harrison (2001). 'The social organization of audio piracy on the Internet'. *Media Culture Society,* 23(1), 71-89.

Corsten, M. (2003). 'Biographical revisions and the coherence of a generation'. In B. Mayall and H. Zeiher (Eds), *Childhood in generational perspective.* London: Institute of Education.

Couldry, N. (2003). *Actor network theory and media: do they connect and on what terms?,* London: London School of Economics and Political Science.

Creswell, J. and Plano Clark, V. (2007). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crook, C., (2012). The 'Digital Native' in Context: Tensions Associated with Importing Web 2.0 Practices into the School Setting. *Oxford Review of Education.* 38(1), 63-80

Davies, C. (2008). *Digital Literacies: A view from young people.* Paper presented at the ESRC seminar series: The educational and social impact of new technologies on young people in Britain, 21 October 2008, Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK.

Davies, C. and Eynon, R. (2013) *Teenagers and Technology.* London: Routledge

De Vaus, D.A. (2002). *Surveys in social research* (5th edition). Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (2003). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (2nd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (2011). *Handbook of qualitative research* (4th edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dey, I. (2003). *Qualitative data analysis*. London: Routledge.

Domitrek, J., & Raby, R. (2008). 'Are you listening to me? Space, context and perspective in the regulation of Mp3 players and cell phones in secondary school'. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 81, 1-33.

Donath, J. and d. boyd (2004). 'Public displays of connection'. *BT Technology Journal,* 22(4), 71-82.

Drotner, K. (2005). 'Media on the move: personalised media and the transformation of publicness'. In S. Livingstone (Ed.), *Audiences and publics: when cultural engagement matters for the public sphere*. Bristol: Intellect books.

Du Gay, P. (1996). *Consumption and identity at work*. London: Sage.

Du Gay, P., Hall, S., Janes, L., Mackay, H., & Negus, K. (1997). *Doing cultural studies: the story of the Sony Walkman*. London: Open University.

Edmunds, J. and B. S. Turner (2002). *Generation, culture and society*. Buckingham: Open University.

Edmunds, J. and B. S. Turner (2005). 'Global generations: social change in the twentieth century'. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 56(4), 559-572.

Edwards, P. (1995). 'From "impact" to social process: computers in society and culture'. In S. Jasanoff, G. Markle, J. C. Peterson and T. Pinch (Eds), *Handbook of science and technology studies*. London: Sage.

Facer, K. (2003). *Screenplay : children and computing in the home*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Facer, K. and Furlong, R. (2001). 'Beyond the myth of the "cyberkid": young people at the margins of the information revolution'. *Journal of Youth Studies,* 4(4), 451-469.

Facer, K., Furlong, J., Furlong, R., & Sutherland, R. (2001). 'Constructing the child computer user: from public policy to private practices'. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 22(1), 91-108.

Facer, K., Furlong, J., Furlong, R., & Sutherland, R. (2003). *Screenplay: Children and* *computing in the home*. London: Routledge.

Fontana, A. and Frey, J. (2003). 'The interview: from structured questions to negotiated text'. In N. Denzin, and Y. Lincoln (Eds). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fox, S., and Madden, M. (2006). *Generations Online (Demographic Report)*. Washington D.C.: Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Fujimoto, K. (2005). 'The third-stage paradigm: territory machines from the girls' pager revolution to mobile aesthetics'. In Ito, M., Okabe, D., & Matsuda, M. (Eds). *Personal, portable, pedestrian: mobile phones in Japanese life*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Gauntlett, D. and Holzwarth, P. (2006) 'Creative and visual methods for exploring identities'. *Visual Studies*, 21(1), 82-91

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. (Vol. 5019). AZ: Basic Books.

Gergen, K. J. (2002). 'The challenge of absent presence'. In E. Katz and M. Aakhus (Eds). *Perpetual contact: mobile communication, private talk, public performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Geser, H. (2004). 'Towards a sociological theory of the mobile phone'. *Sociology in Switzerland: Sociology of the Mobile Phone*. Zuerich: Online Publications.

Glaser, B.G. And Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Chicago:Aldane.

Green, N. (2002). 'Who's watching whom? Monitoring and accountability in mobile relations'. In B. Brown, N. Green and R. Harper (Eds). *Wireless world?: social and interactional aspects of the mobile age*. London: Springer.

Greene, J. C., Caracelli, V. J., & Graham, W. F. (1989). 'Toward a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs'. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, 11(3), 255-274.

Grinter, R. and L. Palen. (2002). *Instant messaging in teen life*. Paper presented at the 2002 ACM conference on Computer supported cooperative work, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA.

Haddon, L. (1992). 'Explaining ICT consumption: the case of the home computer'. In R. Silverstone and E. Hirsch (Eds). *Consuming technologies: media and information in domestic spaces*. London: Routledge.

Haddon, L. (2006). 'Domestication and mobile telephony'. In J. E. Katz (Ed.), *Machines that become us: the social context of personal communication technology*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Harrison, C., Comber, C., Fisher, T., Haw, K., Lewin, C., Lunzer, E. & Watling, R. (2002). *ImpaCT2: The impact of information and communication technologies on pupil learning and attainment*. British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA).

Hartmann, M. (2003). *The Web Generation?: the (de)construction of users, morals and consumption*. EMTL.

Hartmann, M. (2005). 'The discourse of the perfect future: young people and new technologies'. In R. Silverstone (Ed.), *Media, technology and everyday life in Europe: from information to communication*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Hengst, H. (2003). 'The role of media and commercial culture in children's experiencing of collective identities'. In B. Mayall and H. Zeiher (Eds). *Childhood in generational perspective*. London: Institute of Education.

Herring, S. (2008). Questioning the generational divide: technological exoticism and adult constructions of online youth identity. In D. Buckingham (Ed.), *Youth, identity, and digital media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Holloway, S. L. and G. Valentine (2003). *Cyberkids : children in the information age*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Ito, M. (2005). 'Mobile phones, Japanese youth and the re-placement of social contact'. In R. Ling and P. E. Pedersen (Eds). *Mobile communications: re-negotiation of the social sphere*. London: Springer.

Ito, M., Okabe, D., & Matsuda, M. (2005). *Personal, portable, pedestrian: mobile phones in Japanese life*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Ito, M. (2009). *Hanging out, messing around, and geeking out: kids living and learning with new media,* MA: MIT Press.

Jasanoff, G. (Ed.) (1995). *Handbook of science and technology studies.* London: Sage

Jenkins, R. (2002). *Pierre Bourdieu.* London: Routledge.

Jenkins, R. (2008). *Social identity* (3rd ed.). London:Routledge

Johnson, R. (1996). 'What is cultural studies anyway?' In J.Storey (Ed.), *What is cultural studies?* London: Arnold.

Johnson, R.B., and Onwuegbuzie, A. (2004) 'Mixed methods research: a research paradigm whose time has come'. *Educational Researcher,* 33(7), 14-26.

Jung, J-Y., Lin, W-Y. and Kim, Y-C. (2012) The dynamic relationship between East Asian adolescents' use of the Internet and their use of other media. *New Media and Society,* 14(6): 969-986.

Katz, E., Haas, H., & Gurevitch, M. (1973). 'On the use of the mass media for important things'. *American sociological review,* 164-181.

Katz, J. E. and Aakhus, M. (Eds)(2002). *Perpetual contact : mobile communication, private talk, public performance.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Katz, J. E., & Sugiyama, S. (2005). 'Mobile phones as fashion statements: the co-creation of mobile communication's public meaning'. In *Mobile Communications: Computer Supported Cooperative Work,* 31, 63-81.

Keen, A. (2007). *The cult of the amateur: how today's internet is killing our culture.* London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Kent, N. and K. Facer (2004). 'Different worlds? A comparison of young people's home and school ICT use'. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning,* 20, 440-455.

Kertzer, D. (1983). 'Generation as a sociological problem'. *Annual Review of Sociology,* 9, 125-149.

Kim, D., Lee, Y, Lee, J., and Kim, M-C. (2012). New patterns in media addiction: Is the smartphone a substitute or a complement to the Internet? *Youth Counseling Research (Korea),* 20(1), 71-88.

Lee, C. (2001). *Internet addiction of young people in Korea.* Seoul: Insitute for Youth Development.

Lee, C-H., Sung, Y-S., and Jung, N-W. (2013). Social media use of Korean Youth. Seoul: National Youth Policy Institute (Korea).

Lee, L. (2005). 'Young people and the internet'. *Young,* 13(4), 315 - 326.

Lee, J.-H. (2007). 'Defining MP3 player: the interface, temporality, and spatiality'. *Journal of communication research,* 44(1), 109-136.

Lee, T.-S. (December 5th, 2005). '프루나도 음원 저작권 침해[Pruna violated music copyrights]'. *Digital Times* (Seoul, South Korea).

Lenhart, A. and Madden, M. (2007). *Teen, privacy and online social networks: how teens manage their online identities and personal information in the age of MySpace.* Washington D.C.: Pew Internet and American Life project.

Lessig, L. (2005). *Free culture: the nature and future of creativity.* New York: Penguin.

Lewin, C. (2004). 'Access and use of technologies in the home in the UK: implications for the curriculum'. *The Curriculum Journal,* 15(2), 139-154.

Lewis, C., & Fabos, B. (2005). 'Instant messaging, literacies, and social identities'. *Reading Research Quarterly,* 40(4), 470-501.

Ling, R. S. (2004). *The mobile connection : the cell phone's impact on society.* San Francisco, CA: Morgan Kaufmann.

Ling, R.S. (2007). 'Children, youth, and mobile communication'. *Journal of Children and Media,* 1(1), 60-67.

Ling, R. S. (2008). *New tech, new ties: how mobile communication is reshaping social cohesion.* Cambridge, MA; MIT Press.

Ling, R., & Yttri, B. (2002). '10 Hyper-coordination via mobile phones in Norway'. In J.E. Katz and M. Aakhus (Eds), *Perpetual contact: Mobile communication, private talk, public performance.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ling, R., Bertel, T. and Sundsøy, P. (2012). The socio-demographics of texting: An analysis of traffic data. *New Media and Society*. 14(2):281-298

Livingstone, S. (2002). *Young people and new media: childhood and the changing media environment*. London: Sage.

Livingstone, S. (2003). 'Children's use of the internet: reflections on the emerging research agenda'. *New Media & Society,* 5(2), 147-166.

Livingstone, S. (2006). 'Drawing conclusions from new media research: reflections and puzzles regarding children's experience of the internet'. *Information society,* 22, 219-230.

Livingstone, S. (2009). *Children and the internet*. Cambridge: Polity.

Livingstone, S., & Bober, M. (2003). *UK Children Go Online: Listening to young people's experiences*. London: LSE.

Livingstone, S., & Bober, M. (2005). *UK children go online: final report of key project findings*. London: LSE.

Livingstone, S., & Bovill, M. (2001). *Children and their changing media environment: a European comparative study*. NJ: LEA.

Livingstone, S. and Bober, M. (2006). 'Regulating the Internet at home: contrasting the perspectives of children and parents'. In D. Buckingham and R. Willett (Eds) *Digital generations: children, young people, and new media*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Livingstone, S., Haddon, L., Gorzig, A. and Olafsson, K. (2011) Risks and Safety on the Internet: the Perspective of European Children. London: EU Kids Online.

Lobe, B., Livingstone, S., Olafsson, K., and Simões, J. A. (2008) *Best Practice Research Guide: How to research children and online technologies in comparative perspective*. London: EU Kids Online (Deliverable D4.2).

Loveless, A. and Ellis, V. (Eds)(2001). *ICT, pedagogy and the curriculum: subject to change*. London: Routledge.

Madriz, E. (2003). 'Focus groups in feminist research'. *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*, 2, 363-388.

Mannheim, K. (1952). 'The problems of generations'. In P. Kecskemeti (Ed.), *Essays on the sociology of knowledge*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Matsuda, M. (2008). 'Children with Keitai: when mobile phones change from "Unnecessary" to "Necessary"'. *East Asian Science, Technology and Society*, 2(2), 167-188.

Mayall, B. (2001). 'Introduction'. In L. Alanen and B. Mayall (Eds), *Conceptualizing child-adult relations*. London: Routledge.

Mayall, B. and Zeiher, H. (2003). *Childhood in generational perspective*. London: Institute of Education.

Mcmillan, S. J. and Morrison, M. (2006). 'Coming of age with the internet: A qualitative exploration of how the internet has become an integral part of young people's lives', *New Media & Society,* 8(1), 73-95.

McQuail, D. (2010). *McQuail's mass communication theory*. London: Sage.

Merton, R. K., & Kendall, P. L. (1946). 'The focused interview'. *American journal of Sociology*, 541-557.

Miles, M. and Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: an expanded source book (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Montgomery, K. C. (2001). 'Digital kids : the new online children's consumer culture'. In D. Singer and J. Singer (Eds), *Handbook of children and the media*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Morgan, D. L., & Krueger, R. A. (1993). *When to use focus groups and why*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Na, M. (2001). 'The home computer in Korea: gender, technology, and the family'. *Feminist Media Studies*, 1(3), 291-306.

NIDA (2003). *Survey on the computer and internet usage*. Seoul: Ministry of Information and Communication, National Internet Development Agency of Korea.

NIDA (2004). *Survey on the computer and internet usage*. Seoul: Ministry of Information and Communication, National Internet Development Agency of Korea.

NIDA (2005). *Survey on the computer and internet usage*. Seoul: Ministry of Information and Communication, National Internet Development Agency of Korea.

NIDA (2007). *Survey on the computer and internet usage*. Seoul: Ministry of Information and Communication, National Internet Development Agency of Korea.

NIDA (2008). *Survey on the computer and internet usage*. Seoul: Ministry of Information and Communication, National Internet Development Agency of Korea.

Palfrey, J., Gasser, U., Simun, M., & Barnes, R. F. (2009). 'Youth, creativity, and copyright in the digital age'. *International Journal of Learning*, 1(2), 79-97.

Papert, S. (1993). *Mindstorms: Children, Computers, and Powerful Ideas*. New York: Basic Books.

Peräkylä, A. (2005). 'Analyzing talk and text'. In N.K. Denzin and Y.S.Lincoln (Eds), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Potter, J., & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and social psychology: Beyond attitudes and behaviour.* London: Sage.

Pilcher, J. (1994). 'Mannheim's sociology of generations: an undervalued legacy'. *British Journal of Sociology*, 45(3), 481-495.

Prensky, M. (2006). *Don't Bother Me Mom. I'm Learning!* St. Paul, Minn.: Paragon House Publishers.

Ribak, R. (2001). '"Like immigrants": negotiating power in the face of the home computer'. *New Media & Society*, 3(2): 220-238.

Schwartz Cowan, R. (1989). 'The consumption junction: a proposal for research strategies in the sociology of technology'. In W. E. Bijker, T. P. Hughes and T. Pinch (Eds), *The social construction of technological systems: new directions in the sociology and history of technology.* MA: MIT Press.

Selwyn, N. (2006). 'Exploring the "digital disconnect" between net-savvy students and their schools'. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 31(1), 5-17.

Selwyn, N. (2010). *Schools and schooling in the digital age: a critical analysis*. London: Routledge.

Silverstone, R. (2006). 'Domesticating domestication: reflections on the life of a concept'. In T. Berker, M. Hartmann, Y. Punie, and K.J. Ward (Eds), *Domestication of media and technology*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Silverstone, R. and Hirsch, E. (1992). *Consuming technologies : media and information in domestic spaces*. London: Routledge.

Silverstone, R., Hirsch, E., and Morley, D. (1992). 'Information and communication technologies and the moral economy of the house hold'. In R. Silverstone and E. Hirsh (Eds), *Consuming technologies: media and information in domestic spaces*. London: Routledge.

Skelton, T. and Valentine, G. (1997). *Cool places : geographies of youth cultures*. London: Routledge.

Smithson, J. (2000). 'Using and analysing focus groups: limitations and possibilities'. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 3(2), 103-119.

Somekh, B. (2004). 'Taking the sociological imagination to school: An analysis of the (lack of) impact of information and communication technologies on education systems'. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 13(2), 163-179.

Sorenson, K. H. (2006). 'Domestication: the enactment of technology'. In T. Berker, M. Hartmann, Y. Punie, and K.J. Ward (Eds), *Domestication of media and technology*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Strandell, H. (2010). 'From structure-action to politics of childhood: sociological childhood research in Finland'. *Current Sociology*, 58(2), 165-185.

Tapscott, D. (1998). *Growing up digital : the rise of the Net generation*. New York: McGraw Hill

Taylor, A. S., & Harper, R. (2002). *Age-old practices in the 'new world': a study of gift-giving between teenage mobile phone users*. Paper presented at the SIGCHI conference on Human factors in computing systems: Changing our world, changing ourselves. ACM.

Taylor, B. C., Demont-Heinrich, C., Broadfoot, K. J., Dodge, J., & Jian, C. (2002). 'New media and the circuit of cyber-culture: conceptualizing Napster'. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 46(4), 607-629.

Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (Eds.) (2003). *Handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Temple, B. and Young, A. (2004) 'Qualitative research and translation dilemmas'. *Qualitative Research,* 4(2), 161-178

Tichi, C. (1991). *Electronic hearth: creating an American television culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Turkle, S. (2010). *Alone together*. New York: Basic Books

Vaughn, S., Schumm, J. S., & Sinagub, J. M. (1996). *Focus group interviews in education and psychology*. London: SAGE.

Yar, M. (2008). 'The rhetorics and myths of anti-piracy campaigns: criminalization, moral pedagogy and capitalist property relations in the classroom'. *New media society,* 10(4), 605-623.

Zelizer, V. (2002). 'Kids and commerce'. *Childhood*, 9(4), 375-396.

Appendix 1. Translated version of the questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to find out the patterns of your media use. The information gathered by this questionnaire will only be used for my own research purpose. Please go through all questions to the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for your time!

★ Following questions are about your media use. Please read the question and pick **all** that applies.

1. Pick **all** media that you have access to.
1) Radio
2) Book (except text book, comic book and magazine)
3) Comic book or magazine
4) Television
5) VCR
6) Computer (PC or Laptop)
7) Internet
8) Game Console
9) On-line game
10) Mobile Phone
11) Digital Camera

2. Pick **all** media that you have at home.
1) Radio
2) Book (except text book, comic book and magazine)
3) Comic book or magazine
4) Television
5) VCR
6) Computer (PC or Laptop)
7) Internet
8) Game Console
9) On-line game
10) Mobile Phone
11) Digital Camera

3. Pick **all** media that you have in **your room**.
1) Radio

2) Book (except text book, comic book and magazine)
3) Comic book or magazine
4) Television
5) VCR
6) Computer (PC or Laptop)
7) Internet
8) Game Console
9) On-line game
10) Mobile Phone
11) Digital Camera

Question number 4 is a bit different from questions above. Please pick THREE media that applies to the following question!

4. Pick **three** media that you most frequently use.
1) Radio
2) Book (except text book, comic book and magazine)
3) Comic book or magazine
4) Television
5) VCR
6) Computer (PC or Laptop)
7) Internet
8) Game Console
9) On-line game
10) Mobile Phone
11) Digital Camera

☆ The following questions are about **who** you use the media **with**. Please read the question and the list of choices given in the box, and write down the number of your choice in the parentheses.

1) Radio
2) Book (except comics/ magazine)
3) Comics / Magazine
4) Newspaper
5) Computer/Internet

6) Game (console/on-line) 7) Television (inc. VCR/DVD) 8) Digital Camera 9) Mobile Phone

5. Please pick one media that you prefer to use with your **friends**. ( )

6. Please pick one media that you prefer to use with your **sister(s) or brother(s)** (If you don't have a sister or brother, go to #7) ( )

7. Please pick one media that you prefer to use with your **parents**. ( )

8. Please pick one media that you prefer to use **on your own**. ( )

☆ The followings will ask you which media you choose for a particular purpose. Read the question carefully and pick one that applies to each question.

9. What type of media do you mainly use to listen to a music?
1) Radio 2) CD-Player 3) Computer/Internet 4) Mobile 5) MP3 Player

10. What type of media do you mainly use to watch movie?
1) Mobile 2) Computer/Internet 3)TV/VCR/DVD 4) Cinema

11. What type of media do you mainly use to watch a TV program?
1) Mobile 2) Computer/Internet 3) TV/VCR/DVD

12. What type of media do you mainly use to get news information?
1) Mobile 2) Internet 3) TV 4) Newspaper/Magazine 5) Radio

13. What type of media do you mainly use to play games?
1) Mobile 2) Computer/Internet 3) Game console

14. What type of media do you mainly use to read comics?
1) Mobile 2) Computer/Internet 3) Comic book/ Magazine

★Question number 15 to 20 are about your attitude toward each media. Please read the question and the list of choices given in the box, and write down the number of your three choices in the parentheses.

1) Radio
2) Book (except magazine/comics)
3) Comics/ Magazine
4) Newspaper
5) Computer/Internet
6) Game (console / on-line game)
7) TV (inc. VCR / DVD)
8) Digital camera
9) Mobile phone

15. Pick three media you will choose when you are **bored**.
(   ) (   ) (   )

16. Pick three media you will choose when you want **excitement**.
(   ) (   ) (   )

17. Pick three media you will choose when you don't want to **feel left out.**
(   ) (   ) (   )

How would your teachers answer to the same questions?

18. Pick three media your teacher will choose when s/he get **bored**.
(   ) (   ) (   )
19. Pick three media your teacher will choose when s/he wants **excitement**.
(   ) (   ) (   )
20.Pick three media your teacher will choose **not to feel left out**.
( ) ( ) ( )

☆ The Following questions are about your Internet and computer use.

21. How long do you stay on-line once you logged in?
1) Less than one hour 2) 1~2 hours
3) 2~3 hours 4) More than three hours

22. Which three of these do you do most when you are using the Internet?
1) Listen to the internet radio
2) Use email service
3) Chat room
4) Messenger (Buddybuddy, MSN)
5) Watch TV programs
6) Read news
7) Surf my on-line communities
8) Find information for homework

9) Find information for hobbies
10) Shop on-line
11) On-line banking
12) Down/upload music
13) Down/upload movie
14) On-line game

23. Do you have your own space(i.e. Homepage) on the Net?
1) Yes 2) No
23-1. If you have one which format does it have?
1) Homepage
2) Blog
3) Mini-home
4) Cafe or communities
5) Other(please describe it briefly:__________________)

24. Which three of this software do you do most when you are using the PC?
1) Word processor
2) Excel
3) PowerPoint
4) Educational software (i.e. electronic encyclopedia)
5) Graphic software (i.e. Photoshop, Paintshop-pro, Imaging)
6) Multi-media software (i.e. Windows Media Player, Real Player, Winamp)
7) Music editing software (i.e. Logic)
8) Video editing software (i.e. imovie, premier)
9) Home-page authoring software (i.e. Dreamweaver)
10) Game making software
11) Desktop publishing

☆ Your personal information...

Your age ________________ Grade _________________ Female/Male