

SOME RESULTS FROM A SURVEY ABOUT FORMING DIGITAL LITERACY OF 8 YEARS OLD STUDENTS

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Abstract: Contemporary children live in a digital era and it is almost impossible for them not to be tempted by technologies. This article presents some interesting results from Bulgarian project „Digital Competencies and Media Education at Pre-school and Primary School Age” (National Science Fund; H05/8 14.12.2016). In 2018 there were interviewed 637 children from 13 Bulgarian towns. The focus in this article is only 8 years old students and their digital habits. The author is a Member of the team of the COST project ‘Digital literacy and multimodal practices of young children’ (Action IS1410) – DigiLitEY. In March 2019 in Manchester on the final project’s meeting of DigiLitEY were presented results connected with the key participants for this COST’s project – up to 8 years old students. This article analyses this aged group and their attitudes of digital technologies.

Keywords: 8 years old students, digital habits, survey, project, results.

Contemporary children live in a digital era and it is almost impossible for them not to be tempted by technologies. This article presents some interesting results from Bulgarian project that the author has been participated in – “Digital Competencies and Media Education at Pre-school and Primary School Age” (National Science Fund; H05/8 14.12.2016) (DN 05/8 14.12.2016; 2016-2019) with coordinator Prof. Dr Rumyana Papancheva from the University “Prof. Dr Asen Zlatarov”, Bourgas. Assoc. Prof. Dr Lubomira Parijkova (MCM – DigiLitEY) is a leader of the Working Group “Research of the connection between Reading and Digital literacy” as part of the project. This has analyzed a connection between reading literacy and formation of digital literacy of pupils of primary school age. In the first stage of the research there are used three types of polls – for students (priority from fourth grade), for their parents and for teachers. Based on preliminary done investigations and on an acquainting with literature on the problem in Bulgarian and English languages it has been developed a toolkit that is integrated in the questionnaires.

On the focus of this article are up to 8 years old students. The Questionnaire for students consists of Four sections –

- „Reading” with 20 questions,
- „Digital literacy” – with 21 questions,
- „Connection between reading and digital literacy’s formation of students up to 11 years old” – with 4 questions,
- Demographic section

In 2018 there were interviewed 637 children from 13 Bulgarian towns – capital, a very big city /over 200 000 population/, a big city / up to 200 000 population /, middle towns – up to 100 000 population, small towns up to 30 000 population and very small towns – under 10 000.

3% of the interviewed children are at the age of 8 years old. They are 20 students from the first grade of education. 7 boys and 13 girls from 8 Bulgarian towns.

13 of interviewed students have got bigger sisters or brothers. Only one child has answered that he doesn’t love reading. He is 6 years old. All 20 students study subject Information technologies at school. 65% of them have siblings.

According to these criteria: Information processing; Content creation; Communication; Problem solving; Safety of Self Assessment Grid for Digital competence (Europass) 10 students have defined themselves as Basic users; 5 of 20 have defined themselves as Independent users and the other 5 as Proficient users. It is very interesting that the youngest participant of the investigation said that he has Proficient level of digital competency. That means children cannot really do self assessment, unfortunately.

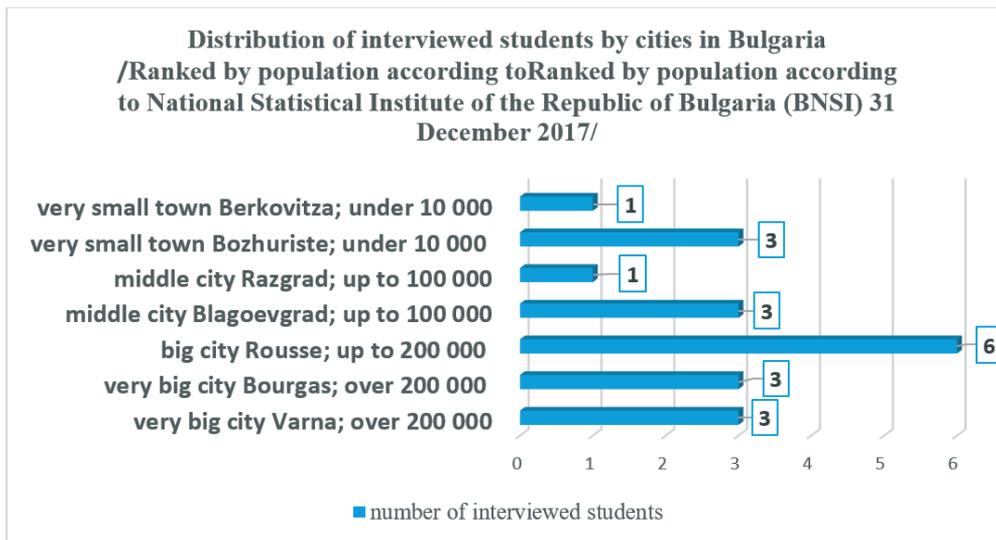


Fig. 1. Distribution of students

The question “What was your age when you started using digital technologies?” gave interesting results – one child answered “before I was 2 years old” – a girl, 8 years old now; another one said “before I be 3 years old”. Second student started with reading when he/she was 6 years old, for example. 11 children started using digital technologies when they were 3 years old or before they were 4 years old. A student who at 7 at the moment started with digital technologies and also with reading at 7 years old.

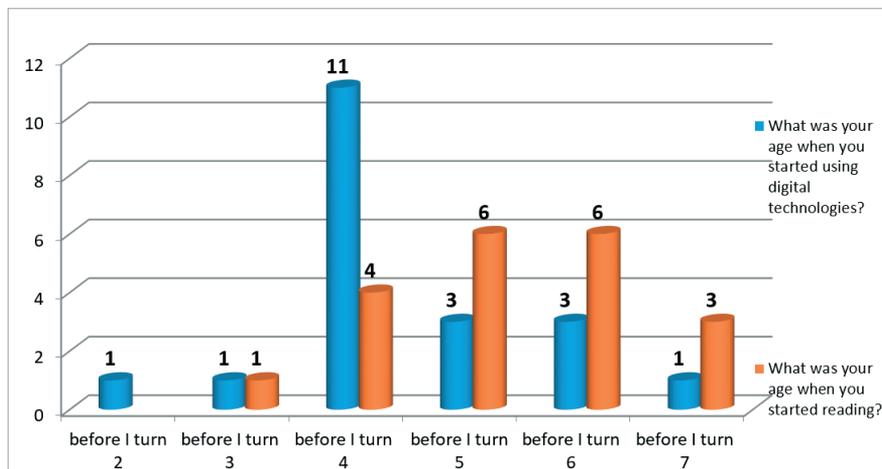


Fig. 2. Comparison between ages of starting reading and using digital technologies /Number of students/

Question about digital devices that children’s families own described as follow: all 20 families have got TV-sets, smartphones, tablets. 16 have got laptops, 9 – PC-s.

Table 1. What kind of devices do your family own?

TV	Smartphone	Tablet	E-reader	Laptop	Personal computer	Game console	PSP	iPod	other
90%	87%	74%	9%	62%	38%	23%	18%	6%	0

Table 2. What kind of devices do you personally use?

TV	Smartphone	Tablet	E-reader	Laptop	Personal computer	Game console	PSP	iPod	other
20	11	17	0	16	5	0	0	0	0

Another question is “What kind of devices do you personally use?” 9 students haven’t got smartphones, 2 – haven’t got tablets, 3 – laptops. As we can see Bulgarian families use variety of digital devices and their children have free access to them.

Between 30 minutes and 3 hours per day children use digital technologies. 3 hours is the answer of 8 years old girl.

Questions are being modified using the main components of matrix of digital competence, as they’ve been mentioned above.

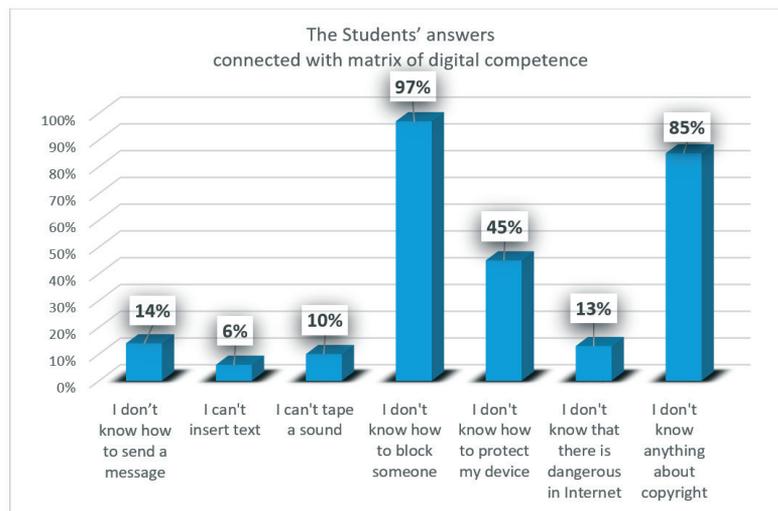


Fig. 3. Main components of matrix of digital competence

Results are as follows:

- 3 of students up to 8 years old from the survey don't know to send a message;
- one can't insert text;
- 3 children know something about Copyright;
- 8 students can't tape a sound;
- 9 children said that they haven't got viber/Facebook group of their class. Eleven – don't know how to search information in Internet.
- 16 know about fake news.
- 17 students don't know how to save text on the computer.
- 8 – don't use skype or messenger, but one (a girl, 7 years old) answered that she has a Facebook profile. This girl has a bigger sister (18), but this is not excuse.

But 100% can take a picture.

3 of all 20 know how to block someone from their devices, but none of them can protect his/her device. 6 children don't know that they could be a victim in Internet crime.

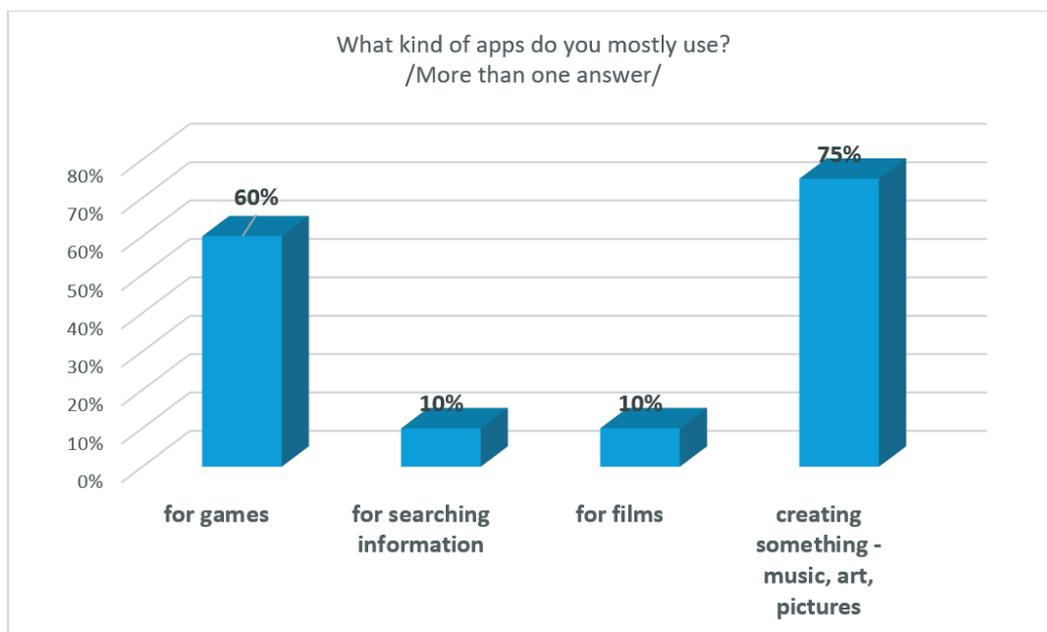


Fig. 4. Activities with devices

The question about apps received many than one answer. Children prefer apps for games and music – 12; for art creating (painting, music creation) – 15; 2 also for films and only 2 children marked also answer – for searching information. 7 students don't prefer reading e-books, 17 – don't read e-books. 2 students answered that for them digital technology's usage is obligation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

10 students are delighted using digital technologies, and 8 of 20 find possibility for learning new things using digital technologies.

100% of children believe that "The more a student reads, the better it will work with technology".

- These 20 children are keen on digital devices.
- They are familiar with using them.
- Teachers should develop their interests in a creative way!
- We should teach them how to search adequate information and how to avoid fake news and protect themselves.
- Less than half of respondents do not realized that digital technologies can also be used in the learning process. This is an opportunity that needs to be promoted and to expand the field of action!
- It is necessary to develop critical thinking in children.
- Elements of digital literacy must be introduced in all subjects not only in classes of IT education.