

# **Children Sharing Stories with ICDL Communities: A Pilot Study in Mexico and USA**

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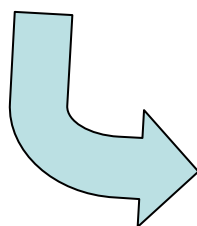
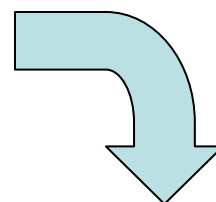
# International Children's Digital Library Communities

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- Develop communities for kids to discuss books in ICDL
- The communities should
  - be safe
  - support social interaction
  - be entertaining & fun
  - be challenging
- For children who speak different languages
- Improve cross-cultural understanding  
(Allport, 1988)



Creating new story endings  
in Hungary



Interpreting the  
new story  
endings in the  
USA



Creating profiles  
on paper in Mexico



Creating profiles  
online in the USA

# Data Collection – Fall 2005

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- Time: 8 weeks (September – December)
- Three private elementary schools in:
  - Baltimore, Maryland, USA,
  - Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico
- USA
  - 4 boys & 3 girls between 7-9
- Mexico
  - 4 boys & 4 girls between 7-10

# Activities

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- Getting to know each other & team building
- Individual & group representation on paper
- Individual & group representation using ICDL Online Community prototype
- Reading a story from ICDL – *Sweet, Sweet Mango Tree*
- Creating and sharing new story endings
- Asking & answering questions between countries on the new endings
- Interviewing

# Our Challenges

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- Sociability
- Usability
- Privacy
- Culture
- Design for kids
- Work with kids

# The Community Works

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- Children (7-10) thought the community was a good way:
  - to communicate with other children and
  - to get to know children from other countries
- They enjoyed drawing, but making stories was hard
- They enjoyed communicating and exchanging questions and answers

# Identity

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- Gender and age identities: could clearly specify
- Ethnic identity:
  - physical characteristics
  - language
  - food
- Understood that people from different countries:
  - look different,
  - speak different languages,
  - eat different foods,
  - and probably play different games
- Cultural/national identity: confused about the city, state, and country concepts

# Getting to Know Other Kids

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- Had positive attitudes towards other kids
- Stereotypes played a role
- They wanted to find out:
  - games, toys
  - food
  - holidays
  - sports
  - family
  - school

# Identity Representation

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- Individual identity
  - Girls drew themselves
  - Boys drew “evil monsters” or game characters
- Team identity
  - Girls: use their own images as group representation
  - Boys: use names of video games, soccer teams, school image

ICDL Communities

International **children's** Digital Library Communities

Get To Know Each Other

BACK



blaire

My name is blaire  
 My secret word is blaire  
 I was born on 7/9/1998  
 I am 7 years old  
 I live in United States


My favorite color is Blue  
 favorite food is Macaroni  
 favorite icecream is Chocolate  
 favorite holiday is Christmas  
 favorite game is Cards  
 favorite book is Heidi  
 I have a pet Rabbit

ICDL Communities

International **children's** Digital Library Communities

Get To Know Each Other

BACK



marcelo

My name is marcelo  
 My secret word is futbol  
 I was born on 11/11/1997  
 I am 7 years old  
 I live in Mexico

My favorite color is Green  
 favorite food is Icecream  
 favorite icecream is Chocolate  
 favorite holiday is Christmas  
 favorite game is Game Cube  
 favorite book is Where is the Bear  
 I have a pet Guinea Pig

# Communicating across Cultures

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- Language was not as big a problem as anticipated
- Kids are visually-oriented: interested in showing and seeing physical environment
- Multimedia identity representation is useful
- Learning as much as possible about the other kids is important
- Finding similarities helps defining common ground and build trust

# Design for Kids

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- Usability problems identified
- Interactivity
  - Make their own drawings
- Entertainment & fun
- Challenge & feedback
- Social interaction with other kids
  - Language is not such a huge barrier!
- Identity online & ownership

# Working with Kids

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- Team building is very important and takes a long time
- Older children are more decisive and direct about their opinions
- Short interviews will yield more and better data
- Have an authority figure do the interview and not the researchers
- Smiley face questionnaires worked well

# Thank You!

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