



Common Uses of Facebook among Adolescents from Different Social Sectors in Buenos Aires City

Usos comunes de Facebook en adolescentes de distintos sectores sociales en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires

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ABSTRACT

In this article, we analyze the common uses that adolescents of the City of Buenos Aires display in the Facebook platform. From the review of the state of the art and the empirical evidence gathered by 30 in-depth interviews, 24 months of daily virtual observation and the analysis of 200 profiles in Facebook, it is displayed that for both groups of adolescents the social network is their central entertainment and communication environment. At the same time, the primary uses they give to Facebook within the site refer to self presentation, interchanging personal information between friends, sex-affective relationship searches, and exploring different aspects of their sociability and identity. We examine the most «popular» posts between adolescents (photos, personal texts). Besides, we describe the most usual ludic-communication uses: chat, upgrading status, photographic prosumption and streaming. In this sense, we acknowledge that daily use of the resource by this population is the sharing of intimate performances with the goal of increasing sociability between peers and accomplish a higher visibility both in and out of the site. Thus, by studying the images in the timeline's of adolescents, evidence is exposed showing that gender representations are in conflict with traditional models and new forms of masculinity and femininity.

RESUMEN

En este artículo se abordan los usos comunes que realizan los adolescentes de la ciudad de Buenos Aires en la plataforma Facebook. A partir de la revisión del estado de la cuestión y de la evidencia empírica recogida en 30 entrevistas en profundidad, 24 meses de observaciones virtuales diarias y el análisis de contenido de 200 perfiles de Facebook, se muestra que para ambos grupos de adolescentes la red social es su entorno central de entretenimiento y comunicabilidad. A su vez, que sus principales usos dentro de este sitio son la autopresentación, el intercambio de contenidos personales entre amistades, la búsqueda de relaciones sexo-afectivas y la exploración de distintos aspectos de su sociabilidad e identidad. Se indaga en los tipos de publicaciones más «populares» entre los adolescentes (fotos y textos personales). Además, se describen los usos lúdico-comunicacionales más habituales: chat, actualizar estados, prosumo fotográfico y streaming. En este sentido, se observa que un recurso de uso cotidiano entre esta población es el intercambio de performances de intimidad con el objetivo de aumentar la sociabilidad entre pares y lograr una mayor visibilidad dentro y fuera del sitio. Asimismo, por medio del análisis de imágenes de los muros de los adolescentes, se aporta evidencia acerca de que las representaciones de género se encuentran en conflicto entre los modelos tradicionales y las nuevas formas de masculinidad y feminidad.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Internet, social networking, adolescents, gender, popular sectors, self-presentation, intimacy.
Internet, redes sociales, adolescentes, género, sectores populares, autopresentación, intimidad.

1. Introduction

Several research projects have addressed how information and communication technology (ICT) are reinventing our social relationships and modifying the way in which we relate with the world (for example, Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Castells, 2009; Baym, 2010). Adolescents, born and raised with ICT in constant expansion, usually are the most intensive users of these technologies (Boyd, 2008; Valkenburg & Peter, 2009). With this context in mind, the core of our investigation is the use of the ICT in behalf of adolescents from the City of Buenos Aires, both in low income or middle income sectors. Our focus is regarding the platform displayed in Facebook, where adolescents interact online. Even though there are differences between adolescents from low and middle income sectors in the City of Buenos Aires regarding Internet use and, in fact, the differences are studied in our Master's thesis (Linne, 2013), this article is restricted to the most frequent uses of Facebook. Therefore, the research question is which are the common uses that adolescents of the City of Buenos Aires display through Facebook. Our specific goals are to explore and describe these uses. Meanwhile, the general goal is to present a local perspective on the issue without attempting extrapolations, with the intention to contribute to future comparative investigations.

2. State of the art

Adolescents, who often have a lot of time, find themselves in a central period of their identity configuration in which they wish to experiment with their image and identity (Urresti, 2008; Krauskopf, 2010). Through social networking sites, they produce and share personal information expressing a similar ethos, which is highly aesthetic and, as Sibilia (2008) affirms, differs from traditional representations of intimacy.

According to the state of the art, adolescents share common knowledge and capacities called «prosumption» (produce and consume digital content) and «multitasking» (simultaneous tasks) (Prensky, 2001; Boyd, 2008; Urresti, 2008; Livingstone, 2009; Dezuanni & Monroy-Hernández, 2012, among others). That is why they have been referred to as: digital natives» (Prensky, 2001), «post-alpha generation» (Berardi, 2007) and «multimedia generation» (Morduchowicz, 2010). The most commonly used name is digital natives since they belong to a generation that did not meet, see or live with analog devices but were already born in a world of digital technologies (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008).

Globally speaking, culture has transformed itself in recent years in an exacerbation of the subject (Urresti,

2008) and a publication of intimacy (Sibilia, 2008). Thus, social networking sites (Boyd & Ellison, 2008), while promoting and pondering personal posts, often encourage the «cyber-exhibitionism» (Urresti, 2008) and the «exacerbation of intimacy» (Sibilia, 2008).

Adolescents spend more time online than adults, and also spend more time in social interaction (Valkenburg & al., 2009; Dillon, 2013, among others). If the interest of children up to ten years old, in terms of technology, is centred on games and movies, from this age on they start becoming interested in relationships within their peers, which include relationships with peers of the opposite sex (Subrahmayan & Greenfeld, 2008). This interest begins to be central in their lives and is transferred to the Internet. As a result, they tend to increase their use of social networking sites (Boyd, 2008). They become part of a virtual community with whom they establish various relationships: entertain themselves, feel included within their group of equals and find company and social belonging (Urresti, 2008). Through networks they provide and seek personal information (Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009); receive empathy manifestations, identify themselves and their environment in another way, accomplish a greater knowledge of themselves and their peers, and offer a personal image that allows them to integrate into other generational peer groups (Valkenburg & al., 2009; Morduchowicz, 2010).

Several studies focus on the different practices used by adolescents regarding ICTs according to social sector, age, gender, use of hours and experience with the media (Prensky, 2001; Urresti, 2008; Van Dijk, 2013; Benítez Larghi, 2013, among others). The contribution of this investigation is the specific work with adolescents of middle sectors and low income sectors of the City of Buenos Aires, this means a trans-class approach in terms of social cultural theory that, based on the differences between each sector, explores what they have in common. This is relevant for two reasons: first, a categorization of differentiated adolescents is proposed; and secondly, within these differences, we suggest that these social groups have more in common regarding the use of ICTs than those who have been studied.

Concepts such as «capital» and «social capital» (Bourdieu, 1985) are very useful in exploring the network of relationships of adolescents, given that in Facebook it becomes visible (Haythornwhite, 2005). Bourdieu (1985) refers to the concept of «capital» to everything that people consider assets (material or not). Meanwhile, «social capital» defines potential or actual resources associated to possession of a net of

social relationships institutionalized to a greater or lesser degree (Bourdieu, 1985).

As for social networking sites, Boyd (2008) states that these sites allow adolescents to work on their identity and status, besides exposing/negotiating their public life. Meanwhile, Valkenburg & al. (2009) conclude that the use of social networking sites positively cooperates in relationships between adolescent peers. Other authors argue that in these sites there is a leading tendency to interact with preexisting bonds (Haythornwhite, 2005; Boyd & Ellison, 2008) and that co-present relationships are enriching because they are horizontal and non-hierarchical (Urresti, 2008). Besides reinforcing preexisting relationships it allows to continuously generate new social interactions, especially in the case of those who have no friends or sex-affective relationships, or who find themselves in a reluctant relationship (Boyd, 2008). Regarding the impact on private life, both in a friendly or a loving/sexual scale, Van-Dijk (2013) provides empirical evidence about popularity in social networking sites as arenas for self-expression, communication and self-promotion. On the other hand, other research indicate that these sites generate a mixed communication, since elements of oral and written communication are combined (Baym, 2010; López & Ciuffoli, 2012).

Regarding Facebook, and applying Bourdieu's concepts, Valenzuela & al. (2009) points out that the mere membership to Facebook does not contribute per se in the fact of increasing social capital, but collaborates in the consolidation of it, by allowing the major flow of information available about peers, the expansion of opportunities for socializing with people and the possibility of continuing to extend the network contacts. At the same time, Garcia, López de Ayala and Catalina (2013) state that, in the case of Spain, adolescents that have between 15 and 17 years are those who perform the most intensive and active use of these sites. Almansa, Fonseca & Esparcia (2013) observe that Spanish and Colombian adolescents manifest themselves in Facebook in their own language, which does not meet traditional spelling and grammar rules. At the same time, they state that ado-

lescents manage their friend relationships in Facebook having image as their central element and, within seconds, decide to accept friend requests of strangers depending if they find him/her attractive. In the case of adolescents from the City of Buenos Aires, Dillon (2013) argues that the use of Facebook reinforces bonds between peers and that the most important thing for them has to do with friendship and their group of peers, either within or outside the site.

Finally, to investigate gender representations regarding seduction and friendship, we will use the concept of gender as an analysis category both from

The tendency of adolescents to display intimacy is amplified by sharing them in the network. Therefore, intimacy is shown, exhibited and exchanged daily –selective but done daily– through the mediation of computers. This weighting of personal content is common to all groups, although each group has particular characteristics. In this context, we wish to emphasize that the purpose of this exhibition of intimacy is meeting and sociability with peers.

the classical formulation of Rubin (1975) –which proposes the «sex/gender system», understood gender as a cultural construction–, and the reformulation of Butler (1990) «subjects of sex/gender/desire», which incorporates two modifications: first, «sex» is as cultural as gender; secondly, that generic constructions are crossed by a «hetero-normative matrix». Finally, in the scope of this article, we highlight that gender is produced by daily interaction (West, 1987), since it is an activity that is constituted and reproduced by repetition of body styles, practices and norms that, when «naturalized», generate the illusion of a fixed identity (Butler, 1990; Cháneton, 2007). We state that the intimate gestures adolescents perform in Facebook both from low income or middle sectors, are suitable for studying these issues.

3. Material and methods

The goal of this investigation is exploratory and descriptive. Our study universe is delimited by adolescents who reside in the City of Buenos Aires and who

are between 12 and 18 years old (born between 1995 and 2000). Using some indicators from the National Statistics and Census Institute (INDEC) (2010), we define low income households as those who have the following characteristics: lack of at least one basic public service, head of the household that has not finished high school, have jobs of low qualified jobs or are unable to work. As to middle sectors, we define them as those households with public services and house-

that emerged in recent years along with the enormous growth of the ICT and used in social studies to explore how people form social networks on the Internet and configure their virtual identity (Keeley-Browne, 2011).

After two years of work, the profile we developed in Facebook features 2700 adolescent contacts. Along with the interviews, the data collection method of cyber-ethnology allowed us to investigate how adoles-

cents of our sample self-presented themselves, entertained and interacted online. We conducted participant observations, in the sense of sending and accepting friend requests, clicking «Like» in some posts and generating others. We also asked permission to adolescents to observe their walls and profiles in Facebook. This allowed us to analyze their behavior in digital environments, both in low income and middle sectors.

In quantitative terms, we conducted content analysis of 200 profiles in Facebook belonging to adolescents in the City of Buenos Aires, selected in a random way. We analyzed pictures and texts posted in profiles, their central themes and environments. Fieldwork

was conducted between September 2011 and September 2013.

For ethical reasons, we worked anonymously with the material collected, in the sense that no personal data was saved. Although texts and images mentioned had the express permission of the interviewees, to preserve their identity we only exposed images that do not have any names or photographs, as well as the generic labels in every extract of the aforementioned interview. This is why in the interview fragments and wall captures of Facebook we only pointed out if the user was a boy or girl and to which social sector s/he belongs. Finally, being a non-probabilistic or non-intentional sample, results are not extrapolated to the entire population. However, we believe that this investigation is a significant contribution as it explores and describes certain tendencies in the use of ICT between the adolescents of the City of Buenos Aires. Its value lies in showing common uses in Facebook be-

Adolescents of both social sectors make their own presentation by personal publications, they chat with friends, find a partner or someone to date, use their capital, tell experiences and sex-affective relationships, manage their address book and diary, entertain themselves with playful and communicative practices as games, photographic «prosumption» and «streaming». This way, their identity configuration and everyday sociability is associated with Facebook, the main site where they explore and redefine relationships with their peers. Regarding gender, they maximize stereotypes as well as question them.

holders with medium or high qualification jobs and whose educational level equals or surpasses secondary school.

We have used a mixed methodology that combines qualitative and quantitative tools. As for a qualitative level, we used traditional and virtual ethnographic tools: 30 co-present in-depth interviews and 24 months of daily virtual observation through the creation of an ad hoc profile on Facebook. This new tool for collection of information was very useful, because we consider that traditional ethnographic methods alone are not enough to grasp the web of meanings in which adolescents find themselves immersed. Therefore, we chose to explore their sociability and virtual identity with the same tool they use on daily basis. To do so, we made an online fieldwork following the concepts of «virtual observation» (Hine, 2000), and «cyber-ethnography» (Farquhar, 2012), which relate to new tools of ethnographic investigation

tween adolescents in an important city of Latin America, with the intention of collaborating in future comparative work both within the region and globally.

4. Analysis and results

4.1. The central environment

For adolescents in our sample, the Facebook social network has become the central communication environment and entertainment, followed by mobile messaging application such as WhatsApp and Twitter for middle sectors of the population. Blogs, emails and instant messaging no longer appear as separate applications, since they have been centralized in the Facebook platform. Therefore this site is the central space of their day to day sociability and their convergent activities during their free time.

- «Through Facebook we communicate with our friends and school mates more easily and without spending money. It's more practical and it's what is used today. We use Whatsapp a lot when we are traveling or at school. And everyday more friends are starting to use Twitter» (Female, middle sectors)

- «Whenever we can we are connected to Face because it's more comfortable and we like to get in touch with our friends and be aware of what happens to each one of us... and sometimes see what the guy we like is up to» (Female, popular sectors).

The phenomenon that made Facebook become the central environment of adolescents who live in the City of Buenos Aires can be explained by two reasons. First, it works as an interactive address book full of events and contacts, as it allows them to coordinate meetings and comment about them before and after they finish, and expand or restrict their contact list based on the actions displayed everyday and mediated by computers. Second, it operates as a center of aesthetic identity publications, where they constantly update their performance regarding their presentation to others.

Adolescents choose to spend much of their time on Facebook because the levels of usability and satisfaction they experience are usually higher than anywhere else. In addition to the interstitial time spent in Facebook while they are in school or traveling on public transport, or even when they are alone (or sometimes accompanied) one of their main activities is to check the updates of their contacts and edit their own posts.

4.2. Personal files

Facebook is central in both the accumulation of contacts called «friends» as the ability to activate the

resources they comment on in the profiles of their contacts: principally by clicking Like, making comments and sharing posts. When adolescents make personal publications, in addition to updating their presentation to others, they are measuring their social capital (Bourdieu, 1985), defined as the level of acceptance and the ability to mobilize resources. Adolescents in our sample tend to appreciate that their peers share their intimacy and agree that those with more contacts, Likes, and opinions shared are more likely to have more couples and friends. This is also associated with their efforts in making public intimate performances to gain popularity, which often leads them to expose their intimacy in a conflictive manner in the opinion of parents, partners or friends.

- «With Face we can express ourselves without having the adults on our backs. Maybe it's what makes all of us like Facebook. Adults do not understand what we do in Face and sometimes they get angry or they control us because they are afraid. They are from another generation» (Male, middle sectors).

- «We make videos or take pictures, for example, and edit and publish them on Facebook. There isn't much more to it. It is unique and everyone can do it. We take pictures at school, the mall, when we get together in a house. And we always go out with the camera» (Female, low income sectors).

Within the personal files, photos are very important and take up a lot of space. Autobiographical texts accompanied by a personal image tend to receive more comments and Likes. Publication of pictures alone or with their group of friends is the preferred practice among adolescents of both low income sectors (Linne & Basile, 2013) and middle sectors. Pictures are also common with couples or friends of the opposite sex. 90% of the profiles analyzed contain photos in the same areas: schools, parks and houses of friends or of themselves. Adolescents choose to take pictures in places that provide greater autonomy from adults. They often accompany these personal images with brief illustrative or explanatory texts. By doing so, adolescents risk their body-aesthetic capital while they update their availability status and mood. In many cases, this also serves as a warning sign –«I'm in a bad mood, do not want to talk to anyone» (Female, popular sectors)– or an invitation to interact.

4.3. Communication and Entertainment

Communication and entertainment are fields of activities that form part of most of the practices deployed at the site. These two activities appear mixed among adolescents within multitasking: they use chat,

games, music, voyeurism and sharing of photos, various 'postings' application usage and viewing videos at the same time.

- «When we are bored and there is no one to speak in Face, we play games. But when there is someone to chat with, we like it more. Or sometimes you just want to play and not talk to anyone, it depends» (Male, middle sectors).

- «We look at girls' pictures, sometimes we take pictures of ourselves, we comment on the photos, we chat and play. There are plenty of games that are very cool in Face» (Male, low income sectors). As for entertainment, 90% of adolescents surveyed select YouTube applications and games. On YouTube, males prefer sports videos –mostly soccer–, dance, comedy, tutorials and musical genres, such as the slum cumbia, reggaeton and hip hop. Meanwhile, women choose similar videos, and other genres like romantic cumbia, ballads and teen pop. In gaming applications, the men prefer action and combat sports, while women tend to prefer ingenuity, design and roles. Both women and men watch in YouTube and other streaming sites, shows like «The Simpsons» or movies like «Titanic».

- «The games that I like the most are 'Counter Strike', 'Criminal Case' and football, as well as the 'Winning Eleven' and the 'FIFA'. And I also play a lot of the games shown on Facebook, which are more convenient, like ones with the mafia, letters or creating civilizations. And your friends send you the invitation to play, so you play with them when they are online. They give you tips, like new tricks or it becomes a topic to talk about» (Male, middle sectors).

- «I like 'Up Cake Special' which is about decorating a cup cake, 'Mini Pets' or 'Pet Society', where you have to take care of your pets, 'Juice and Fruit', where you have to make smoothies in a bar', 'Good Night Kiss', where you say goodbye to your boyfriend in the front door of your parents house, 'Mall World', where you have a clothing store in a mall, and all those kinds of games. The ones we like the most with my friends are the «Angry Birds» and «Candy Crush», they are so addictive» (Female, low income sectors).

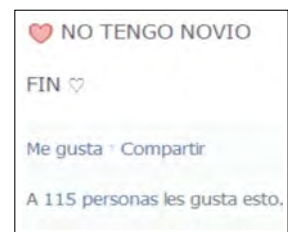
- 70% of respondents and Facebook profiles analyzed, show that their favorite games are. «Criminal Case» and «Candy Crush». While «Criminal Case» is favorite among boys «Candy Crush» is common in men and women. Both games are paradigmatic of the great confluence in communication-entertainment practices between different social sectors. In fact, adolescents of low income and middle sectors agree that their most common communication-entertainment

practices are around the Facebook platform : status updates, games, photo prosumption, chat and streaming. While updating states usually refers to mood or emotional states (see images 1 and 2), the prosumption of pictures involves publishing photos and images of personal observation, the chat is used to strengthen ties and explore new ones, while the «streaming» music and audiovisual content is often a major source of entertainment.

4.4. Friendship, seduction and matchmaking

All adolescents interviewed by Facebook mainly communicate with their friends, sometimes with people they know and family, and sporadically with strangers. Communication via instant messaging, chat and content publishing often appear closely linked to the pursuit of sex-affective relationships and creating and sustaining friendships. Such practices are central to these adolescents.

Profiles analyzed have between 132 and 4877 friends/contacts, and the average is 1432. 60% performed at least a weekly publication with a common theme: matchmaking or timeliness affective. When updating the «states» in addition to letting others know what they are up to, they update their relationship status, the degree of harmony or conflict with their partner and their most significant bonds. This is the way they let others know if they got in a fight, if they miss someone, if they feel betrayed, grateful, ignored or loved. As seen in the following images (1 and 3), adolescents express their desire to be in a relationship with publications of images with short texts, «single», «I want a girlfriend»; «in a relationship»; «who wants to be my boyfriend?»; «Everyone with a couple and I'm all by myself». One important aspect associated with the 'popularity' among adolescents is the amount of Likes. Note the 'popularity' (115 Likes) in the following picture where an adolescent updates their status.



(I DON'T HAVE A BOYFRIEND END)-

Image 1. Capturing the wall of an adolescent user of Facebook, low income sectors.

When they choose what pictures they publish, it is usually a thoughtful practice, since they edit the photos to present the best possible image of themselves. This constant cross-game in which privacy is made public to create an pair intimacy away from the adults, creates repeated adolescent

conflict: for example, when one member of the couple is jealous and feels that the other is disrespectful since they are «flirting» with other contacts. This is why; a common control practice is to publish something from the profile of the couple. This resource shows a greater intimacy which implies some exclusivity. Here we see how a teenage male writes something from the profile of his girlfriend, to express his love and at the same time, discourage contacts «that want a piece of her» and this way he «marks territory».

Mi Amor EHM solo vine a marcar territorio porque unos pares se te hacen los lindos we que sepan que vos tenes novio y sos solo mia ah 😊
weno miamor te re amo mi vida y lo sabes mi cielo ah ue, miamor me tenes mas que en todas princesa ❤️ en las buenas y en las malas amor

(Myy loveee EHM I just came to mark territory because some dudes are trying you out well they should know you have a boyfriend and you're only mine ah, well my love I really love you darling and you know it my sweetie ah, my love you have me more than all the princess, in bad and good times love).

Image 2. Capturing the wall of an adolescent user of Facebook, middle sectors.

4.5. Representations of gender

Since the daily life of a large proportion of adolescents in our sample takes place in Facebook, we can see the representations of gender when they present themselves and while they search for a partner. This research is limited to gender constructions of men and women who want to maintain, at least publicly, sex-affective heterosexual ties, while recognizing that this dynamic is also present in the bonds of gays, lesbians and queers. Field work has shown that the social network plays a key role in organizing the system IDs and it displays various capitals brought into scene in the process of gender construction and matchmaking. Several of their first sexual and love dialogues, comments and content exchange about their identity, and their experiences are displayed through this site. This is seen in the publications about how to configure your «ideal couple» (images 3 and 4).

As we see in figures 2, 3 and 4, it is common that adolescents feel they have a right to be jealous, seen in captions to photographs, such as the following «yeah, I'm jealous, so what?». By sharing or celebrating these comments on their walls, they demonstrate their agreement regarding these behaviors. On the other hand, more than half of the women adolescents interviewed also take pride in their autonomy and search for couples who are sensitive, «a companion, friend and lover», as declared one of them.

- «For me the ideal boyfriend is a guy I have to like

La novia perfecta no es la que juega al play, al fútbol, ni ninguna de esas cosas. La novia perfecta es aquella que te ama, que es celosa, enojona, que te pregunta en donde estuviste y con quién, y sólo se enoja para que le des besos y abrazos. Esa con la que peleas y te terminas arreglando. Esa que no despegas su mirada de tu rostro solo para que la mires y le des un beso. Aquella que te dice "niete" porque la enamora tu sonrisa. Aquella con la que puedes ser como tu eres y eso a ella le encanta. La que te da los mejores abrazos cuando hace frío, y te dice "te amo" a cada rato. Ella que cuando pasaron 5 minutos desde que se vieron la última vez, te manda un msj diciendo "ya te extraño". Así que no piensen en una novia que solo sea linda y tenga buen cuerpo. Porque existen chicas maravillosas, esas que dan todo por uno. Son las que a pesar de todo, te hacen sentir orgulloso de decir "ELLA ES NOVIA". Esas son las novias que te hacen realmente feliz ❤️.

(The perfect girlfriend isn't the one that plays soccer, playstation, or anything like that. The perfect girlfriend is the one who loves you, that she is jealous, gets annoyed, who asks you where have you been and who with, and only gets mad so you can give her kisses and hugs. That girl that you have a row with and end up getting back together. That one that doesn't stop looking at you so you will look at her back and give her a kiss. That one that tells you to «laugh» because she is in love with your smile. That one that you can be who you are and that is just what she likes. The one that gives you the best hugs when it's cold, and says «I love you» all the time. The one who 5 minutes after you left her, sends you a message saying «I already miss you». So don't think of a girlfriend who is just pretty and has a good body. Because wonderful girls exist, ones who give you everything. They are the ones that after all, make you feel proud to say «She is my girlfriend». Those are the girlfriends that really make you happy).

Image 3. Capturing the wall of an adolescent user of Facebook, middle sectors.

physically, but the way he thinks. He does not have to be just cute. And he has to treat me well. If he argues a lot with me or controls me too much, I don't like him. And he must have initiative, drive me to the movies, concerts, things like that» (Female, middle sectors).

Un novio que te diga , elimina ah quien vos quiera mi amor mi facebook es tuyo , eso es un chico FIEL♥. (:(

Me gusta · Comentar · Compartir · Hace 7 horas cerca de Buenos Aires · 🇦🇷

(A boyfriend who tells you, eliminate anyone you like, my love, my facebook is yours, that is a faithful boy).

Image 4. Capturing the wall of an adolescent user of Facebook, low income sectors.

- «My ideal boyfriend...I don't know. He should be cute, thoughtful. He should like cooking, listening to me and be good. He should like going for walks, going out and doing things together» (Female, low income sectors).

Digital practices in both low income sectors and middle sectors, show the tension between the paradigmatic ways of being a male and female, as they are questioned at times, as well as in other cases they

reproduce traditional gender representations. A large proportion of men, both of low income sectors and middle sectors, publish photos and personal texts that exhibit, more timidly than women, sensitive and intimate issues. This way, they express love to family, friends, girlfriends and couples, or show their sadness at the absence of a loved one or loneliness. We observed how males are allowed to show emotions and emotional deprivation, in apparent contrast to previous generations. Therefore they show to all their contacts their affective sociability in addition to their social capital. Adolescents post personal texts written in a colloquial, agile and expressive language, elements used orally. In both low income sectors and middle sectors, publications are address mostly regarding the topic of friendship. Most emotional expressiveness of adolescent males, visible both in interviews and profiles and walls, evidence a new masculinity that coexists in tension with the traditional paradigms, such as using violence to impose respect and defend their territory, or be cynical towards emotional demands of women or other men. In return, adolescents tend to express more about their sexuality and their claim regarding freedom to choose who they want to be with, this points out a greater consciousness of gender and a larger empowerment regarding previous generations.

5. Discussion and conclusions

In this research we investigate common practices in Facebook by adolescents of low income sectors and middle sectors of the City of Buenos Aires. Similar to what García & al. (2013) stated for the case of Spanish adolescents, their use of time is mostly concentrated in Facebook games and audiovisual streaming, which outperforms downloading content. Also consistent with García & al. (2013), the desire for popularity is a predominant issue among adolescents of the City of Buenos Aires. We agree that female users between 15 and 17 years are more active regarding this point. Just like Spanish and Colombian adolescents (Almansa & al., 2013), our adolescents of the sample decide to accept or reject applications in seconds. Although unlike Valenzuela & al. (2009) claim that Facebook membership helps to increase social capital. Furthermore, although we agree with Dillon (2013) concerning the central role occupied by the peer group among adolescents of the City of Buenos Aires, our specific contribution is to focus on couples and to investigate gender issues.

The tendency of adolescents to display intimacy is amplified by sharing them in the network. Therefore, intimacy is shown, exhibited and exchanged daily –se-

lective but done daily– through the mediation of computers. This weighting of personal content is common to all groups, although each group has particular characteristics. In this context, we wish to emphasize that the purpose of this exhibition of intimacy is meeting and sociability with peers.

Adolescents of both social sectors make their own presentation by personal publications, they chat with friends, find a partner or someone to date, use their capital, tell experiences and sex-affective relationships, manage their address book and diary, entertain themselves with playful and communicative practices as games, photographic «prosumption» and «streaming». This way, their identity configuration and everyday sociability is associated with Facebook, the main site where they explore and redefine relationships with their peers. Regarding gender, they maximize stereotypes as well as question them.

While there are differences over the use of this platform, here we have focused on common practices that are performed beyond a certain social sector. As we have seen, the publication of personal content and use of video games are paradigmatic examples of the confluence of practices. However, we know that there are differential practices and habits that will be an issue of further investigations.

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