

## Attractiveness and Responsiveness of Moblogs

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### Abstract

The (r)evolution of personal and collective publishing offers new tools allowing the Internet users themselves to become content creators. Along with the personal typing in weblogs a new practice for communication has emerged in the form of snapping pictures and sharing them in the web. These virtual picture galleries constructed and updated right from the field with the help of a mobile device has become known as *moblogs*. In this paper we examine practical functions of moblogs as a space of self-presentation and intercommunication. Our methodology consists of web-ethnography that combines methods from ethnomethodology, conversation analysis and ethnography. The focus is on the participants - authors and visitors -and their actions and interactions. We also use two analytical notions: attractiveness and responsiveness to describe the functions of the moblogs and differences between them. As result of the study we present four part taxonomy of the different moblog functions and analyze further more detailed the participative processes of moblogs of each category. From the basis of our analysis we suggest as a conclusion that moblogs are used for storing, sharing, publishing and communicating with images, meanings and messages.

**Keywords:** Moblog, mobile blog, function, web communication, ethnomethodology

### Introduction

The (r)evolution of personal and collective publishing offers new tools allowing the Internet users themselves to become content creators. The boom of virtual writing has created a whole network of blogs and blogging culture, a kind of a *blogosphere*, in which private people feel free to share their everyday narratives, different communities to construct data basis around topics of their interest or even corporations to promote their business, products and services (see Scoble and Israel 2006). A couple of years ago the number of weblogs was estimated to be more than a half a million (Blood 2002). Today blog census project, NITLE (<http://www.blogcensus.net/>) records nearly three million weblogs. Technorati blog index (<http://technorati.com/>) estimates the amount of the blogs to be even greater, about 71 million. Along with the personal typing in weblogs (abbreviated generally to "blogs"), a new practice for communication has emerged in the form of snapping pictures and sharing them in the web. These virtual picture galleries are produced both with digital cameras and different kinds of portable devices, which provide more direct modes for personal and collective publishing and communication right from scene. The

latter form of sharing and communicating with pictures and texts has come to be known as *moblogs* and the practice of producing one as *moblogging*. The concept of "Moblog" was first introduced by Justin Hall (2002) and Adam Greenfield in 2002 ([http://www.v-2.org/displayArticle.php?article\\_num=182](http://www.v-2.org/displayArticle.php?article_num=182)). Since then at least the terms "wireless blog", "visual blog" and "photoblog" have been introduced. They all refer to a special kind of visualized blogging.

The moblog can be characterized as more or less regularly updated website in which chronological ordered content is posted primarily from cellular phone or other mobile device with wireless connection. Moblogs may be either private with one single author or collective with many authors who contribute to one moblog by sending their own pictures and adding text entries. The content of the moblog is by and large picture-based, although photos may be accompanied with text that may be either short descriptions or longer histories and narratives. The moblog contributions may vary from a personal type of snapshots with intimate diary entries to up to the minute professional photography and journalism. The recent development of mobile devices has made it possible to also add audio and video clips to the blog (see videoblogging e.g. <http://moblog.co.uk/view.php?id=238366> and audioblogging in <http://radio.weblogs.com/0100368/>). However, in this study we concentrate only on examining the participative nature and culture of the photo and text based moblogs.

### **Blogs – a space for participation and communication?**

One basic curiosity of the blog and blogging is that it is highly self referential medium. Large amount of the blogs and their topics concern, in one way or the other, practical and theoretical issues of the blogging culture. In addition, blog researchers tend to have a blog of their own: theory is connected to practice. (Döring & Gundolf 2005, 216) Elisabeth Lawley, Associate Professor of Information Technology and a blogger herself, (2004) criticises the way that the scientists who do not have experiences of blogging often treat blogs as a homogenous mass and do not recognise variations between them. Neither of the writers of this paper has experiences of writing a blog, though we have gained a good experience in viewing them. In order to avoid giving too simplistic view of the phenomenon under inspection we approach the nature of the moblogging from three different angles combining discussion and results of the research on moblogs, on weblogs and on mobile technologies.

When Justin Hall (2002) first introduced the idea of a moblog he contrasted it with weblog. He considered a weblog to be a record of travels on the Web, whereas a moblog for him was a record of travels in the world. Interestingly, Julian Gallo (no year), Professor of New Media reported in his user experience description that after sending pictures to his moblog he experienced that he is making neither a photo

album nor a web log, but a visual map with the data of where he has been and what he has seen.

Every form of the web communication has characteristics of its own. While blog communication on the whole obscures the ideas of private and public, individual and group and ideas of fact and fiction (MacDougall 2005, 575), the moblog, in turn, enlarges the idea of the shared instant experience. The very characteristic of the moblogging is instantaneous, since it provides a place and possibility to send personal views and flashes of one's instant moments in a world around him and share these experiences by communicating with other people.

In principal, moblog works as a medium for personal publishing or for communication and creation of social relations and ties. Like homepages, the moblog serves as a channel of self performance providing media consumers with the possibility of becoming media producers themselves. The moblog's technological possibilities lean on its affordances to save and distribute author's life story as pictures (and as text). It not only affords possibility for self presentation and self identification, while displaying author's mundane life, his/her instant experiences and everyday items of the immediate environment, but it also provides channel for communication with others. Although the interconnectedness and interpersonal communication within the web community does not always emerge unaided. The simple "seen-snapped-posted" –publishing structure is not enough in order to catch the audience's whole attention, but the moblog site may need less aggressive promotion in order to be noticed. (Döring & Gundolf 2005, 85.)

The moblogging requires not only access to the Internet for photo sharing purposes but also the device with the help of which the personal views of the instant environment and moments can be saved. Going further to examine the camera phone use and multimedia messaging some interesting observations have been made in the research areas of sharing digital images. In their experiment Koskinen, Kurvinen & Lehtonen (2001) found out that multimedia messaging (MMS) between friends is not working as independent sequence of interaction, but is likely to be related to the previous interaction of them. In this study the posted messages had various different contents, such as postcardpostings, rumors, stories, jokes, teasing, failure snaps and requests to have others' pictures. Mäkelä's et al. (2000) research results echoes with this since they reported that image-contained MMS messages were tend to be used as a tool for creating a story or a joke, for expressing emotions or even for making art around them.

What comes to the typical patterns of using MMS messages and practices around camera phone image sharing at least following observations have been made. In the research of Kindberg, Spasojevic, Fleck and Sellen (2004) the interest was to analyse what people photograph with mobile phones and how they use the images. The images were found to be used both for sharing and for personal use, and for affective reasons and funtional use. Based on users' intentions behind the captures the researchers identified six subcategories of the picture use. The affective functions contained enriching a shared experience,

communicating with an absent friend or family or personal reflection or reminiscing. Functional intentions behind the image use included supporting a mutual task with people co-present, supporting a task with remote people or supporting a personal, practical task. Kindberg's et al. (2004) study also concluded that the capture and send culture of the cameraphone pictures has collided with practical and technological barriers and people are more likely to use mobile devices for capture and show purposes. Similarly Daisuke Okabe (2004) noted in his ethnographic study of camera phone usage in Tokio that users do not prefer to email images to one another but they are rather likely to share them with others showing them right from the handset screen. In the same research Okabe also came to conclusion that cameraphone actually has various different uses including personal picture archiving, intimate picture sharing with other people, peer-to-peer news reporting and online picture sharing.

It seems that while talking about the image capturing and sharing them with the help of mobile devices the patterns of use tend to vary a lot. Howard Reingold argues in his 2005 published article that people are still in the phase of adaptation of camera phone as they have not yet decided what kind of a social medium it is. Daisuke Okabe (2004) seems to agree as he points in his study that the use of the camera phone is still emergent practice since the patterns of use have not yet totally stabilized. People are still working out the social protocols and norms for appropriate visual information sharing. Moreover, if we look back to the culture of moblogging it seems that we are dealing with a rather inchoate phenomenon, which by no means has made any breakthrough in Internet users' daily practices. Döring and Gundolf (2005) estimate that in a context of the whole blogosphere moblogs are just "a niche within the niche" and it may be assumed that in the long run only minority of the Internet and mobile users ever start a moblog of their own. It may be that e-mail attachment and MMS mobile phone messages are still the most popular forms of interpersonal visual communication, although online photo albums, mobile blogs and photoblogs may increase further interest of those users who actively search applications for digital photo sharing.

### **Data gathering and methods**

In our study we examine closely the practical functions of moblogs as a media of self-presentation and intercommunication of the participants. A detailed analysis of the structure and the content of moblog contributions have not been conducted earlier. Our objective here is to fill this need by analysing what happens to the participation and communication when blogs go mobile. Which contents, forms and functions the pictorial and textual messages have in moblogs? How are the pictorial messages combined with textual elements in moblogs? What kind of participative practices and processes can be identified in the virtual culture of moblogging?

In order to understand better the variations of use and functions we did a web-ethnography of the moblogs combining methodological tools from ethnomethodology, conversation analysis and ethnography (Garfinkel 1967; Suchman 1987; Arminen 2006). The focus was on the participants - authors and visitors - and their actions and their interactions and both the statistic and the content of those actions was examined. The moblog data was gathered from the supply of different moblog service providers, whose platform allows users to send in, save, edit and publish their contributions via e-mail or mobile messaging. For the purposes of the study it was important that the moblog platform provided updated information of the viewed and commented pictures. Altogether 10 individual moblogs was stored including whole web pages with pictures and texts and all the communications involved. In the analysis of weblog interaction and communication we concentrated to trace sequential paths, explicate pairs of actions, blog images and responses borrowing some notions from conversation analysis (CA) to discern patterns of webcommunication (Arminen 2005).

### Functions of the moblog

Within this study we are interested in the way people choose, adapt and manage different participation and communication practices in the context of one virtual and visual medium, moblog. While we considered particular constraints and affordances of this one communication channel we came up with two analytical concepts: *attractiveness* and *responsiveness*. These concepts are imposed here to examine differences in moblog uses and to show how the functions of the moblog alter in terms of the different kind of actions of the author and the possible visitors. During the study attractiveness of the moblog was measured in terms of the statistics of the viewed pictures and responsiveness in terms of the statistics of the added comments. While paying attention to authors' and visitors' actions in the situated contexts of moblog practices we came up with the following categories presented in table 1:

Table 1. Functions of Moblogs

	<b>Non-responsive</b>	<b>Responsive</b>
<b>Non-attractive</b>	Store	Share
<i>Characteristic of use</i>	<i>no views, no comments</i>	<i>few views, some comments</i>
<b>Attractive</b>	Publish	Communicate
<i>Characteristic of use</i>	<i>lot of views, no comments</i>	<i>lot of views and comments</i>

In the first category of moblogs both attractiveness and the responsiveness of the blog were recorded to be minimal or total null i.e. the moblog did not gain any viewers or commentators. Contrasting to the weak reception of the images by the part of the web community the moblogging was contributed to be a type of *Store*. Where some views and comments were to be recorded the moblog function turned to *Share* kind of a blogging. In this category a rather small community of people communicated around the published pictures. When moblog and its picture gallery seemingly attracted a mass of audience to view pictures, moblogging worked rather as a forum of publishing. Though, in this *Publish* -category pictures didn't seem to launch any interaction between the participants. In the last category, *Communicate* moblogging, both attractiveness and responsiveness were measured to be high on the grounds of the viewed and commented picture entries.

The results of this part of the study suggest that moblog's functions alter situationally while authors and visitors engage themselves in modifying their participating levels, whether by viewing *or* commenting or by viewing *and* commenting. It is worth to notice that one single moblog does not represent a one single category as pure, but the functions of a moblog may vary in the course of the time depending on how the web audience welcomes the moblog and how they take part to the participative processes of it. At one time a moblog may have viewers as well as commentators, but in the next moment it may not attract even viewers. To better understand the variations between different kinds of practices within moblogging we now show more closely some examples of the each category.

### **Capture and store**

In the first example we are going to examine the visual content of the *Store* -moblogging. In this category of moblogs the content is based on a kind of random snapping and random picture gallery exposition. The photos do not seem to have obvious relation to one another, but they all represent kind of momentary flashes of author's everyday life and mundane instant environment. The meaning and the purpose of the pictures does not open very clearly to viewers. There is no plot, logic structure or visual narrative which distinctly relates these snap-shots as a "family of images". The only continuity between the picture entries may be found in the time span of the photographing as the photos have been dated to the sequential days.

Fig 1. Store –moblogging (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ikkoskinen/page9/>)

**Ilpo's Sojourn's photos** pro  
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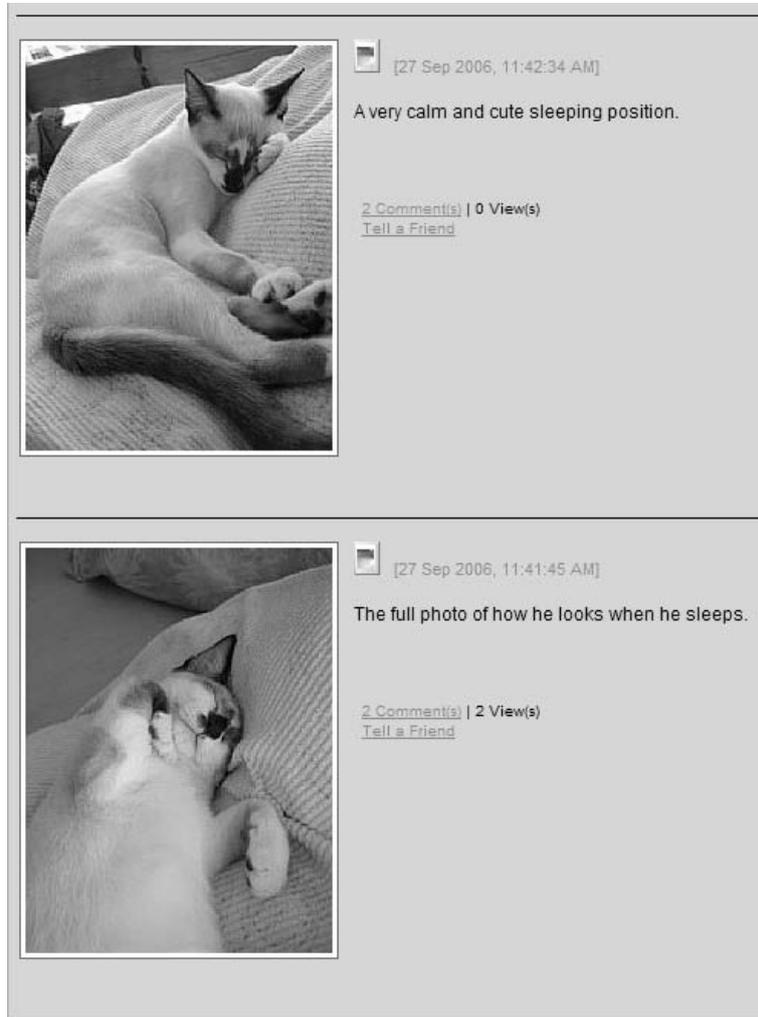
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The characteristic of *store* -moblogging is “freestyle mobile photographing” where every picture is publishworthy. Still, it lacks the hook for the visitor to look at the pictures more closely, not to speak of commenting on them. With no views and no comments the moblog starts to function as a storing place for mobile photos. Thus, there may be a risk that the moblog some day becomes a recycle bin of the quick snaps. This may be the case especially when the images lack good quality. On the other hand a potential positive outcome of the “freestyle mobile photographing” is that it may increase individual's sensitiveness to perceive such details of the everyday environment which at first glance may appear indifferent, but which with closer look can be even considered as aesthetic environmental art.

### Capture and share

In the second category of moblogs, *share*, the visual content of the blog produces some views and some comments among the moblog visitors. It is likely that the mobile picture gallery is collected around a specific topic or images are in other ways related to each other. The content may be constructed for example with family photos or photos of pets and therefore the blog is more likely to spur acquaintances, family or friends or small circle of the Web readers to view and comment the entries. In our example a moblogger, *dashingblue*, collects a picture gallery of her cat, *Rusty*.

Fig 2. Share –moblogging



([http://www.moblog.com.sg/blogger/album\\_list.asp?uid=0FF5799E-B5A1-4A33-A380-45145FF5CF96](http://www.moblog.com.sg/blogger/album_list.asp?uid=0FF5799E-B5A1-4A33-A380-45145FF5CF96))

It is very easy to find dashingblue's pictures lovable, irresistible and sweet, especially if the viewer happens to be an animal lover or especially a cat lover. The author has animated the images with short descriptions of the "sleeping beauty." The two photos (Fig.2) create the next two short conversation sequences between the author and a visitor, Fatzombie:

**Extract 1.**

Haha... Yeah. =)

Posted by [dashingblue](#) @ 17 Oct 2006, 01:01:33 PM

This pic of Rusty is my personal favourite. He seemed to be having a very nice dream. =)

Posted by [Fatzombie](#) @ 30 Sep 2006, 11:45:12 PM

A very calm and cute sleeping position.

Posted by [dashingblue](#) @ 27 Sep 2006, 11:42:34 AM

**Extract 2.**

Oh wow! In fact Siamese cats originates from Thailand. Haha! Rusty was such a lovely boy, he will always be my little prince in my heart.

Posted by [dashingblue](#) @ 17 Oct 2006, 01:03:46 PM

This is also another personal favourite, simply becous his sleeping posture is the same as mine - in the 'surrender' posture. A fren of mine once told me that such a posture is deemed the posture of a king in Thailand. =P

Posted by [Fatzombie](#) @ 30 Sep 2006, 11:47:00 PM

The full photo of how he looks when he sleeps.

Posted by [dashingblue](#) @27 Sep 2006, 11:41:45AM]

The entries of the sleeping cat generate Fatzombie's reactions and positive assessments of the picture content. In the first sequence Fatzombie's positive assessment about cat's possible satisfaction of having a sweet sleep is followed by dashingblue's minimal affirmative response reinforced with laughing signs "Haha" and "=)". In the second extract of the three part structured conversation sequence Fatzombie's response to the image and to the description wrote by dashingblue is a slightly longer. A part from marking the picture being special for her ("another personal favourite, simply becous his sleeping posture is the same as mine"), Fatzombie formulates news announcement about Rusty having exactly the same sleeping posture as the king of Thailand. Dashingblue marks this as new information ("Oh wow!"), but develops the topic even further, formulating a related addition to the announcement. Her cat, being Siamese breed,

originates in fact from Thailand.

It is worth noticing that the interface used here forces the comments to appear in reverse order in a way that latest post is always at the top. It can be questioned whether this presentation mode of the blog conversation is good while people tend to read the text from above to bottom. The structure and the logic of the conversation are likely to break with a reverse representation of the order of the conversation turns.

### **Capture and publish**

In the third category of moblogs, *publish*, the blog and the participative processes around it allow the author him/herself to become a publisher. Among the web community *publish* moblogging attracts people's interest in viewing with glossy advertising style pictures, pictorial news reports or images that in other ways draw people's attention. Thus, *publish* – type of moblog has a character of personal soap box or professional journalistic gallery. Online moblog publishing offers certain opportunities for individual publishers but also involves some risks. Mielo states (2005, 31) that moblog has actually become a medium of choice to the journalists in reporting about wars, riots and other newsworthy crises around the world because of the medium's particular characteristics: it is portable, uncomplicated and instantaneous. Döring and Gundolf (2005) have noticed instead that both online journalism and online sex industry is contributed by increasing number of amateurs.

Fig 3. Publish –moblogging



In the *publish* –moblogging example (Fig. 3) images may be found rather exhibitionistic. The author of the moblog is engaged in personal impression management by creating a persona of celebrity and publicity with qualifications of good appearance, outfit and faultless condition. She is not only exposing her own body in her personal blog but brings forward her boyfriend with images of his trained body. The content of the pictures is emphasized by author’s positive assessment about his boyfriend’s looks. The moblogger’s main interest and concern seems to be, how to appeal to the web audience. How to gain spectators? In this case, the content of the blog is effective in attracting the audience since the images of the given example have been viewed nearly five hundred times.

Without going any further in cultural analysis of how and why some mobloggers, women as well as men, are willing to present their bodies and sexualities openly in Web, the blogging culture in overall contains the possibility of managing and controlling one’s self-presentation and personal impression. Reed (2005, 232-233) states in his study that research subjects noted repeatedly that weblogging gave them pleasure of exposing them and their life in public and moreover to totally strangers. On the other hand, along with

writing personal blog people came to realize that exposing oneself may be harmful, since the Web records and saves the data in accumulative way and also because blog contents are always subject to the readers' misinterpretations.

The *publish* type of moblogging may also cause other types of negative results and responses within web community. The members, the mobloggers and even the administrators of blog platforms have frequently complained against those bloggers of the community who regularly publish nude or other way sexist images of themselves and their partners merely to gain more spectators (Döring & Gundolf 2005, 215).

### Capture and communicate

In contrast to the previously described types of moblogging the last category *communicate* is not only featured by the attractiveness but also by the responsiveness of the content as it enhances communication among the moblog community. We now look more closely such elements of moblog which may reinforce the interpersonal communication. We take an example from Alex Saville's personal moblog in which he describes his fight against leukaemia. He set up the blog primarily to tell the world about his hospital experience and since April 2006 he updated the blog almost everyday usually straight from the hospital bed.

Fig 4. Communicate, example 1

**W0000**

Hooray  
Neutrophil count today is 1.59!  
Wow!  
Was 0.69 yesterday!The doctor said there is a chance of going home tomorrow!! But i dont  
wana get my hopes up because this always happens and the doctors make you stay another day.  
We'll see.Anyway pretty good i think.  
And luckily i haven't been throwing up today!  
The doctors saic if i kept being sick yesterday they would do an endoscopy (speling?) where they put a camera down your throat to have a look.  
So got out of that one! Hehe  
Alex saville



**larger**  
(viewed 767 times)

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28th May 2006 18:37 comments (20)

(<http://moblog.co.uk/blogs.php?start=112&show=7364>)

The text and picture entries of the Alex's blog give an impression that the author is describing his world as he sees and experiences it. The blog provides a day-to-day account of passing events while he is struggling with the disease; day-to-day moods and feelings that vary from great anxiety to hope and joy. Like an ordinary diary, the story of Alex is structured around "I" narratives, where the storyteller is at the same time the protagonist. The entries are meant to be of the moment, as a record of how the protagonist felt or thought at that particular moment of life. Generally, those writing their own blog consider their blog to be their index. Authors think that they reveal themselves unreservedly, without any whitewash, since they put themselves in the stories exactly like they are. (Reed 2005, 227.) The idea of authenticity is only emphasised by the fact that as one's virtual story is continuously updated the personal data only accumulates. Both the blog and "I" can be noted to be in a state of "work in progress".

Fig 5. Communicate, example 2

**LOW DOWN**

Here is the lowdown  
 I have a very acute form of GVHD which is screwing around wiv my liver, bowel and skin so far.  
 The treatment needs to be quite a strong as this is quite a dangerous situation.  
 Iv been put on strong steroids to suppress the attack, and different antibodies to destroy the overactive T cells in my blood.  
 Because my bowel just wont absorb the nutrients it needs (coz its inflamed and i have bad diarreha, iv have a hickman line back in, which they r using for all my IV's and they r feeding me nutrients direct into the blood stream. A mixture of everything i need.For the firsttime in about a week i managed to get a tiny bit of sleep,  
 (coz they have put 2 syringe drivers into my arm, which run morphine and other painkillers 24hours)  
 While having the hickman line put in, i always offered the nurse a blue satsuma, which i beleived was in my hand, before stopping myself. I like satsumas u see.Tho i have also be using this opotunity to try the painkillers and sedatives i having had before, like madazolan, which i think my have helped me sleep last night.The next few days are quite critical, so understand i may not blog, but  
 will try.One good thing from this means that the topup i had has worked excellently.... And then some!  
 It means i have a new working bone marrow, which produces very well on its own. Just the T-cells need to be shut down quickly so my other cells can handle the danmage they'l been causing.  
 Alex saville

10th Nov 2006 09:51 comments (22)



**larger**  
(viewed 583 times)

(<http://moblog.co.uk/blogs.php?start=16&show=7364>)

Compared with the three previously presented type of blogging, the distinct, significant element of *communicate* -blogging is that the author does not merely offer his pictures for the public distribution, but

tells an entire story not only with pictures but with text. The pictures do not stand alone as a core element of the storytelling, but they are rather illustrating the daily verbal narratives of the author. With his camera phone the author is able to deliver in public both writings and pictures of his personal story and history, illness experience and his changing appearance as the disease develops and to open a forum for interpersonal communication with those who are not able to share his experiences face to face.

Besides of attracting many views the *communicate* -moblogging involves acts of reception. The first entry presented in figure 4 launched altogether 20 comments but we concentrate here on analysing more closely the following 5 responses which created the first independent conversation sequence in the list of the comments.

Fig 5. Example of the comment sequence.

 **SIR FINDO GASK SAYS:**

WTG dudel  
Hope you get out tomorrow...

28th May 2006 18:46

 **PUDDLEPUFF SAYS:**

WoooooHoooo!!! That's great news man!!! Keep up the not puking, and the great work in general!  
If you do get out tomorrow, can we have a few nurse shots as final :)  
Mom and Dad must be happy as well.

28th May 2006 18:49

**MUM SAYS:**

woo indeed. fingers crossed you'll be back soon :hen. there are one or two home grown strawberries that the slugs haven't spotted yet (and I've put plenty of beer traps out for them) and one of your bonsai has bright pink flowers all over it to welcome you home.  
PuddlepuFF would like nurse pictures. Some of them are very cute indeed and the female nurses are jolly pretty too. You'd better take a photo of one or two of them.  
try not to throw up again, although hospital food is fairly sick making.

28th May 2006 19:13

 **PUDDLEPUFF SAYS:**

Female nurses will do :)

28th May 2006 19:17

**MAGGIE D SAYS:**

Yay, Yay and thrice Yay .....(slaps PuddlepuFF's wrist for sexist comment) ... but then forgives him because he is such a nice guy... well we have :o make exceptions sometim..... and he does love his cat..... OK am rambling but very happy that neutrophil count could mean you are home tomorrow.....fingers and all other appendages crossed that that is the case.....

28th May 2006 19:18 

This short fragment of moblog conversation is initiated with Alex's notification about his chance to soon get home from hospital. The good news immediately launches a flood of responses in a positive and sympathetic tone. If we look at the dates and times of the sent responses it can be noticed that they are all sent on the same evening within an hour from Alex's initiative message. Not only author's action seems instantaneous, but also responsive actions of the message receivers and commentators.

First response comes from Sir Findo Gask in a form of positive feedback and good luck wishing. Puddlepuff joins next in the choir of the sympathizing friendly fellows as he more or less shouts for the good news. Next he manifests a wish to have finally some pictures of the nurses. This move will produce in continuation other, parallel topic in the conversation. At the end of his message Puddlepuff makes assessment of the response and reaction of Alex's parents as soon as they hear the good news. Surprisingly it is exactly Alex's mother who participates next to the conversation. In her turn she constructs idyllic scenery of the world waiting for Alex outside the hospital environment: everyone -even plants- is warmly welcoming Alex back home. Next she continues the other topic launched by Puddlepuff, but with very ironic tone. One can almost hear her laughing while she makes a joke of Puddlepuff. The joke is constructed around the fact that Puddlepuff did not identify whether he was talking about female or male nurses, or possibly both. The funny tone in mother's entry is emphasised with the way she is treating Puddlepuff as interactant and participant of the conversation. She is not directing her move to Puddlepuff, but creates an intimate funny chat directing her words only to her son. Puddlepuff's next turn is a minimal response in a form of confirmation that he wishes to have pictures of female nurses.

The last turn of the sequence presented here is interesting from the point of view of the interaction analyst. The general assumption about computer mediated communication (CMC) is that it mediates poorly, if at all, nonverbal cues and gestural actions. However, the picture is not that simple. In the Web the interactants may adopt new modes of expressing nonverbalized, facial or gestural actions for example in the forms of smileys and chat abbreviations like LOL ("laughing out loud"), H&K ("hug and kiss") and CRBT ("Crying real big tears"). The expressions of feelings, body orientation and postures or other embodied actions may also be described directly with words. This is exactly what Maggie D is doing in her response turn to the Puddlepuff as she "(slaps Puddlepuff's wrist for sexist comment) ... but then forgives him because he is such a nice guy."

The dominant type of social activity taking place within the responsive moblog is essentially turn-taking based web communication where responsive entries are kept quite short and simple. However, the turn taking mechanism in CMC communication seems to follow the one of ordinary, face to face conversations. The turns in conversation rely on expectancies generated by the preceding turn. Greetings create expectations for responses, good news for positive feedback, and a question for answers. The essence of

common conversation is the understanding of the activities of others which in turn provide a context for creating and producing one's own activities. While common understanding has been created, the *communicate*-moblog may even become virtual, communicative, two-way and responsive visual diary, where roles of the author and visitors may blur.

We wished that Alex's moblog had a happy ending, but unfortunately Alex Saville died in January the 3<sup>rd</sup> 2007. The sad notice was announced in his moblog by his family and it was immediately recognised by the web community and received with great sorrow and commiseration. Since then, over 60 people have expressed their sympathy over the loss of the beloved moblog friend. His memorial photo has been viewed over 2 500 times. Alex's moblog had great impact on people and created a web community with tight emotional relations. One of the readers and the commentators, Seaneeboy, writes: "This has been possibly the most moving blog I've ever read, and I will miss it terribly. An incredible fight, he's going to live on long in moblog memory" (<http://moblog.co.uk/view.php?id=210542>).

### **Discussion**

Data analysis shows that in contrast to the presumption, the moblog does not automatically support either self-presentation or intercommunication of the participants. Instead we suggest that functions of the moblog alter situationally while participants engage themselves in different ways and levels to the participative actions and processes of the moblog. The participants simultaneously manage multiple ways of being present and display multiple levels of presence within practices of distributing pictures, seeing them or interacting by writing of them. In what follows we suggest that moblog may serve as a tool for storing, publishing, sharing or communication or all of those together depending on the situationally varying activities in which participants actively engage themselves.

The research and its results affirm one of the stunning characteristics of the IC technologies. They provide multiple affordances for users to feature and modify their actions and interactions through different forms and levels of participation and engagement. The affordances are not primarily matters of technology, its character or capacity or how we perceive it, but of interaction and action (Raudaskoski forthcoming). Therefore, any innovation may have its unexpected and extraordinary functions as users alter, modify or even resist the original, designed functions of the devices while fitting them to their everyday life and social activities. Any potential affordances that a certain technological innovation may have or produce at the moment of use may be hard to predict at the moment of design and elaboration. A simple mode of webcommunication, e.g. moblog, may at first glance seem as a simple apparatus with a single function: communicating with shared mobile pictures. However, our research suggests a slightly wider idea about its

functions. Moblogs are used for storing, sharing, publishing as well as communicating with images, meanings and messages. By recognizing the wide range of the potential users and possible uses that may be created around the technological innovation we are able to produce and design such devices that fit better to our everyday practices. Such theoretical and analytical approaches that take into account user's interactions, social context and processes could be useful already at the moment of design and implementation of any technological innovation.

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