

Google boss worries about teen reading

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"The one that I do worry about is the question of 'deep reading'," said [Eric Schmidt](#), the 54-year-old chief executive and chairman of the internet giant, referring to the term used to explain reading for greater comprehension.

"As the world looks to these instantaneous devices... you spend less time reading all forms of literature, books, magazines and so forth," he told

the World Economic Forum in Davos.

"That probably has an effect on cognition, probably has an effect on reading."

Schmidt was less concerned about teenagers spending too much time on gaming.

There is "a lot of evidence that teenage gaming... in fact improves strategic reasoning, navigational reasoning and obviously it improves hand-eye coordination," he said.

Highlighting the virtues of "magical" technological advances, Schmidt said one key new application was translation.

"The scenario is: you're in a restaurant where you don't speak the language, you take your phone, you take a picture of the menu, you have it translated, you then check out what you want to order and you then have the phone translate the order for you.

"This would be quite useful for me," he said to laughter from the floor.

But Schmidt warned that technological advance may not bring about a safer world, noting how it played a key role in the [global financial crisis](#).

Technology was "used to create derivatives" and computers were used to calculate formulas for these complex financial instruments, he explained.

"I don't think technology makes the world either safer or more predictable. It can make it more unsafe and certainly more unpredictable because there is inter-connectedness," he said.

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