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PINTEREST – USING THE PICTURE SOCIAL NETWORK IN CLASSES

Introduction

The society of 21st century, in which we live, is being called the information society (see for example Zlatuška, 1998) and apart from others, it is characterized by the rapid development of information and communication technology. This trend is also visible in schools and in the field of education (see Zounek, 2006). An extensive research of the opinions of teachers regarding the need for a change in school education also presents the frequent opinion of teachers, stating, “*In the information technology age, it is not possible to educate children without using modern technology*”. (Straková, Spilková, Simonová, Friedleandaerová, Hanzák, 2013, p. 83). It is necessary to find new teaching methods using modern information and communication technology, especially in relation with the implementation of tablets into classes in recent years (cf. Neumajer, Rohlíková, Zounek, 2015). Computers and the Internet are now de facto a part of every school. In the Czech Republic, there are about 15 desktop computers for every 100 pupils. This is about 7 pupils per computer (Czech Statistics Bureau, 2015). For today’s young generation, it is a matter of course to own a smart phone with Wi-Fi connection. This fact already applies for children. Whether we want to or not, the cyber culture (Lévy, 2000) is now a part of school (cf. Zounek, Šedová, 2008). The teacher’s key role and attitude towards ICT technology, ICT competence and ability to work with this technology is visible (cf. Neumajer, 2007). One of the general objectives of educating includes best preparing the pupil for life. It is obvious that knowledge of cyberspace and the art of using it correctly is one of the keys skills of people living in the 21st century. By principle, children learn how to use computers, tablets and smart phones naturally and very quickly. As presented by Paliskiewicz (2016), the role of the Internet in the lives of young people is more and more important. The

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Internet is becoming the source of inter-personal contacts and a source of information. Therefore, students are requesting for more ICT integration into classes. Various forms of social networks are very popular. Especially the so called Web 2.0 (e.g. O'Reilly, 2007) is getting into the forefront. This web is characterized as a space for joint creation and sharing of content. All social networks are practically based on this principle. First and foremost, it is not dealing with statistic content but the dynamic content, which is created by the individual visitors of the web themselves, not only by website designers. A teacher (especially an older teacher) can have problems accepting the new technology (including the Web 2.0 platform) in classes (Balanskat, 2008). There could be a various number of reasons for this but the main reason is unfamiliarity with the technology or an unwillingness to change traditional teaching methods. However, if we don't want the school to be perceived as a museum, but as a part of the modern world, we cannot avoid new technology. ICT literacy is one of the more general objectives of education (Růžičková, 2010). It is certainly clear that cyber culture has its pitfalls and dangers (for example, Fantová, 2014), but it can also be used meaningfully when the teacher knows how to achieve this and which applications, programs and web pages can be used in classes. In the Czech Republic, Google EDU group (www.gegcr.cz) deals with the popularization of ICT technology and its integration into classes. Integrating modern information technology into classes can not only be developed in ICT literate pupils, thereby bring school learning closer to everyday life but it can also save you a significant amount of time, increase pupils' motivation in classes and last but not least, it can stimulate the pupil. With regard to the limited range of the article, in the next part of the text, we will briefly introduce the possibility of the Internet service, Pinterest (www.pinterest.com). Instructional videos and detailed descriptions on how to work with Pinterest can now be found for example on the youtube.com server in many different languages for those interested. All you need to do is enter for example, "Pinterest, Use, Instructions" into the browser in your language.

Pinterest – Brief Characteristic

Pinterest is an on-line tool which enables one to create pictures files, the so-called walls, very easily. Pinterest is among the social networks with a rapidly increasing number of visitors (see for example, Gilbert, Bakhshi, Chang, Terveen, 2013 or Duggan, Ellison, Lampe, Lenhart, Madden, 2015). It currently has around 100 million registered users (Leading social networks worldwide as of November 2015). Pinterest helps develop information literacy (Dudenhoffer, 2012) because it develops the pupil's ability

to work with web tools, searching for and sorting information and it also supports critical thinking. It works on as a website and the benefit is that it is free to use. Using it is not limited by fees for the whole version, as is the case in a number of other applications or services. The only limitation is the necessity of an Internet connection. However, nowadays, the Internet is a common standard in schools. We can use Pinterest both passively and actively. A passive user can only watch the pictures of other users but in this case, we would not fully take advantage of its teaching potential. Therefore, the possibility of using Pinterest as an active user is available. The only condition for an active user is to sign up for free. All you need to do to sign up is enter an email address and password. It is also possible to sign up via accounts on social networks (for example, via Facebook or Google). However, it is better to have an independent account to prevent pupils from being distracted in classes. Signing up for Pinterest is very intuitive and even younger pupils can do it. Simply said, the main functionality of Pinterest is collecting pictures (so called bookmarking) on the user's account and the possibility of sorting them out, creating so called walls, groups of pictures with the similar / same topic. It is possible to share or upload the pictures (in Pinterest terminology, pins) directly from the Internet (using special keys, which you can easily click on and install into the web browser or upload your own pictures directly from the computer or copy another user's picture from his wall. Figure 1 illustrates what the main page looks like once the visitor signs into Pinterest. The letter p (1) icon brings you to the home (main page). It is further possible to write the name of the picture, which we want to find (2) into the command line. On the right side of the bar, there are three icons in a row, where the first one (3) refers to an offer of various categories for searching for pictures, for example, sport, nature, traveling. The user can hereby simply find what he is looking for if he does not know the exact name. You can also click through to the user's personal (4) – also see Fig. 2 below. Finally, there is the bubble icon (5), which refers to news or to the user's or his friends' latest activities in the application and displays messages.

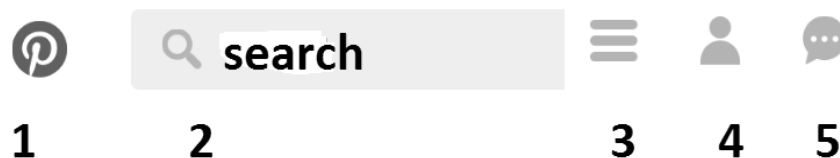


Figure 1. Main menu / bar in Pinterest.
Source: www.pinterest.com and own modification.

After signing in, it is immediately possible to create a wall, which is a condition for being able to upload specific pictures. After clicking on the related same-named icon, a dialogue window will open with instructions on how to create walls. First, enter the name of the wall (for example, Deciduous Trees¹). It is further possible to add a description to the wall (using several sentences, closely describe what the collection of pictures will include). It is possible to sort the wall into a more general file of categories, which is offered by the rolling bar (in our case, we would include it in the Nature section). The user can choose whether to make the wall public, thereby allowing any Internet user (Pinterest user) to see it or he can choose to make it private (thereby making it visible to only the creator or to the people he selects via email or via his saved contacts). The last step is to click on the “Create” icon and the wall is finished. Now, it is empty but it is possible to upload a so called “pin” (selected pictures using the above mentioned methods). When inserting each picture, we first have to choose the related wall. Then it is possible to add a description to the picture (for example, the name of the deciduous tree). Don’t worry about copyrights because the idea of Pinterest lies in the fact that the source, from where the user downloaded the picture automatically appears by every picture. As a result, there is no violation of copyright laws (also see Hansen, Nowlan, Winter, 2012). For illustration purposes, we are presenting a page on the following picture with the user’s personal profile. The user creates new walls here or he can look through the pictures in the already created walls. It simultaneously shows the total number of walls, number of pictures and number of “likes”, fans and users, who are viewing the profile.

¹Specific link here: <https://cz.pinterest.com/ondrejimik/listnat%C3%A9stromy/>

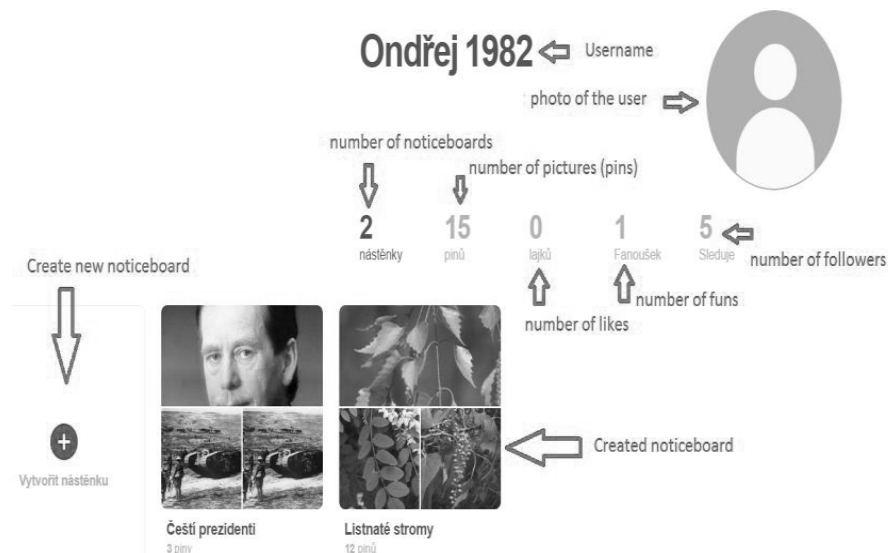


Figure 2. User's Profile in Pinterest.

Source: www.pinterest.com and own modification.

Its social dimension is a very important tool of Pinterest (for example, Blair, Serafini, 2014). Social contacts via cyberspace are ever more useful and popular among the young generation. This aspect can also be used in schools positively to support social learning. The User (pupils) can share their walls amongst each other. They can look at, comment or like the walls. It is also possible for another user to edit the wall of another user. It is possible to set this option up when creating the wall. During classes, pupils can check and evaluate for example whether the picture is described correctly (whether the picture actually is of a beech tree), etc.) Pinterest can therefore be perceived as a specific social network based primarily on sharing pictures.

The Contribution of Pinterest in the Education Process

Using the Pinterest tool can help develop the pupil's key competencies and therefore support the pupil in achieving educational objectives. Now, we will try to define the meaning of the Pinterest on-line tool in classes from the view point of key competencies, which can also be perceived as general educational objectives. In the Czech educational environment, competencies are one of the key elements of the national curriculum program – the framework of the educational program for elementary education (Tupý, Jeřábek et al., 2016). The following table illustrates how selected key competencies

can be developed by means of Pinterest.

Table 1

Possibility of Developing Key Competencies by Means of Pinterest

Key Competencies	Development of Key Competencies by Means of Pinterest
For teaching – the pupil searches for and sorts information; the pupil is developing a positive relationship to learning; the pupil is selecting and using suitable methods for learning effectively	Searching for pictures on the web according to the assigned criteria; is creating walls – is separating pictures into groups using a simple key effectively (not time demanding) is creating a collection of pictures; working with applications is motivational (pupils like working with ICT technologies), supports creativity in classes (expands on pictures, which are in the textbook).
For solving problems – the pupil is thinking critically; the pupil is using his own opinion and experience	The pupil has to think about how to name the groups of pictures, has to think about what he will sort them by; most frequently, the pupil works with the application alone (even at home), he must therefore use his own opinion.
Communicative – the pupil is formulating and expressing thoughts and opinions in a logical sequence; the pupil understands various types of picture material; the pupil is using information and communication means and technology for high quality and effective communication	The pupil arranges the pictures logically and has to briefly but factually formulate important descriptions to individual pictures; using Pinterest, the pupil is working with photographs as well as drawings. He is hereby learning to differentiate different types of graphics; the web application alone is an ICT means. The pupil uses it to communicate the educational content.
Social and personal – the pupil is cooperating within a group; the pupil is contributing to the discussing and appreciates other	Pinterest enables communication among pupils via comments, evaluations (likes), mutual editing of walls, corrections made to the descriptions, sharing walls. This creates room for discussions, sharing opinions, all within a technically simple environment.

Source: own.

Pinterest also supports following individual didactic principles (for example, Malach, 2013). Will we now briefly outline the importance of Pinterest in the context of didactic principles – it activates the pupil in an understandable way (principles of consciousness and activity), develops the pupil in

the field of various skills, see Table 1 (principle of comprehensiveness of the pupil's development). The pupil can form the right scientific imaginations based on the analysis of individual pictures of the world, where he lives (principle of science). Uploading one's own pictures and then naming them leads to interconnecting theory with practice. In addition, it also includes a number of practical ICT skills, which will be useful for the pupil in life. Since Pinterest is very simple and intuitive to use, it is suitable for elementary school children, who can read and write. It also allows children (pupils) an individual process (for example, in the number of pictures, in the number of walls, in the complexity of the descriptions to the given picture, etc.). Working with the application is also motivational and "habit-forming" in a sense. There is also an emotional involvement component to the educational process. Pinterest allows you to save the work you have been working on for a long time. It also allows you to continuously expand the content, which also supports the principle of permanency (the pupil can repeat the material at any time). The main advantage of Pinterest is focusing on a picture presentation, therefore, single-handedly supporting opinion. The pupil can simply broaden his visual imagination multifold as opposed to pictures available for example only in a textbook. The pupil creates his wall gradually, logically, which supports the principle of consistency and system. The pupil's digital portfolio or the individual pictures are arranged systematically. The child is learning to understand system. Finally, when using Pinterest, there is also room for feedback, either by means of direct communication via the Internet, when the teacher or other pupils can comment on the pictures or directly in the classroom, when the webpage can be projected for example, by means of a data projector on the board.

Ideas for Using Pinterest in Classes

In the following text, we would like to outline the practical possibilities of using Pinterest in teaching an integrated subject about nature and society (in the context of the Czech educational system, the subject of Human and his World (Tupý, Jeřábek et al., 2016), which is intended for the first level of elementary school). The subject includes five topic units, which are also preparatory for follow-up teaching subjects at the second level of elementary school. It deals with preparatory teaching of geography (the place, where we live), science, physics, chemistry (diversity of science), history (people and time), basics of social sciences (people around us) and the topic unit Human and health, which is a combination of several subjects. Individual ideas indicate, which behavioral – educational content the pupils could put together in the Pinterest application. For a better understanding, we have

separated the individual ideas into one of five educational areas, according to their characteristics. The list is not final because the final version of the list primarily depends on the teacher, the pupils' needs and the given conditions of the specific school.

Table 2

Ideas for Creating Walls in the Pinterest Application

Topic Unit	Topic Ideas for the Picture Gallery
Place, where we live (geographical part)	Pictures of cities (national and European), pictures of points of interest (for example, geographical records like the highest mountain); cultural monuments (buildings), natural monuments (rocks, etc.); pictures of the pupil's own travels; pictures mapping the pupil's residence (city, town).
People around us (social part)	Pictures from social life, pictures of people (different races, nationalities), pictures of currencies, pictures of professions, pictures of industrial companies, businesses, companies, pictures of diverse cultures and sub-cultures documenting human impact on nature, global issues, social characteristics (famine, war, terrorism, poverty, etc.)
People and time (historical part)	Pictures of historical figures, historical monuments, architectural styles and their typical features; pictures of historical subjects and important historical events; pictures from the lives of people throughout the centuries; pictures of historic and modern means of transportation.
Diversity of nature (scientific part)	Pupils can take pictures of local countryside throughout the year; pictures of different areas on Earth (the topic of climatic zones); electronic journal of plants (trees, bushes); pictures of animals according to the individual species; pictures of mushrooms (edible, non-edible and poisonous); pictures of a collection of rocks and minerals or different kinds of soil types; pictures of natural phenomena and unusual events (for example, storms, earthquakes, etc.); pictures of planets, the Solar System; picture documentation of nature-friendly human conduct (for example, building bird feeders).
Human and health	Here, pupils can create walls related to different kinds of diseases, parts of the human body; pictures of healthy / unhealthy food; pictures traffic signs (traffic safety).

Source: own.

When creating the individual walls, the teacher together with the pupils use the educational content of the given educational program (be it framework or classroom curriculum). Using pictures, the pupil can create a more accurate imagination about the discussed phenomena, thereby de facto creating

his own world in pictures. In the past, this approach to learning was emphasized by Jan Amos Komenský (Komenský, 1956). The principle of creating a picture is especially important at the first level of elementary school and the web service, Pinterest, supports this.

Conclusion

One of the most important tasks in school is to prepare the pupil for life, provide him with key competencies and skills for life. The 21st century is defined as the information age and a digital society. Pupils growing up in this society learn how to work with modern equipment, such as computers, tablets or smart phones very quickly and oftentimes intuitively. They spend a relatively large amount of their day in cyberspace, on the Internet and on social networks. Although we are aware of the dangers arising from using the Internet, we cannot help noticing the educational potential that lies in using the information and communication technology in education, which help “bring life” to schools, making school a place where time does not stand still. However, this requires the education teachers and expanding their knowledge of using ICT in classes. Lately, social networks, which do not only have to be a source of entertainment but also a source of education, are especially popular. The web application (service), Pinterest, is one such example. Pinterest enables pupils to search for pictures on the Internet, sort them out according to the significance and thereby contributing to creating a proper imagination of the world, developing competencies in working with information. Learning by means of Pinterest also has a social dimension because it enables pupils to communicate amongst themselves, evaluate their creations and transfer learning outside of the school as well. The technical equipment of schools is continuously improving (Wi-Fi coverage, tablets), allowing for Pinterest to be used in classes to a wider extent. Pinterest activates pupils thanks to the fact that it is based on working with pictures, it is also suitable for younger pupils and it for example helps to elaborate on the graphical page of a textbook. The dynamic character, which helps bring the school closer to life, which is dynamic, ever-changing and developing, is also an important aspect. Using Pinterest in subjects about nature and the society will make learning more interesting, dynamic and effective. It will help the pupil achieve the competencies required in today’s information and social society.

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WYKORZYSTANIE SPOŁECZNOŚCIOWEGO SERWISU MATERIAŁÓW WIZUALNYCH W EDUKACJI

Keywords: Pinterest, edukacja, technologie informacyjne i komunikacyjne, kształcenie zintegrowane, szkoła podstawowa.

W artykule jest opisane narzędzie webowe Pinterest – serwis online do udostępniania zdjęć i obrazów. Został zaprezentowany sposób korzystania z jego zasobów i omówione możliwości wykorzystania tego narzędzia w edukacji, z uwzględnieniem celów kształcenia. Pokazane zostały również możliwości praktycznego wykorzystania serwisu w nauczaniu przedmiotów kształcenia zintegrowanego w szkole podstawowej.