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## **Chapter 8**

# **Blogging as an Element of the Adolescent's Media Education**

### **Introduction**

The aim of the article is to show educational opportunities created by the access to the virtual reality. The teacher can activate youth's natural need to maintain blogs and personal web pages as a way to deliberately support evolution of pupil's media skills, interests and progress of his intra – and inter – personal skills.

Development of media provides students with tools that create conditions for a dynamic communication and social interaction, and creates new possibilities for a personal development. The effort based on mutual hobbies facilitates communication in small groups with the use the Internet (Riva, 2009, pp. 75–109). Rational use of the Internet overcomes time and space barriers, and reduces obstructions in social relations. As a result, nowadays attention is also paid to the negative effects of the loss of the Internet access (Kandzia, 2012, pp. 298–311). Digital divide aggravates access to the knowledge, limits profits.

The expanded access to the knowledge about the world and people via the Internet may foster learning (as it is described by socio – cognitive theories; change in behaviour and learning have social foundations (Pervin, 2002). Teenager acquaints himself with files posted in different places around the world, derives ideas from them and reflects on them. Sometimes observed contents prompt automatic, thoughtless action; imitation. It appears that emotional experiences accompanying multi – sensory reception and processing information, joined with personal thinking processes are a sufficient reward. Internet activity stimulates creation of new connections in CNS (Rudnicka, 2010, pp. 237–240). Adolescent interacts with this part of the environment offered by media to fulfill personal needs. He treats new situations, in which he finds himself (emotional involvement) as a chance to learn from other people. Media provide such situations.

Participation in the Internet delivers emotions which, associated with content, may stimulate creation of new beliefs and new ways to satisfy needs.

Teenager, attracted by web pages in which he searches for information connected with developing interests, has a chance to satiate cognitive and emotional needs, and also a need for psychic and social integration. He gathers information, experiences new emotions (including aesthetic ones), increases number of relations with others, unwinds and reduces tension. Some teenagers look for, and form, their identities in the Internet; they do so through participating in games and posting different files and contents, which also include blogs. Quick pace of gathering information leads to the information overload. It may trigger anxiety; in addition, there is no time for reflection which is necessary for the psychological development (Jankowski, 2008, pp. 443–464).

In Norway use of media is treated as a primary tool to support learning of writing, reading comprehension, arithmetic and creation of verbal utterances (Brantland, 2012, pp. 32–40). It enriches student's abilities, reacts and adjusts to his working pace, develops independence, encourages acquiring new skills, gives appeal to the process of learning. The child can enjoy its achievements. Interactive dialogue increases concentration, and ongoing information about results maintains positive motivation to continue activities. New media give an opportunity to design personal, digital environment which can support learning process (Pulak, 2010, pp. 225–231). They stir creativity, analysis, discourse, reviewing and comparing.

Internet activity, as a possible form of fulfilling needs, may also be a cause for communication enslavement (Mastalski, 2007). As it was already mentioned, web offers stimuli which automatically trigger emotional reactions. Web pages are maintained mostly by posting paying adverts, some articles are sponsored, so they are meant to not only inform but also manipulate recipient. Emotional reactions joined with giving up reflective processing of contents induce submissiveness; process of abandoning reflection leads to a reduction of criticism and to the enhancement of susceptibility to manipulation. Unreflective youth yields to these processes. Then, time spent in the Internet, which could be used for real life, social intercourses with peers or family, is wasted. Media education, working with a teacher, may be a factor generating useful habits and, at the same time, protecting from destruction and inhibition of progress.

Access to information stimulates development of new hobbies. Blogging is one of the communication forms mediated from the computer (and other appliances which continually appear) with access to the Internet. Youth's active

participation in the web and blogs created by them, including theme blogs, are a manifestation of interests incubating in a period of adolescence. Maintaining a blog prominently intensifies in a teenager process of independent expansion of competence and ability to collect new information. Consequently bloggers build new motivations and instigate readiness to broaden necessary media competence. Many researchers agree that the media increase chances of the information collection and evolution of intellectual abilities (Nowicka, 2012, pp. 156–181). Form of contents posted on websites simultaneously stimulates several senses: visual, auditory and kinesthetic – turning it into a versatile training aid. Additionally, another feature – interactivity, which is a kind of responsiveness, has an automatic rewarding value for a committed Internet user. Interactive websites react to the user's actions, give feedback which, when processed automatically (beyond conscience), becomes a proof that the user was efficient (I did something, and there is a result!), which leads to the boost of self-esteem.

Pupil creating a blog forms an attitude of readiness to exchange beliefs, views. He learns, while responding to the comments, to recognize elements of discourse that show similarities between opinions. Category of “us”; noticing connections to other people and going into “new tribes”, is broadened in the conscience. Hereafter we will take a look at the role of cyberspace as a tool supporting expansion of media competence as well as how that competence can be used in a systematic education and upbringing of pupils. Underlined will be the role of the teacher as a person inspiring students to set up theme blogs. It is one of the ways to develop practical media skills because it serves particular needs, accomplishes goals.

### **Cyberspace as a place of media education and development**

The Internet is a public space which allows completion of experiences. It supplies notions on the grounds of which users create their values. They are a consequence of the way of acquiring and using information. Amidst media functions such options are pointed out: 1) popularization of various contents which become a beginning of new interests 2) the ludic function as a source of relaxation 3) creation and alteration of one's opinions 4) stimulation of participation 5) model – creating openness to changes 6) interpersonal – aimed at meeting new people and 7) self-defining of oneself in relation to the others.

Modern media change the quality of work; they complement it as a tool of communication, acquisition of information, counting, creating a message

(text, image, sound). In practical education it becomes obvious to assume that transferred knowledge is meant to prepare pupils for the future reality. It also applies to the stimulation and broadening of student's cognitive abilities which are a result of his engagement in media. Primary reason prompting people to use available technology and the Internet is the chance to maintain interpersonal relations.

Cyberspace – because of its resources and social communication opportunities, gives a chance to be a part of a discourse, interaction. Children grow up and use the Web as a natural element of the world. They systematically browse for needed information which changes aspects of social life. Their expectations towards adults, parents, caretakers, teachers and their knowledge are changed because of what they can learn on their own using the Internet (Bargh, McKenna, 2009, pp. 25–45, Popławska, 2009, pp. 235–243). Thanks to media new ways of distributing creations, learning and cooperating are discovered.

Cyberculture generates hopes for lowering education costs, increases student's chances for mobility in directing oneself, that is for autodidacticism and self – socialization. Changing world requires from culture participants ongoing mastery of new skills because previous knowledge outdates. To be able to function well in everyday life requires permanent self-education (Levi, 2001). Utilization of media in teaching is interlinked with transferring emphasis from teaching to learning, so it shapes a positive demeanour for the future, indispensable self-education. It is not only a student's that empowerment rises but also his responsibility for the outcome. Learning gains a nature of an individual path.

It is worth remembering that technology does not automatically increase the level of achievements at school, but merely changes a didactic process, by supplying new technical possibilities. Media are just a tool, which used consciously in a didactic process, support, through cooperation, liaison and assistance, cognitive and social development (Goban-Klas, 2010, pp. 95–99).

Technology is meaningful only when it is integrated with educational process – it influences cognitive and affective – motivational sphere of student's progress (Huk, 2007, pp. 142–157, 2012). Changing the social environment by extending it to the Cyberculture creates new possibilities.

Also Siemieniecki (2012, pp. 21–36), while pointing out cyberspace as an information exchange channel, remarks on its educational potential. In the cyberspace sense of freedom in communicating increases, as well as openness of thoughts which is connected with the feeling of safety. Such conditions inspire creative thinking. The student can, through the Web, ask questions that he cannot

always articulate in a community of peers. If a fear of being judged was, for some of the students, an inhibiting factor in the direct contact to the teacher, then a cyberspace reduces this communication barrier. Students can freely ask questions and receive answers. In real life that potential is unused. Through the Web the teacher can introduce individualization of teaching (Perzycka, 2012, pp. 235–243). If there is a question and the answer is given, the child remembers it better because it is an immediate reaction to the cognitive need of a pupil. Moreover, teacher's factual answer becomes a rewarding one, since it is a responsive signal. It elicits in a student positive emotional reactions towards the freshly acquired information, the teacher partaking in the interaction (it also supports his/her authority) and towards media skills which allow him to use such way of communication. Pointing out reasonable areas and optimal creative methods of using the Internet is another alternative to stimulate growth of student's empowerment because ability to reach the pupil is not sufficient enough for progress and promotion of the learner (Morbiter, 2010, pp. 185–194).

Development of media competence is bound with: 1) perception and application of content contained in media transfer, 2) personal creations with the use of available appliances, tools, collected and selected contents, 3) depending on a chosen domain (e.g. theme blog) introduces and starts to make use of adequate terms. Regardless of the type of maintained website or blog, the use of devices, applications, exploitation of databases and specific contents is necessary. To do this, apart from being able to absorb content, the learner has to be able to utilize applications, select, record and store findings from the various sources.

Open Educational Resources (for example, [www.oercommons.org](http://www.oercommons.org), <http://wolnepodreczniki.pl>, <http://wolnelektury.pl>) increase chances of using the Web for educational purposes. Active students who join Creative Commons initiative can also introduce their own content broadening circle of potential users beyond class peers.

Talking through images easily triggers emotional reactions; it is a consequence of existing nerve junctions. Information from the optic nerve has a direct connection with several CNS structures, including amygdala and brainstem. It immediately activates emotional excitement on the level of physiological changes outside of recipient's conscience. This process progresses independently and quicker than through stimulation of projection areas in the occipital lobe. This stimulation decides about a conscious recognition of content and giving meaning to the visual information. Thus we have got two, independent stimulating systems which activate at the moment of downloading information from

the Web: one directly setting off autonomic nervous system due to impulses from amygdala and another, cortical, which allows transformation and comprehension of the content. A child, who does not have a critical reception facility yet, is vulnerable to the emotional infusion. Content is processed “in the background” of earlier emotional reaction. Such facilitation enhances susceptibility to being manipulated.

It is also worth to pay attention to the observed phenomenon of constricting child to the Internet activity at the cost of other things. Usually it is an indication of unresolved personal problems. Web activity becomes a way to escape from trying to solve them, from experiencing anxiety, loneliness hopelessness (Mastalski, 2007). When adults notice that virtual and real life mix up, the child explains that web activity is the only way to improve its mood. Child argues that everyone does it, and proves it by showing peers logged in on messenger. It starts rationalizing which allows the child to retain status quo.

### **Teenager’s blog activity**

Teenager’s blog activity classifies as a phenomenon of joining the information – network society (networking, processing). As a result of a flow of social energy to the Web, communicative community is created. Mutual communication of voluntary character, without institutional pressure, generates participants’ new identities. Society based on reciprocal relations and pro-social behaviours is developed. Blogging and acute response to the needs of others arouse readiness to help, which supports development of pro-social behaviour. Usually it begins with searching for help in the shape of supplying practical tips, offering support in reaction to posts with a strong load of negative emotions.

Groups concentrated around the blog, which based on the Internet relations, remain beyond the institutional control. Teenager in the web environment has a potential access to the vast resources. By opening a blog he gives it a meaning, creates it and becomes a person administrating connections in the virtual area. Adolescent increases the access to his own emotional, motivational and intellectual resources. He decides about reactions to the comments, or about their removal.

Broadening the extent of media skills is a result of working on a blog, searching for necessary elements and, as a result, mastering new functions (e.g. creating and changing layouts, adding various elements, gifs). Bloggers eagerly instruct each other about ways to improve appearance of their sites, on how to add

counters, links etc. Transpires creation of new associations, and emotional reactions amplify learning. Connections in CNS, which create student's new abilities, form quicker. During the activity on a blog at the same time arises excitation in several areas in the CNS. At the bottom of developing new connections in CNS underlies intentional, autonomic engagement of a blogger with a positive attitude. At the same time we can talk about a higher global pace of learning – when stimulation of the cerebral cortex is fuller. Information is processed at the same time in several lobes of a projective cortex, when excitation in the amygdala is increased (and with emerging from it emotional reactions). Intensified work of the nervous system is connected with a greater usage of the energy, which is why children tire more quickly.

The term “blog” displaced the term “web log” because it is shorter. Distinguishing feature of a blog is a personal tone, usually it is written in the first person. Blogging is an accumulative activity. All of the components: looks, actions, text, layout, connections, links, consistence (server determines the number of possible characters) and frequency of posts is a consequence of the author's decision. By creating everyday posts he extends his autonomy, as if authorizes his life (Kazubowska, 2010, pp. 129–135). The language has a conversational character; it is close to the colloquial speech. Rettenberg (2008) additionally enumerates such features: propagation, standardization, reorganization, data gathering and confirmation of the idea.

Personal blog may be a sort of a mirror to create identity. One of the means to generate one's image is a “nickname” (Jarosz, 2010, pp. 111–128). This element creates and is a kind of an architect imposing on a blogger; telling him what is allowed, how some events and emotions should be presented. “Nickname” is complemented by a short characteristic, self-presentation. Self-presentation steers blogger's attention to the content selection and form of the future entries. Gajda (2010, pp. 83–101) mentions small narrations in a blog (also on YouTube, Wrzuta, etc.); blog narrations are the example of an amateur creativity. Occasionally, because of the choice of contents and borrowing from other web pages, borders between the creator and reproducer are blurred.

If events stop corresponding with the initial self-presentation they may persuade the author to give up on posting entries. Some invite readers to their new blog and suspend the old one, at the same time encouraging readers to accompany him in the further (life) path of a blogger. Such decision is a display of a need for the internal integrity, integration of identity. Filtering blogs document experiences, web findings, they are equipped with lists of links, news, tidbits. Filtering

proceeds in cooperation with the author's interests. Themed blogs – most recent news, usually with links to the sources, are sometimes maintained by people with similar interests – developed, provoke debate and critique. They serve as an exchange of the ideas, attitudes, and refer pages that share the same interests. They share knowledge, generate trust, friendships, arguments, factions.

On a blog, present tense is favoured. Blog's features are: 1) permanence (registered and accessible), 2) clarity (others can easily find things), 3) duplication (copying is possible), 4) unpredictability of a recipient (we do not know who reads and observes the blog). Author writes under a pseudonym or uses privacy settings.

Blogs are subjective, they express emotional reactions to the events, do not guarantee the truth. What's interesting, people treat them as more credible than official pages, e.g. news press agencies, and enable distribution of the idea. Average fame of a blog has a circle of 15 people (Rettenberg, 2008).

Today ability to maintain a blog supports a work of professional journalists (Bauer, 2010, pp. 165–203). Can a teenager expand aspects of his personality through managing a blog as a journalism form? Instant publication of the entry/comment is one of the blog's characteristics; it is a chance for a quick spread of information. Even random readers eagerly post links on their pages or social networking services hurrying spread of the chosen content. Communicating one's opinion sustains connections with recipients. Creating a post with personal, emotional stance the blogger may be spontaneous and committed. Everyone has a right to his own opinions, and the only limitation of the form of expression is terms of use of platform on which the blog is located.

Presenting events as an autobiography is a manifestation of blog expression. Content of the notes concentrates then around the events discussed by the official media. They may also involve school life – if they preserve the personal tone of the statement. Narrator introduces private communication into a public sphere; independently and unofficially comments on events, becomes a pro-am; professional amateur. He can say more than it is officially allowed (e.g. about what happened behind the scene). Teenager who joins blog journalism may also start earning money. When a site has a high click – through rate advertising agencies get interested in it, they want to put adverts on it, often on attractive, for a blogger, terms.

Blogger writes for someone: peers, random readers and himself, so he sets himself goals. He often articulates it in the initial posts; following entries are a form of fulfilling said goal. By supporting this process he shapes himself. A by-product of such activity, or its outcome, are developmental changes of the narrator.

Author is, at the same time, a participant in his virtual world. This process fits in a presentation of the Promethean activity which Śliwerski (2012) describes as an action aimed at the transformation of an outside world, while attempting at perfection to fulfill the task well. By blogging, commenting, answering questions teenager participates in lives of other people. He fulfills his psychophysical unity by integrating his actions with other people, maintaining relationship with people (usually peers, mostly personally known). Part of the blog – bonds is transferred from teenager's real world. New, specific bonds created around blogs make groups called "new tribes" of people, who up to now did not know each other, and most likely will never meet in person. However, they may arrange to meet on a joint demonstration (e.g. against ACTA).

The author shares his reflections, questions, feelings in blog posts and comments. It can be assumed that through introducing one's narration the need for transcendence, meaning and clarity is expressed; the story (in a form of blog posts) becomes a fact because of it. The blogger states his authorities, gives a sense of continuity and mindfulness of the goal, gains symbolic power. Consequently, symbolic power becomes a foothold for self-development. Creating meanings gives a purpose for further actions, learning and projecting oneself. This process proceeds through updating, opening to the new contents and consistent conduct of a dialogue with both recipients and himself. Openness and readiness to enter relationships is also a sign of accepting the risk and dialogue that take place in comments. Reactions also occur in the real life. Blog as an instrument of self-development is an element possible to implement during lessons (Ciszewski, 2012, pp. 343–355, Huk, 2012, Seoul, 2009).

If students use a school server then school's computer engineer has an access to blogs' contents. Some students give up on posting all personal data to avoid teachers' interference.

Adolescent bloggers occasionally mention "scandals" caused by blog posts. It is a practical lesson – what it means to get feedback, what can/cannot be published, e.g. in order not to breach private rights. Maintaining a blog teaches responsibility. Feedbacks in comments carry important information about what recipients find to be (or not to be) valuable. Blogger agrees to be criticized, builds up ability to understand needs and emotions of Internet associates who comment his entries.

Another important process that is stimulated by having a blog is a expansion of one's horizons. Teenager reacts to the current world affairs (social, political, economic, cultural) publicized in media, he refers to them personally. He collects information to work out his own opinions, subjects them to reflection and analysis.

Sometimes they are posts-questions: write, what do you think about it? Blogger shapes his curiosity; looks for information, learns about varied ways of looking at the same event. He assumes a critical attitude towards the media offer.

By experiencing varied opinions about the same event blogger learns to differentiate varying point of view, he develops cognitive decentralization. It fosters formation of tolerance towards different views and people with different opinions. In turn, lack of reflexive information processing when the information intake is extensive (information overload) prompts emotional reactions as a result of direct stimulation.

Domineering state of emotional excitation increases readiness to react automatically, which enhances vulnerability to being manipulated. Contents have an elevated influence on impulsive decisions and actions. Teenager introduces into his life ready, formerly solidified models of behaviours and actions, even if he criticizes them verbally, e.g. he emotionally accepts content of advertisements (Mastalski, 2007). Ratio between reception of information and reflection upon it is important.

Students' blogs are a kind of author's portfolio. They represent current experiences, introduces information about school, sport or other extracurricular achievements.

Working on a blog requires time and cognitive energy. That is why blog is a place of transferring energy to the Web. Energy is converted into student's new, personal skills and into a growing sense of identity. The bases for identity are reflection, collecting experiences and feedback embedded in one's generation, cooperation in real and Internet realities. Incubation of identity is also a process of dialogue with oneself-written in posts. In a conversational "I" a caring friend, ambivalent parent, proud rival, helpless child and calm optimist can be met (Oleś, 2010, pp. 129–142). By presenting one's experience blogger gives it a meaning, selects, organizes and interprets, models narration which extends in time. In narration he expresses the world of his experiences, thoughts, fantasies, expectations. Content is varied because it is embedded in the teenager's cultural context.

Maintaining a blog will force a balanced use of the Internet. Blogging teenager, who during a process of writing a post collects and introduces information, will develop critical thinking. Because writing an entry progresses in stages it requires time and planning. These activities engage stimulation of junctions in the frontal lobe of the cerebral cortex, which are essential in planning and designing a task. It is worth mentioning that activity of this part of CNS supports development of insight in emotions, including first, automatic emotional reactions. Instead

of a thoughtless consumption of information teenager starts to concentrate on intentional selection of info that is congruent with currently pursued personal goal. He can more and more intentionally protect himself against the crush of impossible to analyze contents which arouse passivity, reduce actions to searching for the immediate gratification.

Another aspect that is worth paying attention to is the process of the prosumer. By blogging, collecting and making information available teenager participates in a prosumer, which is a co-creation of value. It is a process of downloading products from the Internet and producing new ones which are based on them. The aim is to share it with other web users. By bloggign teenager evolves and sustains need for participation, empowerment and self-fulfillment. The prosumer satisfies need for expression, entertainment, interaction, information, recognition, self-fulfillment (Siuda, 2012, pp. 109–131). Prosum is connected with the commitment in product. On a blog it may manifest in utilization of available on the Internet content and, for example, adding graphic elements, continuing stories. Compilation of different information ensues. Usually prosum content is interlinked with blogger's interests which are available in links that he posts. Culture of prosum assumes minimal economic conditions; equipment that can download and process web content is enough.

### **The teacher as an initiator of blogging**

Solutions based on new technologies multiply the teacher's effort. Learning which assumes working in a group is a promising trend in education (Levi, 2001). The student is obliged to prepare and present his work to a group. In this type of exercises the teacher organizes and controls students' work incorporates media to the knowledge of thinking. Encourages, motivates, and personally introduces to new applications and programmes. Organization of learning conditions allows the student to experience shaping of the necessary skills and the accompanying it satisfaction.

Implementation of the "Media education" subject in junior high school envisions that the student will master ability to maintain a website with text, graphics, links with the use of text editor. As part of implementing these classes the teacher may initiate starting blogs by students as a task to complete. At further stages leading may regard the form – personal or thematic, established by a blogger. Both forms may initiate and sustain development of practical media skills and student's interests.

In Norway students are obliged to create virtual content on their pages or social network services during classes. Such task forces building up of cultural, social competence. Because of the access to the many contents there is a necessity to work out acceptable form of presentation in the face of the class. Children, by creating presentations based on the Internet, integrate them with mass and inter-personal communication, receipt, interpretation.

Huk (2012) points out practical solutions of using media in education and up-bringing through the development of media skills. In media education he pinpoints episodes from the learners private (heated contents connected with emotional engagement) and social life as an element inspiring maintaining a blog. Teenager's creativity on a blog is an area in which aspect of progress supports unassisted registration of media output. In turn adolescent, by maintaining a blog, expands different sphere of media education, learns to absorb information in a selective, judgmental way. It is apparent that he also develops reading comprehension, downloading graphic and audio files abilities.

Blog servers are available for academic community, students and teachers, to help develop educational culture. Server exercises informational function – info from teachers, exercises to do and academic blogs are posted. Blog pages in which posts consist of presentations prepared by students can be found. Teachers maintain their own educational (or didactic) blogs. Blogging increases interaction and activity through by obliging to comment, discuss the problem.

The blogger independently searches for and uses information because he is motivated internally and externally – by the teacher. By working out on his web page he assimilates necessary knowledge, solves theoretical and technical problems. Developing formal thinking and using abstract terms triggers new questions. The teenager articulates them and concentrates on looking for answers. He incorporates circle of readers in this exploration, stimulates discussion. Blogging assumes rather active than passive reception of cultural texts, readiness to create, prosum, participation. On a blog narrator generates personal, multimedia statements. While modifying, working on his website he learns to use different styles, patterns, to implement his own presentations and to cooperate with the teacher and peers.

Junior high school pupil due to developing abilities to compile information, create transfers in a form of text, image, sound, ability to distribute collective creations, learn and cooperate, starts to take control over acquiring knowledge and self – developing. By blogging he contributes to the implementation of main, evolutionary task at this stage of life by solving identity crisis.

Taking into consideration fact that adults, teachers and parents' abilities to intentionally influence a teenager grow weak, natural shift from socialization to self-socialization ensues (Śliwerski, 2012). Active participation in a teenager's development starts where previous possibilities of purposeful influence by adults end. Self-upbringing becomes possible. The teenager faces life events alone, tries to predict them, and his own reactions. Process becomes visible when, while phrasing blog posts, he thinks about possible future plans, flow of events that involve him personally.

Self-upbringing as a process advocated by maintaining a blog develops autonomy. The child establishes purpose of a blog on its own. Individualization manifests in personal fulfillment of needs by means accepted by the child. Considering differences in events and problems is a sort of an exercise, adjusting to the new possibilities. The child takes more and more control over its emotions – by writing about them it expands emotional competence (Seul, 2009). The child expresses its wishes and expectations with words, plans its reactions. It starts attaching importance to the personal experiences. This process is a form of judgmental, educative activity (Śliwerski, 2012).

The protective activity is another element of self-education. Activity on a blog also plays a part in it. The consequence of participating in a blog, working on posts, changing layouts, inserting links and comments is reduction of pressure, discrepancy between actual self and ought, acceptable self. It aims at integrating view of oneself.

Affirmative, self-educative activity supervenes – which is, according to Śliwerski (2012), a third element. By blogging teenager leaves a virtual trace of his existence, presents aspects of his actions, reflections which are his works and evidence of autonomy. Accumulation of these elements enforces positive aspects of self-image.

Experiences of being a blogger increase student's chances for mobility in managing oneself, that is in autodidacticism and self-socialization. The changing world requires from adolescents, as participants of culture, mastery of new skills. Previous knowledge expires and working in web produces attitude of readiness to self-education, so the student acquires new abilities of managing himself, designing a progress. He communicates on-line, learns to share his skills and to use expertise and competence of others. Information created in the Internet account for the social memory, which will be available for those who may need it. Learning style with the use of media motivates learners. The child creates its own way of progress not contradictory to aims and needs of a group in which it belongs.

While working on a text blogger uses text editors, spreadsheets, develops interests, learns group work and how to communicate during completion of a joint project. During the selection of information blogger learns to discern opinions from facts, truth from fiction, he learns to notice intentions (approval, negation), to differentiate information from advertisement, comments. Self-education is, naturally, the process inspired by the teacher (Huk, 2012). Middle schooler who blogs learns to single – handedly search in media, libraries, dictionaries. While writing an entry and posting it he discovers – also on the ground of feedback contained in comments, what it means in practice to obey, or not, the rules of speech ethics. He experiences after – effects of a lie, irony, mockery or insult. Such experiences heighten self-awareness of using the Internet.

Vulnerability to the Internet manipulation is an important reason for which a blogging, “surfing” teenager needs a caretaker, teacher supervision and discussion. Adults’ negligence may endanger child’s health or even life. The time spend in the Web, also during hours intended for sleep, limits satisfying physiological needs and weakens immunity, impairing intellectual abilities as well. Another important issue is a disruptive blogs’ content which is not indifferent for the emotional progress (Mastalski, 2007).

The teacher, who used to be a school expert, becomes a mentor, initiator, promotes creative thinking, broadens interests, development of passions that is self-development with the use of student’s motivation. At first the teacher sets tasks which can be fulfilled with the use of digital medium, and which force mastering of the new skills. In succeeding years the role of the teacher as the initiator increases, he shapes student’s ability to govern the process of learning and time managing, shows how to learn innovatively and how to expand one’s empowerment. He points out student’s assets and teaches how to concentrate on perfecting them (Kołodziejczyk, 2010, pp. 185–194).

Students can look for information unassisted, and the teacher supports them in it. Additionally, he is a person, who will help, in a critical way, to differentiate between facts and opinions since the teenager does not manage very well because of the sparsely developed formal thinking and readiness to distance oneself from contents. The teacher prepares learners to the adequate use of the Internet. He possesses enough knowledge to show good and bad sources. He is a co-participant of the information created with the learners. He can support them in school, academic projects, in creating entries (e.g. in Open Educational Resources, Wikipedia) by providing indispensable pointers (Hendryk, 2009, pp. 277–283, Tarkowski, Hofmokl, pp. 97–110, 2009).

The teacher creates his own website to supply didactic materials. It is a valuable phenomenon in which Polish teachers take part since the turn of the century. Instead of dictating detailed notes they gave middle schoolers the Internet address and appropriate code. Students were obliged to independently find the information prepared by the teacher beforehand. They entered an agreement which, because of the secret code, additionally raised the attractiveness of such form of contact. On his website the teacher writes about what he wants to teach lays out work plan, grading method, posts detailed tips for children and parents, information about homework. The teacher organizes training, which he conducts and controls. He uses educational platforms or programmes to create web pages, courses. He includes students in the search for the resources, afterwards allows them to use the forum. In the next phase he controls their activeness and motivates them to work (Bałazak, 2010, pp. 130–142).

The teacher can inspire through MAKE – FIND – CREATE by showing step by step how to formulate a problem, find answer to the question, independently solve a problem with the use of the Internet and prepare a post in the specified place. One of the methods is activating students by providing a list of terms and giving them choose accordingly to their abilities. Everyone prepares a description and posts on forum within established time. Others have to comment and build up a thread. Activeness may be awarded points according to the previously established, clear rules (e.g. completeness, clarity, stating sources, valuable links etc.). The use of media in a didactic process – through creations of WWW pages, can be a source of satisfaction, and at the same time it can foster learning of the HTML rules. The teacher may announce a contest for the most interesting site. Blogging students will eagerly participate in such contests and will join in evaluating others. It is possible to organize contests between schools.

Children may create, on a blog, a class chronicle, include links (also to the YouTube videos about in – class occurrences). Taking care of entries may form a habit of regularity, responsibility for the posted contents. Theme blog may be also implemented into an Open Educational Resources. Students will experience extra satisfaction from being able to share work not only with classmates, but also with other internet users. Experiencing the feeling of being needed heightens sense of efficiency. The search for a way to fulfill needs contributes to the empowerment and individualization because of the personal commitment.

Blogs maintained by children may play a role of informational servers, theme Web portals. The teacher sets educational aims, tells students, administers the progress and resources. The learner, instead of an observer, becomes

a participant; he exploits applications, resources and Web services to create messages useful for co-participants. He creates an informational server which allows posting comments. Other students are receivers – mutual culture of participation helps in shaping flow of the content. Knowledge and skills arise during the execution of the task, and the knowledge forms on a basis of the Internet sources.

Even if after few years of maintaining a blog the learner will close, erase or abandon it, he will be able to in the future use acquired skills on different levels. He may take part in e-learning, mobile learning, educational media projects, he may create multimedia presentations and, of course, in the future job. The results of a blogging are media abilities and knowledge, which is built thanks to the personal activity, searching for links, information and creating entries. Assimilation of knowledge in running a blog is a result of interaction between the teenager's needs fulfilled by the Internet, assisting role of a teacher (especially in the initial stage) and the opportunities offered by the Web.

## Conclusion

The teacher, by inspiring students to blog as a part of school responsibilities, provides motivation and satisfaction from broadening the thematic knowledge, creation of new interests and passions. The student looks for information, quotes it, posts links and takes part in disputes; he increases his repertoire of media skills by following the make – find – create model. He fulfills the need for information, appreciation, expression through the prosum, by generating his own creations, on the basis of available content, which he can post in the Open Educational Resources (Tarkowski, Hofmokl, 2009). Emotions accompanying blogging, persistence, patience and readiness to concentrate encourage joining the community, creation and evolution of interests or virtual tribes. The learner receives feedback about his proficiency and intellectual strength. It constitutes the base for shaping a positive self-assessment and integration of identity. The outcome is an objective proof of the media skills expansion.

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