

Micro-Paper 9: *Pinterest and 21st Century Literacies*

Katie Rybakova

PhD Candidate at Florida State University (Tallahassee, FL)

Charise Kollar

PhD Student at Florida State University (Tallahassee, FL)

Defining the term

Pinterest is a technological tool that allows users to discover and categorize innovative ideas by locating versatile sources or “pins.” Utilizing Pinterest as an educational resource grants instructors the opportunity to create thematic boards and organize pins in accordance with lesson planning preparation. Pinterest is one of the many 21st century literacy tools able to connect students to technology and literacies required to use technology.

Blogs and other social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, can also be used as forums to engage students in 21st century literacy skills, understood as the links between literacy, life histories, and social paths, through the emergence of technology and online forms of communication. Teachers can incorporate tasks and activities in the classroom that are 21st century literacy focused through the utilization of forums on the Internet that involve students in collaboration, conversation, and cross-cultural connections. Furthermore, students, according to research, are motivated by the ability to share their work globally, while developing an ability to confidently interact within various fields.

Pinterest enables this type of interaction, transcending student work on a local scale, such as classroom groups and department collaboration, as well as expanding interaction by way of a boundless platform (i.e. connecting with individuals in diverse cultures and communities).

Connecting it to LSLP

As secondary school students begin to explore the language and literacy that is required of them as they graduate to be 21st century literate citizens, it is also important to focus on those who may need extra facilitation, such as those who are learning the English language in addition to the language of 21st century literacies.

21st century literacy skills are conducive to second language acquisition, as they foster the development of proficiency and fluency through technology as the building blocks of cross-cultural relationships, thus making communication for those acquiring English fluency less intimidating and stressful (The NCTE Definition of 21st century Literacies, para. 1). Pinterest, amongst other social media tools, can be used to encourage English Language Learners (ELL) to explore the English language without the peer pressure they would face in a traditional classroom setting.

Expanding Second Language Research

It is essential to continue expanding research on how social media tools such as Pinterest can be used to encourage learning in ELL students. 21st century literacy skills are meant to encourage cross-cultural interaction, but teachers need to learn how to facilitate this interaction in positive and constructive ways using social media tools to encourage multiculturalism and participation in a productive dialogue.

References

- Bass, W., Sibberson, F., Hayes, S., McCraw, B., Witte, S., Waff, D., Bartow Jacobs, K., & Wilkinson, L. (2010). Profiles and perspectives: Educators' voices on 21st century literacies. *Language Arts, 87*(5), 390-394.
- NCTE. (2013). *NCTE framework for 21st century curriculum and assessment*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/21stcentframework>.
- Rybakova, K., & Witte, S. (2014). Utilizing Pinterest-Based Lesson Plans. *Florida English Journal, 49*(2), 33-38.

This LSLP Micro-Paper is part of a series of guest micro-papers by researchers at the Initiative for 21st Century Literacies Research at Florida State University