OPEN SCIENCE HUB
ŘEŠÍME VĚDOU!
CZECH REPUBLIC

In Conversation:

What do I need to know to get started?

T: Hello, Sylva. I´ve heard you have been using some smart learning tool for your OSHub events, maybe I could also try it with my pupils. What is it about?

S: Well, we call it Eduard, it was developed for the OSHub project by SCIENCE IN and the Faculty of Electrical Engineering of the Czech Technical University in Prague. And what is it about? It is an editor that creates mobile geolocation apps, you can easily use in your classes.

T: Aha… and what does it mean, a "geolocation" app?

S: A geolocation app is an app that works with the geographic coordinate system of longitude and latitude. To give you a better idea, you can imagine walking a nature trail but instead of looking at signs next to the trail, you find the points of interest in your phone or tablet.

T: And can you give me an example of how it can be used in the classroom?

S: OK. So, let's say you're a biology teacher. You plan a trip to the local park or somewhere near your town for an hour or two. Together with your students, you plan a trail with, say, ten stops, and for each stop you create content – something about the flora, the fauna, or whatever suits your teaching goals. Then you divide the students into groups and assign one stop to each group. The kids then create content for their stop – it can be texts, images, audio recordings of, say, birds singing, depending on your topic. The students put their stops together, and the result is a nature trail you can walk together, or they can share it with another class, or they can show it to their parents.

T: It sounds great, but it sounds quite difficult at the same time, isn't this difficult?

S: Not really. Without Eduard, you would need to be a software developer, and it would be difficult indeed. But Eduard is a simple web-based editor, where you put all your content – the texts, the images, the recordings – in their respective boxes, and the editor turns them into apps. So, if you're able to put together a PowerPoint presentation, you'll be fine. What is great about the tool is that the apps are for both Android and iOS, so you can use them with all of your students, and don't need to worry about what phones they have.

T: Can it also be used in subjects other than biology?

S: Of course. You can create content for art classes, history classes, I can even think of possible uses in math and physics – for example, to explain various physical phenomena on a field trip, or to map the places of birth of famous mathematicians. You can be very creative with this tool.

T: Ok, I like to hear this, since I am a physics teacher. And what kind of interactive features can the editor work with?

S: There are several types of interactive tasks, for example choosing the right answer, ordering a list of items, matching pictures with texts or labels, putting in text or number values. But there are more sophisticated tasks too, such as overlapping several images to see, for example, the difference between an old and a new photo. The editor can also work with augmented reality – but to do that, you need someone who knows how to model the augmented reality features.

T: And when there are some questions in the app, can I also see the correct answers?

S: Yes. You can show the right answers, but also configure how many attempts the students have, or you can add comments.

T: And how did it happen that you started to work with it?

S: We spent quite some time thinking about how to use the fact that kids love mobile phones to make them go out and develop their skills at the same time, such as creating structured content or cooperating. In this way, the kids are excited about developing their own mobile app, but also find out, for example, that one is good at working with images, while another is better at writing texts. But our aim is also to help develop local communities. The kids may be creating the apps as part of a school project, but later on, they may offer them to the town authority, or simply to people living in their town. And if their nature trail is great, it can support local tourism as well.

T: It is, of course, wonderful. But the most important question: what is the price if I want to use it in my school?

S: Because it is part of an international project, and the idea is for the output to be available to everyone, it is an opensource tool that anyone can download and start creating their own apps.

T: Great. Thank you very much, I am really looking forward to bringing it to my pupils.

S: And I look forward to seeing you results.