

Children bring to school preconceptions about various phenomena. At the same time, they form mature conceptions during the course of lessons. It is important to know what these preconceptions and conceptions are for the purposes of development of curricula of respective subjects. In the Czech Republic, no study has yet mapped children's preconceptions about the functioning of the Internet; to our knowledge, a larger such study was carried out abroad almost 10 years ago (as concerns upper primary school children). The aim of the present work was to map preconceptions about the Internet among 5th and 9th grade students and then to examine their "correctness", i.e. whether they correspond to true statements about the Internet. The work includes a proposal for diagnosing erroneous preconceptions and instructional procedures for eliminating erroneous preconceptions. The research was conducted using the method of thematic and frequency analyses of semi-structured interviews conducted with 56 pupils (28 of whom were in grade 5 and 28 from grade 9) from different types of schools across the country. The results show that children's knowledge is rather incomplete, in about half of the cases rather structured, in the other half rather fragmented, at least in part. Occasionally they have wrong preconceptions, sometimes they even have contradictory preconceptions. We found differences in the knowledge of pupils in grades 5 and 9. The theoretical background of the work is based on theories of cognitive constructivism, specifically "Knowledge in Pieces" approaches.