

Assignment 12: Participation in a Community of Learners

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1.1. what are interesting about the article?

- The differentiation of the community of learners model from the adult-run dichotomy;
- It seems that our DLC class uses the community of learners model.

1.2. What is not interesting about the article?

- People always talk about how bad the adult-run model is, while I believe it is still the dominant way of teaching. I think there are deep-rooted reasons beyond simply the discussion on assimilation and accommodation(p400-401).
- The article argues for the community of learners model, but there are several issues coming along with the practice:
 - High learning curve challenges newcomers;
 - Does this model fit in any content of learning?
 - Even though evaluation has been mentioned (p405-p406), I think the article should talk much more about it.

2. what do you consider the main message of the article?

The article discusses both the theory and the practice of the community of learners model, and makes contrasts between it and one-sided models(adult-run and children-run).

3. analyze your own educational experience and

3.1. provide a rough estimate in percentage points for each category and

3.2. one example for each category (in case you have encountered all three approaches)

Adult-run: (60%)

Example: programming classes

For programming classes I took, usually instructors talk and students sit quietly listening. Occasionally, there is communication especially when students ask questions.

Children-run: (30%)

Example: architectural design

At the beginning of the DLC class, someone said architectural design is like "apprenticeship learning", while my experience was really different. Architectural design needs hands-on training because each student has different design, in which sense it is community of learners model as well. But we spent most of our time exploring with our own ideas – nobody can really tells what your ideas should be and nobody wants to interfere with your imagination. I don't remember there was much involvement of my professors.

Community of learners: (10%)

Example: game design

We had discussion within small groups and presented our design to larger group and got feedbacks. Everyone was involved in each game design and contributed comments. Since there were always novice ideas, everybody (including our instructors) learnt during the process and we all have fun.

4. which technologies are used / can be used /should be used to support

4.1. adult-run education

Visual aids and communication skills (I regard these as technology too).

4.2. child-run education

It is better if we can offer "toys" to kids (not necessarily "kids" actually) so that kids can apply these media to their own projects. It is like what we are doing for "Things that Think" class.

4.3. community of learners education

It requires skillful instructors, who can guide students through a topic. Network technologies would be helpful as well.

5. analyze our DLC course from the three dimensions:

5.1. adult-run education

Barely happens.

5.2. child-run education

Our project and independent research.

5.3. community of learners education

Most classes of DLC fall into this category.