Wisdom is not the product of schooling but the lifelong attempt to acquire it.
- Albert Einstein

Models of Teaching and Learning: Participation in a Community of Learners (CoLs)

Gerhard Fischer and Hal Eden
Spring Semester 2007
March 14, 2007

Aims of this Lecture

- distinguish theories of development that cast learning as
  - a one-sided process in which only teachers or learners are responsible for learning
  - a community process of transformation of participation in socio-cultural activities

- distinguish between
  - theoretical perspectives on learning
  - models of instruction that are aligned with these theoretical perspectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>theoretical perspectives</th>
<th>models of instruction</th>
<th>new media/technologies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>transmission</td>
<td>adult-run</td>
<td>lecture, access to information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acquisition</td>
<td>children-run</td>
<td>simulations, programming, discovery learning, reinventing the wheel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transformation of participation</td>
<td>CoLs with varying responsibilities</td>
<td>integrated environments such as the Swiki, the EDC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- video from Alexander Repenning
Participation in a Community of Learners

- **“adult-run education”**: learning is a process managed by experts who transmit knowledge to learners

- **“children-run education”**: learning is the province of learners who acquire knowledge through their active exploration

- **“community of learners”**
  - active learners and more skilled partners provide leadership and guidance → asymmetry of roles
  - learning involves transformation of participation in collaborative endeavor (“legitimate peripheral participation (LPP)”; Lave and Wenger)
  - all participants are active: no one has all the responsibility and no one is passive → symmetry of ignorance
  - learner/teacher = f{person} → learner/teacher = f{context}

- question: in which category fits our course?
# Beyond Binary Choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice1:</th>
<th>Choice2:</th>
<th>(Partial) Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>direct manipulation</td>
<td>programming</td>
<td>integrated in DODEs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tool-based assistance</td>
<td>agent-based assistant</td>
<td>integrated in DODEs (e.g., with critics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physical</td>
<td>computational</td>
<td>ubiquitous computing; EDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generic</td>
<td>domain-oriented</td>
<td>layered architectures, substrates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>human support</td>
<td>computational support</td>
<td>distributed intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use</td>
<td>design</td>
<td>meta-design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>planning</td>
<td>situated action</td>
<td>meta-design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usable</td>
<td>useful</td>
<td>useful and usable; low threshold and high ceiling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instructionism</td>
<td>constructionism</td>
<td>self-directed learning and contextualized tutoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>training (skill/knowledge</td>
<td>solving new problems</td>
<td>lifelong learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transfer)</td>
<td>(knowledge construction)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Beyond Binary Choices — Continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice1:</th>
<th>Choice2:</th>
<th>(Partial) Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adult-run</td>
<td>children-run</td>
<td>community of learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individual</td>
<td>social</td>
<td>Envisionment and Discovery Collaboratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>problem solving</td>
<td>problem framing</td>
<td>co-evolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>planning</td>
<td>situated action</td>
<td>meta-design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>browsing</td>
<td>search</td>
<td>use artifacts and work context for retrieval (access and/or delivery); Codebroker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**for more information see:**
Adult-Run Model

- p 391: “in most classrooms the teacher stands at the front of the room, dispensing ‘inert ideas’ to his passive students, as if they were so many empty vessels to be filled”

- p 392: “our schools are factories in which the raw products (children) are to be shaped and fashioned into products to meet the various demands of life”

- students learn
  - to solve problems → but **not** how to frame them
  - to produce “correct” answers → but do **not** have experience examining how to determine what is correct
  - to participate in tasks → but these tasks are **not** of their own personal interest
  - to be motivated by the teacher → but **not** how to develop their own interests
Child-Run Model

- the opposite **one-sided** approach (supports self-directed learning, but misses contextualized tutoring)

- children are active constructors of knowledge and **adult involvement is seen as a potential impediment to learning**

- **curriculum debates:** curriculum should build on the great resources of civilization, not on children’s spontaneous impulses

“Discovery Learning” as Understood by E.D. Hirsch

- The phrase refers to the teaching method which sets up projects or problems so that students can discover knowledge for themselves through hands-on experience and problem solving rather than through textbooks and lectures.

- Progressivists made discovery learning the chief or exclusive form of teaching starting with the “project method”.
  - The premise is true that knowledge acquired on one’s own, with difficulty and by expending lots of time and effort, is more likely to be retained than knowledge presented verbally.
  - It is also true that knowledge gained in a realistic context as part of an effort to solve a problem is likely to be knowledge that is well understood and integrated.
  - Unquestionably, then, discovery learning is an effective method—when it works.
Discovery Learning by E.D. Hirsch — Continued

- But there are two serious drawbacks to preponderant or exclusive reliance on discovery learning.
  - First, students do not always make on their own the discoveries they are supposed to make; in fact, they sometimes make “discoveries” that aren’t true. Hence, it is essential to monitor students to probe whether the desired learning goal has been achieved, and if not, to reach the goal by direct means.
  - Second, discovery learning has proved to be very inefficient. Not only do students sometimes fail to gain the knowledge and know-how they are supposed to gain, but they do not gain it very fast. Research into teaching methods has consistently shown that discovery learning is the least effective method of instruction in the teacher’s repertory.
Guided Discovery Learning


- **discovery learning** = students are free to work in a learning environment with little or no guidance

- **social constructionism** = students are expected to work in groups in a learning environment with little or no guidance

- **some findings** reported in this article by the author: “guided discovery learning was more effective than pure discovery learning”
Learning— Illich’s “Deschooling Society”


- the pupil is thereby “schooled” to **confuse** teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new

- we need research on the **possible use of technologies** to create institutions which serve personal, creative and autonomous interaction and the emergence of values which cannot be substantially controlled by technocrats

- an illusion on which the school system rests: “*most learning is the result of teaching*”

- **lecture on April 18: learning webs** = heighten the opportunity for all people to transform each moment in their living into one of learning, sharing and caring
The Discovery Learning Initiative (DLI) and the Discovery Learning Center (DLC)

- **DL-Initiative foci:**
  - *vertical integration* (undergraduate research apprentices, graduate students, post-docs, faculty, community members)
  - *horizontal integration* (collaborative design, shared understanding, overcome “symmetry of ignorance”)
  - *innovative* uses of new media and technology serving these goals

- **vertical integration: learning about → learning to be**
  - model: community feeling in sports
  - L3D’s “Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program (URAP)”

- **horizontal integration → Digital Bauhaus (Pelle Ehn):**
  - “to unite the ‘two sides’: the hard *(technology and natural sciences)* with the soft *(values, democracy, art and ethics)*. One remarkable such project was the Bauhaus. Today, in the digital age we can witness new more post-modern attempts to meeting between 'art' and 'technology'.”
Community of Learners

- **all participants** are active: no one has all the responsibility and no one is passive
  - consumer → designer
  - access → informed participation (end-user authoring and end-user modification)

- more **skilled partners** (e.g., experienced teachers and coaches) provide leadership and guidance → asymmetry of roles

- learning involves **transformation of participation** in collaborative endeavor

- **analogies** of communities of learners in
  - communities of practice (legitimate peripheral participation)
  - communities of interest (making all voices heard, diversity)
Summary Statement of Rogoff, Matsuov, & White (p 410)

- in the community of learners model students appear to learn
  - how to coordinate
  - to become responsible and organized their management of their own learning
  - to build on their previous interests to learn
  - to sustain motivation to learn
  - to focus on their own improvement, rather than on comparison with others
  - they become skilled in self-evaluation

- in the adult-run models students appear to learn
  - how to manage individual performance (often measured against the performance of others)
  - to carry out tasks that are not of personal interest and may not make sense to them
  - to demonstrate their skills in basic test questions
  - to figure out criteria by which adults will judge their performance

- a possible explanation: “attempts to use the community of learners model in U.S. schools confront unique challenges because most teachers and parents have been “raised” in a one-sided model of teaching an learning (usually adult-run)”
Motivation — Some Claims

- The chief impediments to learning are not cognitive but motivational

- People can learn many things if they want to

- Motivation is a tricky problem in learning because while it plays a major role, it is not well understood

- Rogoff et al, p 404: “inherent motivation is fostered along with development of responsibility for one’s choices”
Csikszentmihalyi — optimal flow as a motivating and driving force in learning
The Computer Clubhouse—Designing Informal Learning Environments for Collaboration


- Computer Clubhouse
  - a network of after-school learning centers for youth from economically-disadvantaged communities
  - 75 sites in 14 countries, with 20,000 youth members
Clubhouse Principles

- **Principle 1:** Support Learning through Design Experiences

- **Principle 2:** Help Youth Build on their Own Interests

- **Principle 3:** Cultivate "Emergent Community"

- **Principle 4:** Create an Environment of Respect and Trust
The Clubhouse Culture

- the Computer Clubhouse encourages young people to become designers, inventors, and creators as they work on projects based upon their own interests, supported by adult mentors and other youth.

- many young people discover the artist in themselves as they create original music, write scripts, film and edit live video and stop-motion animation, and explore many other types of projects to make their creative dreams come true.

- at the Clubhouse there exists: a Photoshop culture, but no programming culture.