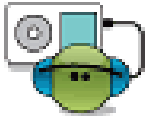


**Title****Author****Summary****Objectives****Keywords**

## ENTERING ICT COMMUNITY

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### Summary

The chapter acquaints with the concept of learning community, different types of LC, ICT learning community, the benefits of ICT community, the ways of use of ICT in the development of study process. It gives a brief insight in the ethics of the use of modern technologies in communicating, in searching the material, in preparing the material for students, colleagues, for presentations, in gaming.

The aim of the chapter:

- to acquaint with the concept of learning community,
- to learn about ICT community,
- to clear up the concept of ethics of the use of modern technologies,
- to facilitate the development of the competences to follow the rules of good behaviour when entering ICT community

**Key words:** learning community, ICT learning community, ethics, cooperation.

### The concept of learning community

Different authors have already viewed the concept of

learning community in the 80's and 90's.

*Wyatt* (1997) states that defining community is somewhat difficult because, to a large extent, what a community is, depends on what its members intend it to be

In return *Foster* (1999) gives the following characteristics to community:

- Communities entail some sort of “glue”, that holds the members together;
- Members are in close contact and communication with one another;
- Each person deserves the support and care of other members;
- Work together in a spirit of trust and mutual respect (serves as the affective component).

The scientist *Gabelnick* (1997) stresses working collaboratively, toward shared, significant academic goals.

It means that learning community consists in a group of people who take an active, reflective, collaborative, learning oriented and growth – promoting approach toward the mysteries, problems, and perplexities of teaching and learning.

Learning Communities bring people together for shared learning, discovery, and the generation of knowledge. Within a learning community (LC), all participants take responsibility for achieving the learning goals. Learning communities are the process by which individuals come together to achieve learning goals. These learning goals can be specific to individual courses and activities, or can be those that guide an entire teaching and learning institute.

The following four core ideas are central to the learning community process:

- Shared discovery and learning;
- Functional connections among learners;
- Connections to other related learning and life experiences;
- Inclusive learning environment.

Community psychologists *McMillan & Chavis* (1986) state that there are 4 key factors that defines a sense of community:

- membership;
- influence;
- fulfilment of individual's needs;
- shared events and emotional connections.

Concluding we may say that **essential principles of LC are:**

- involvement;
- investment (defines as reflection of psychological ownership);
- influence;
- identity;
- certain norms, beliefs, assumptions and value systems.

**There are different types of LC such as:**

- professional;
- living;
- active;
- expended;
- dynamic;
- ICT;

- Internet;
- On – line;
- Electronic.

### **ICT learning Community**

Speaking about ICT learning Community different (terminology) phenomenon are used to describe similar learning communities –

- on-line;
- networking;
- internet;
- distance;
- virtual.

An online learning community is a common place on the Internet that addressing the learning needs of its members through proactive and collaborative partnerships.

Through social networking and computer – mediated communication, people work as a community to achieve a shared learning objective.

In an online learning community, people communicate via textual discussion (synchronous or asynchronous), audio, video, or other Internet-supported devices. Learning objectives may be proposed by an instructor or may arise out of discussions between participants that reflect personal interests. Intentional online learning communities may be categorized as knowledge-based, practice-based and task-based.

The characteristic features of an ICT learning community:

- common goal, mission;
- the use of technologies;
- language knowledge;

- skills in the use of technologies;
- supportive system;
- tutors;
- well designed learning material;
- learning environment.

There are certain benefits of ICT learning community and they are as follows:

- quick communication, cooperation;
- cheap communication;
- economy of time;
- develops independent and autonomous learner;
- learning by sharing;
- new friends, colleagues.

There are also some problems and risks- not all teaching staff and students have good computing skills. There is also the necessity to have technical platforms that support learning communities in different ways: ‘active’, ‘constructive’, ‘collaborative’, ‘intentional’, ‘conversational’, ‘reflective’ and ‘contextualized’. Therefore, technical platforms for CSCL have to support different types of synchronous and asynchronous communication between members of a learning group. They should provide the learning community with platform functions like email, newsgroups, chat, shared data bases, concepts of group awareness, scheduling and mind mapping tools, shared whiteboards, document processing software and multi-user simulation and exploration environments.

If we consider the school as a learning organization – learning community, then we can say that everybody in this organization is interested in developing the teaching and learning

processes by integrating ICT into school in order to prepare students for future life.

### **Entering ICT Community through study process**

The usage of computers, video, TV, radio, CD, as well as Internet is playing a great role in the varying of methods of study process. Using the ICT in the study process skilfully and purposefully is becoming more intensive, and in future also more fruitful. Everyone realizes also that the intellectual and developed man can be characterized by a positive attitude towards both the knowledge and the work of cognition, the wish to broaden and enrich the knowledge.

New technologies have stimulated the changes not only in production, but also in economics, social sphere, in politics and education. The highest value have to become education which provides the chance to get the information for the practical work. The education and the information acquired as the result always have to be the most important intellectual property, which ensures the prosperity and welfare of society. Schools have to obtain good service of modern technologies to influence positively the future possibilities of young people and their compete ability in labour market.

#### Ways of integration of information technologies in school

The objectives for the integration of ICT in schools can be divided into 3 groups:

- Social objectives – to give the pupils basic knowledge and skills in working with ICT in order to prepare them for life in modern society
- Professional objectives – to at least partially prepare the pupils for the possible ICT use in their future profession;
- Pedagogical objectives -to use ICT to the improve the learning and teaching process.

ICT in the school study process is integrated in 3 ways:

- 1) ICT as the object of study,
- 2) ICT as the modern study environment (study instrument, which improves and supplies the traditional study world),
- 3) ICT as an absolutely necessary component of study process.

With the first one we usually understand to be the separate subject of computer science in the study plan. The second way refers to the use of ICT in any subject as well as realizing the link between subjects and introducing new forms of work, for example, days of projects in school. The third one is conventionally more referred to as the professional component in education.

Very topical is the question whether the use of PC essentially and positively influences the learning and teaching? In order to answer this question, it would be very useful to analyse some possible advantages of using PCs to support the study process:

- A PC is a "tolerant pedagogue", which can repeat explanations to every pupil explanations as many times as it is necessary not displaying unwillingness or fatigue,
- A PC gives all its attention to the only one pupil, that is not possible for the teacher working with a group of pupils ,
- A PC will be equally kind, attentive and tolerant engaging in a dialogue with any pupil and also objectively and immediately evaluating that pupil's knowledge,
- Computer programmes, using text, sound, moving pictures, extracts of video etc., can demonstratively perform many complicated processes( also giving the pupil himself opportunities to modify the situation in an interactive mode), that

is very hard to achieve with traditional methods of study,

- Computers offer both the pupils, and teachers wide and multi-faceted content collections of information (dictionaries, encyclopaedia) about countless different themes, which are presented using method of multi media technologies and hypertext,
- Computers can acquire an exchange information on an almost world wide scale ,
- In many cases a computer is a more appropriate work instrument than paper, pens, pencils and rulers.

A command of the PC and other information processing technologies has become one of the essential components of today s life skills and must be included in the study process in schools. The attitude is also a very important element in the positive approach of pupils towards the study process, controlling pupils' interest in and readiness to study.

Teachers play a very important role in enabling pupils to make the transition from the mastering of ICT as an object to its real integration into the process of education.

It is possible to enrich and multiply essentially both the humanitarian cycle subjects (geography, history of culture, zoology, biology, ethics) and exact cycle subjects (mathematics, physics, chemistry), using ICT. Internet based activities are motivating because the form of the lesson is non-typical, however additional preparation is a necessity not only for the pupils, but also for the teachers. We all learn to make the teaching and learning exiting .

### **Ethics when entering ICT community**

The ethics of the use of modern technologies – how to behave appropriately when using modern technologies.

There are three pressing concerns in computer ethics

today. They are questions of copyright, privacy, and censorship.

### **E-mailing as the most common way of communication**

It is possible to point out rules of behaviour for the sender and for the receiver when

- obtaining of the e-mail address,
- preparing of the e mail,
- sending of the e mail, attachments,
- reading of the e mail,
- responding, forwarding.

### **Searching for information on the Web**

There are 3 basic ways to search the Internet for information:

- browsing,
- Internet directories
- Internet search tools.

The found information requires references. It is important to know how to write references. The three main types of electronic sources are:

- websites or web pages
- complete works (reports, research papers, online books)
- articles from periodicals such as journals or newspapers.

The following guidelines will help you to make references:

Be as specific as possible

The diversity of material on the Internet can sometimes

make it difficult to create useful references. The number one rule is to be as specific as possible. The main purpose of any reference is to enable readers to find a particular website, page or document themselves

### Be consistent

We need to include the same key elements and to order them in the same way that we do for print sources. The details of how you do this will depend on the referencing style we use.

### Remember these two differences

Internet sources differ from print sources in two main ways.

- Internet sources should include two dates — the date on which a web page was last updated (if possible) and the date on which it was accessed.
- Internet sources should have a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) that shows where you sourced the document.

Include as many of these elements as possible

Author

Date of publication or revision

Title of document

Title of complete work

Issue information

Date of access

Uniform Resource Locator

### **It is worth to remember about copyright.**

Copyright is a set of exclusive rights that regulate the use of a particular expression of an idea or information. At its most general, it is literally "the rights to copy" an original creation. In most cases, these rights are of limited duration.

The symbol for copyright is "©". The letter C inside parentheses ("(c)"), although a common practice, has never been

a legally recognized designator.).

### **What is Plagiarism?**

Plagiarism is the act of stealing and passing off the ideas, words, or other intellectual property produced by another as one's own. For example, using someone else's words in a research paper without citing the source, is an act of plagiarism.

Netiquette, a portmanteau of "network etiquette", is the convention on electronic forums (Usenet, mailing lists, live chat, and Internet forums) to facilitate efficient interaction. Netiquette originated in the pre-world wide web days when text-based email, Telnet, Usenet, Gopher, Wais, and ftp dominated internet traffic, which was primarily used by educational and research bodies.

Legitimate copying may take place in two ways:

- under licence from the copyright owner
- under Fair Dealing provisions which allow for certain permitted acts

### **Licensing**

There are two types of licence:

- an explicit licence would usually be displayed at the Home Page stating either how contents of the site may be used - or how contents of the site may not be used
- an implied licence which may be inferred from the circumstances in which the material is made available.

### **Fair dealing**

Fair dealing is a series of exceptions to copyright that provide for the fair use of most copyright works without seeking permission from copyright holders. (reproducing of material for purposes of review, criticism ,copying for private study, for setting of examination, home work etc.)

### **The Internet and Copyright:**

What is concretely protected on the WWW?

The unique underlying design of a Web page and its contents, including:

- links
- original text
- graphics
- audio
- video
- html, vml, other unique markup language sequences
- a list of Web sites compiled by an individual or organization
- and all other unique elements that make up the original nature of the material.

It is necessary to recognize, that many aspects of the issue of copyright and the Internet are still not resolved.

### **You can make your own Web page or the Web page for your class**

If you have decided to make your own Web page, then you have to plan it very carefully. You have to pay attention to the design as well as to the content. Material for the pupils should be written in a way that they can understand and suitable for their age group. The layout should be very structured. The web page may include different announcements, additional material for the lessons, differentiated homework tasks etc.

### **When creating a Web page, you CAN:**

- Link to other Web sites. [However, some individuals and organizations have specific requirements when you link to

their Web material. Check a site carefully to find such restrictions. It is wise to ask permission. You need to cite source, as you are required to do in a research paper, when quoting or paraphrasing material from other sources. How much you quote is limited.]

- Use free graphics on your Web page, if the graphics are advertised as "free".

**When creating a Web page, you CANNOT:**

- Put the contents of another person's or organizations web site on your Web page
- Copy and paste information together from various Internet sources to create "your own" document. (You CAN quote or paraphrase limited amounts, if you give credit to the original source and the location of the source. This same principle applies to print sources, of course.)
- Incorporate other people's electronic material, such as e-mail, in your own document, without permission.
- Change the context of or edit someone else's digital correspondence in a way which changes the meaning
- Copy and paste others' lists of resources on your own web page
- Copy and paste logos, icons, and other graphics from other web sites to your web page (unless it is clearly advertised as "freeware." Shareware is not free). Some organizations are happy to let you use their logos, with permission - it is free advertising. But they want to know who is using it. They might not approve of all sites who want to use their logo.

**Gaming**

Games so well known and popular for active ICT users have their pluses and minuses. Games can be integrated into

almost any area of school curriculum, from mathematics to languages and social sciences.

Games promote creativity, interaction, self discipline, obeying of rules, autonomy, following directions, being patient and precise. Games foster the interest in ICT, to use its possibilities.

The content and form of games varies according to the age group it is designed for. In teaching and learning processes the games have either reflect subject content, or may be used for relaxing after a serious and difficult task. Every game has its beginning and end. It is important for the teacher to set certain rules for playing of the games.

#### **Minuses of the playing of games –**

Teachers and parents cannot always be with the child and see what games she/he is playing, but it is necessary exercise parental control and not allow the child to play everything.

It is advisable after the game to have a talk with a child to get the feedback about what he/she has played and discover what did he/she gained from it. Gaming is a specific issue for parents because games are very often played at home, the teacher cooperating with parents can work out rules for playing games. It is also important to involve the medical doctor in working out these rules, especially if it concerns the children with special needs. The children with special needs sometimes get very tired, they may get headaches or become nervous.

When we talk about playing games then we usually talk about so called unwritten rules, that go hand in hand with the ethics of the work of the teacher.

The teacher's responsibility is to cooperate with parents regarding playing games at home. Ethical talks with parents may help to promote a safe game playing culture at home. Together with parents you may create Internet Safety Tips for Parents -

how to ensure Internet safety for children.

There are certain ethics for networking and for web chat as well.

### **Privacy and Safety**

Privacy and safety are of great importance for teachers, pupils and parents. Here are some tips:

- Remember that nothing is ever really private on the Internet. Because of that don't include your home address and phone number in your signature file .Don't give out personal information about someone else.

- Be careful what you say about yourself in blogs and social networking sites– even in the comments sections. Your words could come back to haunt you .

- Always log off when you leave your computer.

- Never give your password to somebody .Do not use anyone else's password. Change your password if you think it has been compromised. When creating passwords mix cases, numbers, letters, and symbols.

- Never write in an e-mail message anything that could be used against you .

- Treat other people's communications with respect.

- Don't respond to spam.

- Don't think that you know someone after having "met" him or her online. Virtual meeting may be misleading.

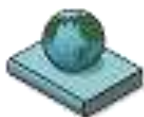
- Don't respond to threatening messages.

It is important for the teacher and administration of a school to create a proper working environment for students when working with modern technologies especially for children with special needs.

### Self assessment tasks



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When all involved in educational process will cooperate and obey written and unwritten rules themselves entering ICT community then it will become a norm for students as well.

#### Self assessment questions

- Define the concept – learning community.
- Name the characteristic features of ICT Learning community.
- Name the benefits of ICT Learning Community.
- Characterize the ways – ICT in school.
- Put down rules for good e-mailing
- Prepare a presentation for parents – Safety use of Internet for different age groups
- Make a list of references you have studied about ethics of the chatting
- Prepare rules of gaming in ... lesson! How do you select the games for the lessons? Give the criteria for the selection!

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