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IDD 600 Trends and Issues in Instructional Design and Development

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Introduction

Over the years, the way instructional design has been defined has changed and varied in its structure. But overall, it is a field that is centered on learning. Learning is the act of mentally gaining knowledge and being able to teach it to someone else. Learning is different than thinking because of different modes of understanding. With learning, you are receiving information. But with thinking, you have already received the information but are trying to mentally categorize the information. Therefore, in this paper I will reflect upon knowledge that I have gained during this course and how I can use this information during my career as a upcoming instructional designer.

Part 1

Definition of Instructional Design and Development prior to this course

Prior to this course, my definition of instructional design focused more on technology as a key component of instructional design. Having technology be the main focus of instructional design seemed inadequate due to the idea that technology would be the main focus of the field. Not all projects include the use of technology. Therefore, instructional design based on performance support and technology was considered. Although there are many labels that have surfaced and are still being used to describe the field, there is one label that seems to stand out. The label of instructional design based on performance support and technology seems to be the most fitting. The label of instructional design encompasses all of the skills that are used. These skills include analyzing, creating, developing, and implementing with or without the use of technology.

New personal definition of Instructional Design and Development

Further research in the field of instructional design lead me to define instructional design in a formal and informal way. Formally, instructional design is a method that uses the knowledge of how people learn in order to formulate and develop instructional tools needed to convey information. Informally, instructional design is shown in everyday life around us. Anything that shows information being presented in a way to help people learn is developed through a method of instructional design, with or without technology. Examples include new hire training materials, diagrams in textbooks, gamification apps on mobile devices, etc.

Research supporting personal definition

As referenced by Reiser and Dempsey (2018), the AECT Definition and Terminology Committee released its latest definition in 2008. The definition is as follows:

Educational technology is the study and ethical practice of facilitating learning and improving performance by creating, using, and managing appropriate technological processes and resources.

This definition captures the overall image and scope of instructional design. The progression of skills and processes that are involved, when producing a final product, are mentioned within this definition. The improvement of performance is also included to be a key feature of focus. As noted by Reiser and Dempsey (2018), the AECT committee expounded on the idea that it should be a priority to help learners apply new skills and information they have learned.

The use of the word creating in this definition brings forth a focus on its importance in the field of instructional design. The creation function includes the following steps: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. These steps are all apart of the generation of instructional interventions and learning environments. (Resier and Dempsey, 2018).

Part 2

Personal IDD Belief Statement

My personal IDD is as follows:

Being that instructional design is student centered, having student performance be the focus of developed products is a great place to begin and to end. Students' needs and individual learning styles are likely considered during this process which helps everyone to be successful. Students are also given the opportunity to be in control of self- correcting and motivation. Overall, everyone is capable of learning.

Research supporting personal IDD Belief statement

In 2009, the Common Core State Standards were established to create standards and guidelines for schools to follow in order to build skills, such as critical thinking skills, that will help students perform well in college/ universities or make them competitive for a career (Delgado, A. J., Wardlow, L., McKnight, K., & O'Malley, K, 2015). To assist in facilitating these standards, teachers are incorporating using technological tools in their curriculum and have extended learning outside the classroom into online environments.

Studies have suggested that online environments can be very beneficial. For example, integrating the course tool WebCT has been shown to improve reading engagement and critical thinking skills (Burgess, 2009). In a study by Morin, Thomas, and Saadé (2012), students perceived that using the Web contributed the most to fostering critical thinking skills. Further, online courses allow learners with the opportunity to master their learning, learn at their own pace, and engage anonymously in online discussions (Saadé, Morin, & Thomas, 2012). Learning outside of the classroom has also been made possible because of technology. Learners are no longer limited to face-to-face learning, since technological advancements have made it possible for learners to choose whether they want to attend class either face-to-face or via online or both. With the significant increase in Internet access and computers in and out of classrooms (Gray, Thomas, & Lewis, 2010), there are numerous options for learning to take place in out of the classroom. The most popular learning environments include: Bring Your Own Device (BYOD); Blended Learning, also known as hybrid courses; Flipped Learning and Flipped Classrooms; and Online Learning, also known as distance education. Each environment differs in the proportion of time spent learning in the classroom to the time spent learning online. This variety of classroom formats allows learners to take courses that are not available at their school. Some online learning courses have helped meet the needs of specific groups of learners. These formats further offer learners the option of taking advanced or college level courses. Lastly, in some cases, schools have permitted learners who failed a course to retake it via online for credit.

In an effect to meet educational standards, technology committees are being replaced with "innovation" teams whose quest is to improve, differentiate and personalize the learning environment (Boyer, 2015). The 2014 Project Tomorrow Report, The New Digital Playbook, presented finding that on computing devices and noted that in school, 75% of the high school students surveyed were using their devices to access class information; 22% were viewing teacher- made videos. Outside of school, a majority of these students (73% of girls, 60% of boys) were using their devices to discuss school work by texting (Boyer, 2015).

Because of the cost to develop instruction, schools often overlook instructional design as a technology for promoting learning. Therefore, Moore (2006) conducted a study to show an appropriate application of Instructional Systems Design (ISD) in a PK-12 school setting. In this study, only the Morrison, Ross and Kemp's (2004) ISD model was used. Each event is represented as a smaller circle within a larger oval. The events include defining instructional problems, analyzing learners, conducting task and content analyses, writing instructional objectives, sequencing content, creating instructional strategies, designing the message, developing the instruction, and evaluating the results. After completing the events of a front- end analysis, the designer moves to the next event of the model. During this event, objectives are prepared to guide the development of the instruction. Next, the cognitive load of the learners should be considered before developing the instruction. Moore (2004) included that one criticism of ISD is that it serves as a recipe for design. In contrast, this particular study shows evidence that the model was not followed exactly but served as a flexible tool.

Children have been born into technology- oriented societies in this present time. Plowman, McMake, and Stephen (2010) stated that, for that reason, the debate on whether technology can be used in young learner's education changed as preschool teachers can best integrate technology for teaching to young learners (Plowman, 2010). The focus must not only be on the introduction of new technologies, but how technology can be integrated into effective, evidence- driven, innovative practices, so that the learner is empowered and enriched by the learning experience (Melhuish & Falloon, 2010). With the added resource of mobile learning, learners can continue to advance in their studies without being restrained to a specific hardware. Mobile devices can be used to provide access anytime and anywhere to study materials. Mobile devices can also be used to scaffold learning. Scaffold learning can take place by providing the learners with supplementary materials and/ or provide hints to the students instead of giving them the correct answer.

Herold (2016) stated that just providing students with access to classroom technology is no longer enough. He also stated that schools are expected to make sure that teachers and students are using devices, software, apps, and other digital software tools in "active" ways. The U.S. Department of Education's new National Education Technology Plan insists that learners should be making things and connecting with others and exploring the world, rather than staring at screens (Herold, 2016). Therefore, ID strategies are needed in PK- 12 schools to help propel a deeper level of learning for the students. In middle and high schools, active use of technology can be represented by students creating their own websites where they share designs and self- produced instructional videos. Educators should aim to redesign lessons to include opportunities

for small groups of students to rotate among stations, allowing them to receive direct

instruction focused on content. They should also aim to engage with some kind of

stimulation or experiment according to what the data and/ or needs assessment

suggests. Video conferences or connecting with other students or teachers using social

media to discuss what they have seen can be utilized as an avenue to incorporate ID

into curriculums. Also, students can craft a digital presentation to demonstrate what they

have learned.

Lastly, technology can encourage students to conduct internet research, motivate

students to use software and apps that respond to individual student's strengths and

weaknesses, and deliver whole- class instruction with tech- enabled opportunities for

quick, embedded assessments that give a real- time snapshot of what students

understand (Herold, 2016). Instructional designers use evaluations to identify problems

with instruction or opportunities to make the instruction better (Dick, Carey & Carey,

2009). For K-12 schools, budgeting can affect the investment in digital learning after

reviewing test scores. The test scores show the effectiveness and future of having

digital learning within a school or district.

My place in the field

Simply, my place in the field is to help learners make connections. French (2007),

also noted that emphasis must be placed on thinking and information skills. There is

such an abundance of information that 21st century learners are able to have information

about any topic readily available by way of the interest. As it relates to thinking, creativity

and innovation must be in the forefront of understanding in order for students to make

connections between ideas, build upon prior knowledge, and apply critical thinking skills.

Part 3

Trends and issues that have the most impact on our field up to this point

Nyugen (2011) provided a clear understanding of what performance support is

and examples of when performance support. It was interesting to find out that some

many different aspects of the workforce have performance support that is available to

assist with tasks that are outside of an employee's job. Features of performance support

include an internal database. For example, school web pages usually have a place on

the homepage where teachers can go to retrieve their email, put in technology issue

requests, and/ or view the system's salary schedule. Performance support can also

include newer features such as the support being able to remotely solve an issue by

logging onto the workers device and solving the problem.

Performance support has been implemented in a vast amount of industries.

Industries include automotive, medical, and educational settings. When the medical

setting was mentioned, only areas in the hospital setting seem to be the appropriate

place for suitable for performance support but it was very interesting that ambulances

were also included.

It was also mentioned that it was criticized that performers were not required to

broaden their expertise and learn in the area that they needed performance support for.

I strongly disagree that it is necessary to learn the skills that performance support assist

with because the overall goal for any worker is to be successful in what they are doing.

When a worker is successful or is competent in their job skills, more economic success is forthcoming.

Trends and issues I see that will shape the field in the next 10 years

Two authors (Reiser & Dempsey, 2011) form a professional argument of the trends of Human Performance Improvement (HPI). Their focus was to highlight the direction in which the professional field of endeavor was heading in. Several key points were mentioned in the article such as what HPI means in respect to each word, the relativity of HPI in today's world, and its future. It was mentioned that the time for HPI to grow and expand is now. Interestingly, human capital was compared to HPI.

The correlation between the two suggested that performance and knowledge has a lot to do with the economic successes of a country. There are several companies in the Birmingham area that from personal experience, focus on the performance of their employees in order to reach more economic success. The specialized training that companies offer seem successful and they allow employees an opportunity to receive a more thorough learning experience which leads to better performance.

Organizational complexity is increasing and can be seen quite often in the workforce. It was interesting to think about how much customer satisfaction emphasis is placed on the worker when it comes to call center employees, for example. In a position such a call center agent, workers are required to keep a nice attitude, be informative, and also helpful. A performance consultant (PC) is definitely needed to help the worker stay on track with delivering great service and in return make more money which leads to more economic success.

HPI has withstood the technology boom and seems to be getting stronger leading to a bright future. Holding people accountable for their actions and allowing them an opportunity to improve their performance would likely decrease undesirable actions but also increase the need for HPI professionals. The main key point is to increase resources; therefore, HPI professionals are essential and will likely be around for a while.

Research supporting these trends and issues

Graduates of Instructional Design and Technology programs are seen as being very valuable to the workforce. This is interesting because it shows that today's jobs are so intertwined with other professions that in order to be successful, there must be a team including people with different strengths. It was contradicting to find out that the field of performance support has improved so much and its employees are widely sought after but there are not many opportunities from college students to engage in real- world practice. Even when searching through most instructional design job postings, it is more often that postings require some experience in the field. In an effort to find more real- life examples, more companies should offer internships and/ or professional development that could help companies feel more comfortable allowing individuals to come in and complete some more hands-on learning? HPT projects can also be used as a way to improve the overall understanding of what HPT is and how it applies to the field that they currently work in.

Buying into the information that was being used for the HPT project makes it more helpful to create and implement the assistance that is needed throughout the

project. It was interesting to find out that there are pros and cons when it comes to working in a student's school setting. Having the opportunity to use a school facility to help acquire more understanding seems to be a good fix for someone who desires experience in that area (Klein, 2010).

Part 4

Areas I feel the most confident in up to this point

One area that I feel that I am most confident in is teamwork. As an instructional designer, teamwork is key. French (2007), noted that there is a need to emphasize communication skills, the ability to work in teams, and the ability to work with different cultures. Every sector that requires training, workplace or school, must take into consideration that communication is the key to success. Communication should be the basis for understanding that the training needs are primary and it should also provide an avenue or the learners to give feedback about the training. Collaborating is also a key factor for effective training. Some learners acquire more knowledge through peer interactions.

Areas in the field I feel the most challenged in my knowledge and skill set up to this point

Up to this point, I feel the most challenged in my skill set when it comes to the design aspect of ID. As it relates to knowledge of the field, I mostly feel that I will continue to get stronger and stronger in this area as a result of the information that is presented in this program.

Personal growth plan to become a confident, competent, active instructional designer

There are five key factors that must be considered when formulating goals. When formulating goals, they must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely. With these key factors in mind, I developed three goals that will help guide me in the right direction to become a confident, competent, and active instructional designer. First, I would like to find at least three local mentors who are instructional designers. Secondly, I would like to start looking for entry- level contract jobs or full-time position to start getting experience in the field of instructional design. Lastly, I want to remain on schedule with finishing my degree in 2019.

Closing

Studying the field of instructional design is important to me because I have based my career around helping others learn and to be the most effective, I feel that having knowledge of how others learn is very beneficial. I plan to use the material from this course in my current profession of teaching and in my future profession of instructional design by being an active learner alongside the learners I am designing for.

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