

Trends and Issues in Instructional Design and Development

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Introduction

As a current educator I knew that I wanted to further my education so that I could be the best educator I can be. My next logical step was to begin a Master's Degree program. Originally I began the Master's in Elementary Education program. I felt that this would help me further my knowledge in the field I was already in. I had just graduated with my BS in Early Childhood and Elementary Education. I began courses while also beginning to teach. As the classes went on I wasn't really happy. The Master's in Elementary Education program was not what I truly wanted to be studying. I took time off from furthering my education and just focused on teaching. After a semester off I knew I wanted to start back to school but I wasn't sure what the best fit for me would be. I began researching different Master's programs at UAB. I stumbled across the Instructional Design and Development Master's program. Upon further research I knew this was the best program for me.

Part One

Prior to this course I only had a vague idea about Instructional Design and Development. I knew enough about the field that I felt this was the best program for me to complete in order to reach my goals. My initial definition of Instructional Design and Development came from Patricia Smith and Tillman Ragan. Smith and Ragan(2004) define Instructional Design as "the systematic and reflective process of translating principles of learning and instruction into plans for instructional materials, activities, information resources, and evaluation"(p.4). At the time I felt this was the best definition

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for Instructional Design and Development for many reasons. As stated in the definition, “systematic” refers to the use of a fixed plan such as the Instructional Design models(Smith & Ragan, 2004, p.4). As an educator I felt that I am already being an instructional designer and because of this I can relate the rest of the definition to Instructional Design. The definition goes on to state the “reflective process” which I related to the constant reevaluation to ensure instruction is effective(Smith & Ragan, 2004, p.4). The definition also states “translating principles of learning and instruction into plans” this represents an educators job of interpreting standards or course of study into goals for learners and how to achieve those goals(Smith & Ragan, 2004, p.4). The definition ends with describing the different mediums of instruction teachers use. Overall I felt the definition clearly and concisely defines Instructional Design.

While I am still new to this field, I feel that through this course I have been able to deepen my understanding of Instructional Design and Development. Through my research and course readings I have been able to develop a definition that is completely my own. My new personal definition of Instructional Design and Development is that Instructional Design and Development is the systematic and reflective application of methodology and theory to design and implement content and learning experiences to support the learner needs for the acquisition of new knowledge or skills in order to meet predetermined goals. My new personal definition came from readings and research done throughout the course. I used several different resources and ideas to develop my definition of Instructional Design and Development. My definition begins by saying the “systematic... application.” I felt that Instructional Design and Development is

systematic based on the definition of systems given by Gustafson and Maribe.

Gustafson and Maribe define systems as, “the learner environment and its related management and support components together” (1997, p. 11). Instructional Design and Development must be focused on the learner and learner environment. For that to happen Instructional Design and Development must be systematic in how it handles the application of learning. I chose to include the word reflective not only because several of the resources I read mentioned the importance of reflecting on instruction but because of my own personal experience. As a classroom teacher I have developed the practice of constantly reevaluating my instruction and reflecting upon it. Reflecting upon it means that I am examining to make sure what I am doing meets the needs of the students in the best way possible. I continued my definition by stating to apply the methodology and theory to design and implement content. As a student in education I studied a wide variety of theories for education. In doing so I was able to shape my instruction based on research and theory. I feel that Instructional Design and Development should also be based on theory. This understanding is supported in the text *Instructional Technology: The Definition and Domains of the Field*. In this text it states that “professional decisions of instructional technologists are guided by their understanding of those interventions which are more likely to yield effect results” (Seels & Richey, 1994, p. 3). Meaning that if using methodology and research that has proven to give results, then basing instruction on it will yield results. I continued my definition by discussing learning experiences. I chose to include this based on Reiser and Dempsey’s explanation of the 1963 definition of Instructional Design and Development. This definition was the first one to be

approved by a major professional organization. Reiser and Dempsey state “the definition statement placed and emphasis on learning rather than instruction” (2018, p. 2). I chose to include experiences with the word learning to ensure that Instructional Design and Development is about true learning not instruction. For me true learning comes through experiences. I continued my definition by stating to support the learner needs for the acquisition of new knowledge or skills. I chose to include this based on several of the methodologies Reiser and Dempsey mentioned in *Trends and Issues in Instructional Design and Technology*. Many of the methodologies discussed in this text use models that are based on the learner needs. As a teacher I know first hand that you must focus instruction based on what the students need in order to reach the state standards. This leads into the end of my definition, predetermined goals. Predetermined goals must be set in order to know when the instruction as been successful upon assessment.

Part 2

As an educator it is important that I have my own personal beliefs about education. Developing my own beliefs ensures that I stay true to myself and my ideals for education. Through this course I have also developed my own personal Instructional Design and Development belief statement. I believe that all people are learners and learn in their own way in order to meet their goals as students. In my belief statement I use two terms to describe people, learners and students. I use both of these terms because most of the time learner and student are used interchangeably. I do not believe

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a student and a learner are the same. I base this belief on the definition of student and learner in the paper titled "Reclaiming Instructional Design." In this paper it describes students are those who submit themselves to the acquisition of knowledge. The paper also describes learners as those who gather meaning and change their behavior based on experience. Everyone can be a learner but not everyone submits themselves to deliberate instructional situations (Merrill, Drake, Lacy, & Pratt, 1966). I also believe that people learn in different ways. Learning is complex, thus all learners learn differently and construct their knowledge differently. Mehraj Bhat states that "The concept of style helps to understand that how the learners are same with each other, and how they differ in terms of learning" (2014). Understanding that everyone learns differently ensures that as an instructional designer you must design instruction to meet all needs. Because students learn in their own way that also means they construct their knowledge in their own way. In order to ensure students have the ability to construct in their own way, instruction must include real-life tasks. Merrienboer and Kirschner discuss the importance of using authentic tasks. They go on to state "that such tasks help learners integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes, stimulate them to learn to coordinate constituent skills, and facilitate transfer of what is learned to new problem situations" (Merrienboer & Kirschner, 2018,p.2). Lastly, I believe that goals are important. Gagne states that "design begins with the identification of the goals of learning" (1990, p. 23). Goals relate to more than just learning in the classroom. Gagne explains this by saying "goals are sometimes conceived as objectives reflecting human performance, and sometimes as learning outcomes" (1990, p. 23).

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A major part of this course was looking at the various settings of Instructional Design and Development. In looking at the various settings, we also looked at the various careers associated with Instructional Design and Development. Studying the different careers made me begin to think about my place in the field. I am currently an elementary teacher and I feel that I will be able to use the knowledge gained in the Instructional Design and Development program within the elementary classroom. I plan to continue teaching in the classroom for the next few years, using my Instructional Design and Development knowledge to guide me as I teach. Several years from now I can see me taking two different paths. The first path would be to step up in a school district to be an instructional coach for other teachers. This would allow me to work with other teachers and improve their instruction. The other path I could see me taking would be to work for a textbook company and work to design curriculum for schools. Both paths excite me and make me ready for the future I have in Instructional Design and Development.

Part Three

Past historical events have defined the field of Instructional Design and Development. Each of these trends and issues shaped Instructional Design and Development into what is today. While each of these trends and issues are important, I feel that there are three main trends and issues that have had the most impact on the field. The first trend and issue that I feel is important is the Audiovisual Movement. Though the Audiovisual Movement began in the 1930s, World War II brought the

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Audiovisual Movement back to life(Reiser & Dempsey, 2018, p. 9). This is because “World War II created an enormous instructional problem; thousands of military personnel had to be trained rapidly” (Shrock, 1995, p. 14). I believe the Audiovisual Instruction Movement had the most impact on the field of Instructional Design and Development because it is still relevant today. In World War II audiovisual instruction was used to train thousands rapidly. This is still taking place today. Many jobs use audiovisual instruction to train new employees or to introduce new regulations to employees. As an educator I have been able to see first hand the impact of the Audiovisual Instructional Movement. The Audiovisual Instructional Movement brought about the use of projectors. As a teacher I have used an overhead projector every day for instruction. The next trend and issue that I feel has had the most impact on the field of Instructional Design and Development is the Criterion-Referenced Testing Movement. The Criterion-Referenced Testing Movement happened “because instructional systems were designed to produce achievement of prespecified objectives, their assessment required tests that could be interpreted in terms of the specific competencies mastered” (Shrock, 1995, p.16). I believe the Criterion-Referenced Testing Movement impacted the field because it is something that educators are still constantly using. As a third grade teacher my students have taken the Scantron Performance Series test as required by the state. With this test, the students take the test in the fall and then again in the spring. Their test scores are then compared to determine their growth and understanding of material. This practice is exactly as Glaser indicated. Glaser indicated “that they could be used to assess student entry-level

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behavior and to determine the extent to which students had acquired the behaviors an instructional program was designed to teach” (Reiser & Dempsey, 2018, p.14). The Criterion-Referenced Movement paved the way for all of the standardized testing that is seen in schools today. The final trend and issue that I feel had the most impact on the field of Instructional Design and Development is the Sputnik. When the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, they indirectly launched formative evaluation. I believe the Sputnik was impactful on the field of Instructional Design and Development because it has helped define the field. In my own definition of Instructional Design and Development, I feel that Instructional Design and Development is a reflective process. It is a reflective process because it is constantly changing. Formative evaluation is the process in which enables “educators to examine the materials and, if necessary, revise them while the materials were still in their formative states”(Reiser & Dempsey, 2018, p.14). Formative evaluation allows for changes to be made to instruction before the final assessment. This can happen before instruction happens or while instruction is happening.

While trends and issues of the past have shaped the field of Instructional Design and Development, current trends and issues will continue to shape the field. One of the biggest trends and issues I see that will shape the field in the next ten years is technology in the classroom. The use of technology in the classroom will continue to grow. The increase in the use of technology has its advantages and disadvantages. One of the disadvantages comes from teacher dependence on technology. Over the past two years I have been told to use certain educational technology programs in my classroom. As a teacher it can easily become my sole instruction to have the students

use the programs for instruction. While there is a disadvantage with the increase in technology, there are many advantages to the increase of technology in the classroom. One of the advantages of increasing technology is the possibility of a flipped classroom. A flipped learning “overthrows traditional instruction by switching in-class instruction time with at-home practicing time” (Hwang, Lai, & Wang, 2015, p.449). Flipped learning allows for students to learn seamlessly across contexts. Flipped learning provides a new strategy for teachers. This strategy allows students “to learn without time or space limitations” (Hwang, Lai, & Wang, 2015, p.453). Another advantage of the increase of technology in the classroom is that it also increases distance learning. Distance learning allows more people access to education that without technology they wouldn't be able to receive. “Just as active learning has become a vital element in all facets of face-to-face instruction, it is also being recognized as important in distance education, and the new technologies provide various methods of accomplishing active learning”(Dewald, Scholz-Crane, Booth & Levine, 2000, p. 36). Not only do more people have access to education but they also have access to a better quality of education.

Part Four

Though I am still new to the field of Instructional Design and Development, there are a few areas that I feel confident in my knowledge and skill set. The first area is the History of Instructional Design. I feel confident that I know the different important historical events and how they have influenced Instructional Design. The next area is

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Bloom's Taxonomy. I initially learned about Bloom's Taxonomy in undergrad. During this course I was studied Bloom's Taxonomy again. Because of me studying Bloom's Taxonomy more than one I am confident in my understanding of it. The last area I feel confident in is theoretical orientation. Theoretical orientation includes the study of behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism. Within this course I was able to further my understanding of theoretical orientation and feel confident in my understanding of it. There are a few areas that have challenged me in my knowledge and skill set up until this point. I feel challenged by the evaluation models(Rossi, CIPP, Chen's TDE), Pebble in the Pond, and SAM. Besides participating in my courses, I plan to continue my growth to become a confident, competent, active member of the field of instructional design. My personal growth plan includes furthering my outside reading of articles and books cited in class. My personal growth plan also includes furthering my research. Furthering my research would allow me to expand my APA/Academic Research Report.

Closing

Through this course I have grown in my understanding of Instructional Design and Development. I have broadened my own personal definition of Instructional Design and Development. I have also developed my own personal belief statement of Instructional Design and Development. Through this course I was introduced to different trends and issues that have shaped the field of Instructional Design and Development. With this course I was also able to evaluate current trends and issues that will shape the field of Instructional Design and Development in the future. Ultimately I was able to

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evaluate the areas that I feel confident in my understanding and also the areas in which I am challenged. I also was able to develop a personal growth plan to further my understanding of Instructional Design and Development.

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