

Running head: CURRENT ISSUES IN INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Constructivism, Personal Computing Devices and the Internet will continue to have an
Influence over Instructional Design.

Peter Rawsthorne

Memorial University of Newfoundland

Partial fulfillment of the requirements for ED6620

Dr. Elizabeth Murphy

Sunday, February 05, 2006

This concept map and short paper explore the current issues surrounding the practice of instructional design. This concept map and paper are created from the perspective of the practitioner. And attempts to dissect and analyze the issues from the pragmatic rather than the academic.

Successful Instructional Design (ID) is an evolving profession (Wilson, 2005) that draws from a large number of disciplines and is therefore surrounded by a plethora of issues. I believe it would be safe to say that ID has never before been so challenged, from so many different issues at the same time. The list of issues surrounding ID includes;

- The methods available for the gathering of ID requirements while acknowledging the cultural context and values of the learner and institutions. (Philips, 2005; Campbell, 2005; Hlynka, 2000).
- The restraints and market opportunities being presented by the current realities of the market economy, increased internationalization and globalization, government policy, educational bureaucracy and standardized assessment. (McMahon, 2005; Spence, 2005; Williams, 2005).
- The emergence of a sovereign (and mature) learner with advanced abilities, expectations and sophisticated epistemological beliefs. (Baron, 2005; Prensky, 2001; Williams, 2005).
- A paradigm shift from objectivism toward constructivism and learner-centered methods. (Jonassen, n.d.; Smith, 2005; Wilson, 2001, 2005).

- The identified need for increased and ongoing professional development for teachers, administrators and instructional designers. (Elgort, 2005; Molphy, 2005; Spence, 2005).
- The emergence, adoption and integration of new technologies like cell phones, tablet computer and wireless networks that are easily accessible to the learner population. (Cochrane, 2005; Prensky, 2004; Tutty, 2005)

Of all these issues I would venture to say that the emergence of the constructivist theory in the early 1990's combined with personal computing devices (PC's, cell phones, PDA's) and the internet combine to have the single biggest impact upon ID. These combined issues have initiated the growth of the other issues. Internationalization certainly would not be what it is today without the internet. The sovereign learner has been empowered by constructivist theories, personal computing devices and the internet. The need for professional development within the school system would not be a strong without the emergence of constructivism, the internet and personal computers. Given the "combined weight" of this triad of issues requires a new way of thinking about ID. This new approach needs to address all these above issues and to build upon the existing ID practices. This can be achieved by adding the practices of; the larger context of values (Campbell, 2005) and political concerns, and the aesthetics as the immediate experience of learning (Wilson, 2005). The combination of existing ID practices with these two new practices is described by Wilson (2005) as the Four Pillars of Practice. It is my belief that ID is undergoing a renewal that will build an exciting world of learning for the sovereign and self motivated student.

References

- Baron, J. & Maier, H. (2005). *The challenge of maintaining the momentum*. Retrieved on Jan. 26, 2006 from http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane05/blogs/proceedings/07_Baron.pdf
- Campbell, K. & Kenny, R. (2005). *Instructional Design Research*. Retrieved on Jan. 25, 2006 from <http://cider.athabasca.ca/CIDERSessions/sessionarchive/>
- Cochrane, T. (2005). *Mobilising learning: A primer for utilising wireless palm devices to facilitate a collaborative learning environment*. Retrieved on Jan. 26, 2006 from http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane05/blogs/proceedings/16_Cochrane.pdf
- Elgort, I. (2005). *E-learning adoption: Bridging the chasm*. Retrieved on Jan. 26, 2006 from http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane05/blogs/proceedings/20_Elgort.pdf
- Hlynka, D. (2000). *Deconstructing Technology*. . Retrieved on Jan. 29, 2006 from http://www.umanitoba.ca/centres/ukrainian_canadian/hlynka/papers/victoria.html
- Jonassen, D. (n.d.). *Constructivist Learning Environments on the Web: Engaging Students in Meaningful Learning*. Retrieved on Feb. 1, 2006 from <http://www.tjtaylor.net/Research/Constructivist%20Learning%20Environments%20on%20the%20Web%20-%20Engaging%20Students%20in%20meaningful%20Learning.pdf>
- McMahon, M. & Luca, J. (2005). *Design explorations for an online environment to promote metacognitive processing through negotiated assessment*. Retrieved on Jan. 26, 2006 from http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane05/blogs/proceedings/48_McMahon%20&%20Luca.pdf
- Molphy, M. & Pocknee, C. (2005). *Chemistry online in a constructivist environment*. Retrieved on Jan. 26, 2006 from http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane05/blogs/proceedings/56_Molphy.pdf
- Phillips, R. (2005). *Pedagogical, institutional and human factors influencing the widespread adoption of educational technology in higher education*. Retrieved on Jan. 26, 2006 from http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane05/blogs/proceedings/62_Phillips.pdf
- Prensky, M. (2001). *Digital Natives Digital Immigrants*. Retrieved on Jan. 21, 2006 from <http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky%20-%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.pdf>

Prensky, M. (2004). What can you learn from A Cell Phone? – Almost Anything! Retrieved on Jan. 23, 2006 from <http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky-What Can You Learn From a Cell Phone-FINAL.pdf>

Smith, J. and Brown, A. (2005). *Building a culture of learning design: Reconsidering the place of online learning in the tertiary curriculum*. Retrieved on Jan. 26, 2006 from http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane05/blogs/proceedings/71_Smith.pdf

Spence, M. (2005). Issues And Challenges Of Instructional Technology Specialists In Alberta Colleges. *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology, Volume 31(1) Winter / hiver 2005*. Retrieved on Jan. 24, 2006 from <http://www.cjlt.ca/content/vol31.1/spence.html>

Tutty, J. & White, B. (2005). *Epistemological beliefs and learners in a tablet classroom*. Retrieved on Jan. 26, 2006 from http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane05/blogs/proceedings/78_Tutty.pdf

Williams, J. and Goldberg, M. (2005). *The evolution of e-learning*. Retrieved on Jan. 26, 2006 from http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane05/blogs/proceedings/84_Williams.pdf

Wilson, B. (2001). *Reflections on Constructivism and Instructional Design*. Retrieved on Jan. 29, 2006 from <http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~bwilson/construct.html>

Wilson, B. G. (2005). Broadening our foundation for instructional design: Four pillars of practice. *Educational Technology*, 45 (2), 10-15. Special issue on cultural studies edited by Ellen Rose. Retrieved on Jan. 29, 2006 from <http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~bwilson/Pillars.html>

Appendix

Rawsthorne, P. (2006). *Instructional Design Issues Concept Map*. Available at <http://www.rawsthorne.org/bit/medit/ed6620/instructionaldesignissues.html>