Reflection on Developing Instructional Design Expertise

Debbie Marcusson

Purdue University

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One purpose of this course is to learn how to develop our skills as an instructional designer. “The challenge in this course is to develop your expertise by honing your problem-solving skills in the company of others who can provide meaningful guidance and feedback” (Barneveld, 2012, p. 2). I can say that the assignments in this course, class discussions and feedback are definitely assisting me in understanding the complexities of becoming an expert in instructional design. As I work on this assignment I have found that my cases analyses have indicated that I need further learning and understanding of the instructional design process.

“Defining ID expertise isn’t simply an interesting academic exercise” (Ertmer & Stepich, 2005, p. 38). This statement really does explain how there are many complexities to identifying as well as become an expert. Within this course I examined three cases and within my analysis I found that I am a novice in my interpretation of the problems and solutions.

In understanding the problems I went through my case analyses and dissecting the following: In synthesizing vs. summarizing I learned that in all three cases I listed the issues and summarized the issues; however, in the Davenport case I found that I did synthesize the situation using words from other resources to clarify the issues. “If the designer follows the instructional design process then you are able to take face-to-face instruction and design for the online environment. In this particular case, Jennie and Pedro need to take each of the issues and design a workshop that will not only meet the needs of Professor Essex but provide an effective workshop similar to the face-to-face workshop and with similar outcomes” (Marcusson, 2012b). Since, the Davenport case was the third one I completed I am thinking that my thought process in analyzing cases is slowly developing towards the expert level at least within synthesizing and summarizing.

Within the other areas of problem solving I found that I am still stuck within the novice level. In principles versus features I did not relate to the issues listed and did not address why the issues possibly were present in the case. “Novices take the available information at face value, describing issues in
terms of the concrete surface features of the given situation…”(Ertmer & Stepich, 2005, p. 40). In all three cases I did not go in-depth and look beyond the noted issues.

In relationships among issues the goal is to find how the issues are linked together. In the Clifford and Davenport cases I listed the issues separately and did not relate the issues together; however, in the Gregersen case I did touch briefly on the relationship among issues. “I would address the challenges above in the order stated as I believe that communication is essential to the entire design process which would be followed by understanding the instructional content which includes conducting a proper needs assessment”(Marcusson, 2012a, p. 8). This touches briefly on the relationship but again this is an area that I need improvement.

A novice looking at the reflective versus reflexive will focus on what the audience does not know; lack of information. In the Clifford case I focused on what is not known. I wrote,

Denny Clifford has concerns on the goal of the project and the objectives of the project as Dr. Oakes did not provide specifics to him. Further, there are concerns on how to implement assessment instruments which go back to the lack of objectives. Dr. Cynthia Oakes wants a program that will not incorporate her implementing hands-on training. Her concern is how to disseminate information without her having to teach in-person workshops.(Marcusson, 2012c, p. 3)

My analysis focused on what is not known and listed the issues. I need to work on how to look further on what is known. “Experts focus on what they know. They make inferences based on given information and suggest possible scenarios…”(Ertmer & Stepich, 2005, p. 40).

How to solve the problems? In understanding the relationships among solutions I found that in the Gregersen I did not discuss the relationships. In Clifford case I briefly discussed the relationships among the time constraints and flexibility. “Developing a Community of Practice Website will be a logical way to implement training materials in a flexible manner that would address the time
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constraints” (Marcusson, 2012c, p. 6). In this case, I provided a solution that addressed the relationships of the issues. In the Davenport case I discussed the solutions that were related but did not discuss the solutions based on that relationship.

In consideration of implications within the solutions I provided some implications within the cases but also listed solutions without an understanding of how to carry out the solutions. In the Clifford case I discussed a solution on implementing a Community in Practice Website. Within this solution I discussed the implications of this solution.

Within this website are links to additional resources, discussion threads and access to webinars either live or recorded. One issue with this platform is the relevance of materials within the COP. The site will need to have a moderator or facilitator to ensure that materials are up-to-date. This platform will provide Dr. Oates with an alternative to traveling and conducting in-person workshops; however, Dr. Oates will need to be comfortable with this format. In addition, the ID'er can continue to modify the training materials as directed by Dr. Oates to ensure that the objectives are being met. (Marcusson, 2012c, p. 6).

Within this case I gave examples of how to implement the solutions; however, this was the first case I analyzed and found that I did poorly on the next two cases. In the Gregersen case, I only provided general solutions with no examples of implementation. In the Davenport case I did provide some information on how to address the solutions in relation to the discussion forums. I stated, “The discussion forums can be a valuable tool for participants. Participants can engage in questions and answers with other participants as well as the facilitator/instructor of the course” (Marcusson, 2012b, p. 8).

The final area of understanding my expertise is flexible versus rigid. In the Davenport case I made suggestions for modifying the recommendations based on evaluations. In the Clifford case I discussed how the Communities of Practice would provide options for the instruction to conduct online
trainings either in-person or online. I was not thorough in the Gregersen case and did not provide any options.

In analyzing my case studies I found that I am more on the novice end of the spectrum and have shown in some areas how I am capable of moving towards the expert level. The feedback I have received after each case study has assisted in my learning when preparing the next case study; however, I found that this reflective paper is even more valuable. The readings this week provided me with the format on how to understand the difference between novice and expert. With that information, I went through each case study and outlined my understanding of each section of the process. More than once, the light bulb went off in my head and I found that I was developing a further understanding of how to conduct a case study. In addition, many times as I was reading the differences between novice and expert I would shake my head thinking “why did I not see that”.

I am a visual learner and I believe my next course of action is to continue to analyze cases. I will take this a step further by keeping the resources available when I am dissecting a case. The article by Ertmer and Stepich (2005) has provided insightful information and gives clear examples of how to move from novice to expert. By seeing examples of what is expected from an expert I can analyze a case by going through steps to reach my goal of understanding a case at an expert level.
REFERENCES


