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Trends and Issues in Instructional Design and Technology

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Reiser, Robert V.

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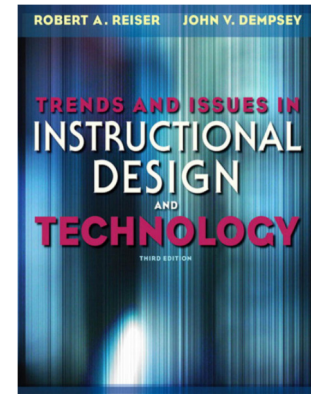
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Trends and Issues in Instructional Design and Technology edited by Reiser and Dempsey contains 9 sections and 38 chapters and looks at instructional design from historical background to current issues and trends in instructional design and technology. This book provides a comprehensive overview of past to future issues in the field; including ethics and the changing nature of the design. This book starts with a historical look at the field of "Instructional Design (ID) and Technology."

There have been multiple terms and phrases used for nominating this field over the past decades; i.e., instructional design, instructional technology, educational technology, and instructional media, to name a few. Reiser and Dempsey discuss the early definitions of instructional technology viewed first as media and then progress to the very new definitions. These definitions contain ethical issues from behavioral to cognitive perspectives.

The main purpose that the authors follow is to let the readers know more about the way instructional design has been defined over the past decades. They try to show the modifications and revisions which have been occurring based on the new trends, learning ideologies, and institutional perspectives. They argue that the changes in definitions are very appropriate because the new ideas and innovations modify the field and then revise the definitions.

This book discusses about instructional design and its characteristics, models, and tasks. The main idea of this book circles around the characteristics of ID moving from the behavioristic perspective to General System (GST). GST consists of some characteristics such as systematic, systemic, responsive, independent, redundant, dynamic, synergistic, cybernetic, and creative. The authors maintain that ID has some special characteristics such as the student-centered, goal-oriented, and reliable, empirical, and iterative. It also at the

same time has a valid way of outcome measurement and self-correcting.

The overall argument of this book is to show that ID aims to improve the learning process of the learners in the best possible way by acquiring specific models and tasks. ID also tries to remove the traditional methods' shortcomings by gathering data, breaking difficult tasks into their components, being more authentic rather than abstract, and scaffolding students during the problem solving step-by-step tasks.

As a result of the new advancements in instructional design and technology, the authors indicate that the roles of teachers, paradigm of teaching, and instruction have been changed. Reiser and Dempsey believe that in the new paradigm of instructional design, problem solving is a key element in current professional lives which requires different cognitive instructional methods.

Movement from traditional and scoring based assessment to more attainment-based instruction in accordance with instructional theory and technology is another focus of this book.

In another part of this book, the benefits and shortcomings of instructional design and technology in a postindustrial world are discussed in detail.

One of the postindustrial paradigms of instruction is Customized vs. Standardized instruction. "This goes beyond attainment-based progress (which is customized pacing) to include customized content and customized methods. While there is a core of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that all students learn, there is considerable time for students to cultivate their particular talents, interests, and strengths" (Reiser and Dempsey, 2012, p.77). This technique does not offer a very fixed and straight framework of instruction. In other word, It is not a matter of either/or. The students are flexible to find their interests and work based on what they are better at. This is a very good technique for both students and teachers.

A very interesting topic of this book is the integration of motivation, volition, and other psychological characteristics to instructional design. I recommend chapter 9 of this book to those who want to conduct a research on human characteristics in technology-based learning.

Another part of this book fully focuses on the evaluation and managing of instructional programs, program management, and resource management. It provides the readers with different assessment theories from summative and formative to newer concepts like Utilization-Focused Evaluation (U-FE) and Brinkerhoff's Success Case Method. This section also deals with human performance improvement (HPI) in particular and human performance technology (HPT) in general. The authors believe that HPI values all stakeholders (teachers, families, instructional designers, principals, etc.) to enhance learning performance and accurately displays the mission and vision of the program. This is a very important point which sometimes is ignored in some other programs. All the involved people in the process of learning not only the learners or teachers individually but

also organizations, managers, governments, etc. have a vital role in learning performance and the vision and mission of the program.

The authors also provide some good recommendations for those who are seeking a job in the field of instructional design.

In general, the authors propose some new trends in instructional design which are very helpful for those seeking the new methods of instruction, scholars looking for further research, teachers desiring to implement ID in their learning environment, and different organizations searching for state-of-art instructional techniques for their staff and employees. This book provides a broad overview on instructional design in different industries and also in different contexts, countries, and nations.

Furthermore, the readers can gain detailed information regarding new tools and technologies such as Web 2.0 and also how to use media in educational and pedagogical settings. Furthermore, readers can learn how to use rich media wisely to help people in multimedia training environments.

The interested readers of this book can also read about the relationship between game design and learning theory and also game design for educational games. The game and play theory is deeply discussed in in this book in regards to difference between playing a game and being “at play”.

Ethics is also another fundamental focuses of this book. The authors identify professional ethics as a central theme in the role of an instructional designer and concentrate on the importance of developing ethical competence and developing a basic understanding that all IT professionals can embrace.

One of the shortcomings of this book is that some topics and chapters are very specialized and professional which may not be useful for some teachers or student-teachers. Furthermore, since it is an editorial book, some topics are repeated in different articles with different wordings but the same content.

To sum up, I highly recommend this book to the students, teachers, scholars, and educators in the field of education and technology, instructional design, instructional technology, technology assisted learning, and educational technology. This book gives very clear ideas about the emergence, reasons, modifications, people involved, assessment, classification, and also the future of instructional design and technology.

REFERENCES

Reiser, Robert V., and Dempsey, John V. (2011). Trends and issues in instructional design and technology. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.