

## Lori Nuth First Online Discussion 9\_6\_05

### Rules:

Postings should be evenly distributed during the discussion period (not concentrated all on one day or at the beginning and/or end of the period). Postings should be a minimum of one short paragraph and a maximum of two paragraphs. Avoid postings that are limited to 'I agree' or 'great idea', etc. If you agree (or disagree) with a posting then say why you agree by supporting your statement with concepts from the readings or by bringing in a related example or experience. Address the questions as much as possible (don't let the discussion stray). Try to use quotes from the articles that support your postings. Include page numbers when you do that. Build on others responses to create threads. Bring in related prior knowledge (work experience, prior coursework, readings, etc.) Use proper etiquette (proper language, typing, etc.).

5-6 postings well distributed throughout the week, very clear that readings were understood and incorporated well into responses

The discussion officially begins tomorrow and ends on Sunday the 11th at 5 pm. I will post one question today and then a follow up question on Thursday or Friday. You should

begin by addressing the question,  
then respond to at least another student's response to create additional threads.

-----Question 1-----

In 1996, David Merrill saw a need to "reclaim the discipline of ID" and in his statement he claimed that:

- Instruction is a science and that ID is a technology founded on this science.
- Those persons that claim that knowledge is founded on collaboration rather than empirical science are not instructional designers.

Jonassen was not convinced that a "reclaim" of the discipline was needed and argued that ID would benefit from a theoretical adjustment and would be strengthened by accommodating multiple perspectives rather than polarizing the issue.

In your opinion, who do you think made a more compelling argument and why? Use the readings to support your point.

-----Lori Nuth's Answer to Question 1-----

Merrill states, "Instructional design is a set of scientific principles and a technology for implementing these principles in the development of instructional experiences and environments. He believes in a hard line drawn in the sand with the technology of instructional design is built upon the rock of instructional science.

I am not convinced that one single theory contributes to instructional design, so I believe Jonassen's argument is more compelling. Jonassen believes "The way students think and the meaning they construct from those activities relies on many factors (learner's experiences, knowledge, beliefs), most of which cannot be measured or even acknowledged." We all have unique experiences with the world and our personal beliefs, we all have different perspectives of the external reality. Because of this the instructor may present a topic expecting a certain outcome, but the learner may achieve a different outcome based on their past experiences. I believe this way of teaching allows for the student and teacher to be more creative. From my experience students learn best when able to apply what they have learned to real-world situations. In order to do this the constructivism theory is the preferred approach to teaching.

-----Response to Gwenanne-----

Gwenanne,

I agree with your opinion. I do think Merrill is looking for that one correct way to teach. As Jonassen states "When asked to commit to either the objectivistic or constructivistic camp, the designer will be best served by replying that it depends upon the context."

If we know that all students learn in different ways and choosing multiple methods to teach will reach all learners, how is this to be implemented? It sounds like you are a teacher and I imagine others in this class are too. In your opinion(s) how do you decide which methods to use that will reach all learners? In today's classrooms and even on CBT's there are time restrictions and it isn't possible to use all teaching methods that will reach all the learners. Do we assume that not all students will get what is being taught and use the methods that work towards the majority of the class? Or how do we as educators ensure that all students are gaining knowledge from the lessons?

-----Response to Nada when she responded to me-----

So do you think Merrill's approach, which is very objectivist or behaviorist, has its place in ID?

Yes I do think the behaviorist or objectivist approaches do have a place in ID. All the theories should be involved in teaching in order to reach different types of learners. As the Ertmer and Newby article states "the behavioral approach can effectively facilitate mastery of the content of a profession, cognitive strategies are useful in teaching problem solving tactics where defined facts and rules are applied and constructivist strategies are useful for dealing with ill-defined problems through reflection-in-action."

-----My response to Aala-----

The alternative is to categorize ID as an art. What implications about the discipline would that need?

In my opinion art is something that has creativity, shows emotion and can be interpreted in multiple ways. I think a part of instructional design could be considered an art. The way we teach or the props we bring into the classroom is an interpretation of the material being taught. Even online courses with no interaction can have graphical images that have an underlining meaning that we hope the learner will interpret the same way we did as a way to reinforce the material. I am a clogger and as clogging is an art and form of dance I have successfully created an introduction to clogging lesson teaching theory and demonstrating clogging via cd-rom/online course. As I mentioned I think part of ID is an art. I still believe it takes several theories combined to create successful teaching methods.

-----Nada Dabbagh's second question-----

Cherry quotes Jonassen that "People do collaborate to construct meaning." and goes on to say that "this meaning can come about as a result of the different environments (society, culture, workplace, etc...) that we belong to."

Alaa on the other hand agrees with Merrill that "groups don't learn, individuals learn". This was a contentious argument in the debate between Merrill and Jonassen.

Why do you think this conundrum is a result of the two opposing epistemologies: objectivism and constructivism? Look for clues in Jonassen's "objectivism versus constructivism" paper and also the Ertmer and Newby paper.

-----Lori's response to Nada's second question-----

I think this debate is derived from the fact that all people have different perceptions on a particular topic. Like Cherry mentioned, some people believe football is what the people in the United States know as soccer. Even if a group is taught the same topic all people

will have different opinions or take different ideas away from the lesson. I am involved in writing the content for a course at work. Since I do not know the content, the SME's were talking out what a particular topic should say. When I told them how I interpreted what was written they realized it needed to be written in a different manner since I interpreted it incorrectly. When a live teacher is not present to correct or direct inconsistencies in how material is perceived, this can become a great challenge to those trying to teach individuals a specific subject.

In the Jonassen article he states: "Perhaps the most common conception of instruction based upon objectivists thinking is the transmission of knowledge, a knowledge that is prescribed by subject-matter analysis." He goes on to state that in a constructivists view "instruction should focus on providing tools and environments for helping learners interpret the multiple perspectives of the world in creating their own world view". I still believe the constructivists view is the best approach for most learners. In my above example where we had to rewrite content because a learner was not interpreting it correctly (an objectivists thinking), we are also including a database outside of the course where the students can go to it and enter commands and play with it to further their knowledge on what is being taught (a constructivists view). In my opinion the constructivists bring a little of all the theories together just like we are attempting to do in our course at work.

-----Response to Cherry question 2-----

Cherry, I agree it seems pretty circular, personal experience can enhance our learning. As someone stated in their bio, they are saying 'Ahh' as they learn in class because it validates what they have been doing at work. I think our experiences and what we learn go hand in hand. In the Ertmer and Newby article they state "The practitioner cannot afford to ignore any theories that might provide practical implications". The approach to one design may not be the same as been done in the past, because it all depends on the context. My belief is the constructivists incorporate objectivists ideas into their theory and if this is true then I believe in the constructivist's ideas. If I am incorrect in how I perceived the readings than I would say I am on the fence next to you.

-----Final Question from Nada-----

On page 11 of Jonassen's Objectivism versus Constructivims article, he provides 4 "changes in practice" that one must adopt based on constructivist assumptions. Do you think these "changes in practice" are viable or implementable in your teaching/learning/professional contexts?  
Have you experienced any of these practices or do you think you can implement these practices in your profession?

-----Lori's response to final question from Nada-----

Jonnaseen states "we should create real-world environments that employ the context in which the learning is relevant. A related approach is to require learners to serve a

cognitive apprenticeship”. I am currently taking EDIT730 Analysis & Design of Multimedia & Hypermedia Learning Environments with Dr. Clark. On our first day of class one of his first statements was that we are going to take a different approach to our class. Typically teachers hand us project assignments, we form groups and turn it back in and the teacher grades it. This semester Dr. Clark is having real-world clients with Instructional Design problems come to our class and each group will be working for a client. Dr. Clark is still teaching the traditional (objectivist) method to cover the basics, but the majority of our class is this way of working in a real life apprenticeship method. I think this is a very creative and more accountable way of teaching. Not only am I interested in doing well in the class and be prepared for Dr. Clark’s expectations, but I don’t want to let the client down either. If I am not mistaken the emersion program is structured in this same way.