Reflection on Developing Expertise

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Throughout the course EDCI- 67200: Advanced Practices in Instructional Design we the students have been charged with completing four cases analyses. Allowing us to test our skills in instructional design and helping us to better our thinking regarding instructional design problems. The objective of these assignments is to help us move further along the novice to expert continuum. The following is a reflection of the cases analyses I conducted throughout this course, concluding with an action plan to help me further my journey to instructional design expert.

Michael Bishop Case

Problem Finding

While I was able to identify the design challenges in this case, my identification was too broad and not detailed enough. According to Ertmer and Stepich (2005) the novice instructional designer takes, "the available information at face value, describing issues in terms of concrete surface features of the given situation, often in term of what specific people did "right or "wrong"" (p. 40). This is what I did during this case, for example when identifying the design challenges in the implementation phase of the project I stated, "By not arranging for more than one pilot test group Michael has placed himself in this position. Multiple locations for such tests are needed to avoid situations like this; Michael should have planned this phase better" (Myers, 2013a, p. 3). I am clearly placing the blame here and focusing more on what Michael did wrong then on the actual challenge. In addition, in this case I did not clearly identify all of the key stakeholders and their roles in the project. Being able to identify the roles of the stakeholders is important because it can help the instructional designer to make connections between challenges

and concerns. It also will help the instructional designer to better identify the potential impacts of the solutions found and which parties need to be brought fully on board for solutions to be implemented.

Problem Solving

In this case I was able to identify multiple possible solutions as well as describe both the pros and cons of each. However, my analysis of the implications of those solutions was incomplete. I did not clearly explain how Michael could implement my solution or the impact it would have on each stakeholder. By not clearly identifying all of the key stakeholders, my final solution lacked specifics on how to address each of their concerns. Instead, it focused mainly on the concerns of Michael and the needs of the instructors

Craig Gregersen Case

Problem Finding

Once again in this case I had difficulty in identifying all of the stakeholders clearly. While I improved from the first case by adding in the stakeholder roles I missed; the identification of the Training as the client and the limited power Craig had as a consultant. However, I did a much better job in this case regarding what Ertmer and Stepich (2005) call "Principle vs. Feature" (p. 40) and stayed focused on the case issues versus who was to blame for what. In addition, I provide specific information as to why these concerns are an issue and make connections between them allowing me to prioritize them by scope and urgency rather than simply listing the issues without regards to context.

Problem Solving

Once again because I missed some of the stakeholder positions I was not fully able to identify all of the implications of my possible solution. In addition, my solution is not presented in a flexible way, which according to Ertmer and Stepich (2005) is more indicative of a novice than an expert.

> The final recommendation is for Craig to follow solution one. Craig calls a meeting with Richard, Louise and Stan and informs that as the project currently stands it is headed in the wrong direction. He outlines why this is so – conflicting goals and objectives, scope creep, lack of communication – and provides a suggestion for getting the project back on track. He then asks each party to present their goals and objectives (Myers, 2013b, p. 6).

In the statement above, I do not recognize that Craig might have issues getting everyone on board, or that Richard in particular could completely derail that plan. My solution leaves no room for flexibility and is stated in absolute terms.

Peer Case 1: Natalie Morales

Problem Finding

This case perhaps best exemplifies my growth in what Ertmer and Stepich (2005) call "Synthesizing vs. Summarizing" (p. 39) in which the instructional designer is able to use both their known prior knowledge as well as what they know of the case to identifying the problem. In this case I was able to combine my knowledge of on-the-job training and situated learning to identify that additional needs analysis, as well as a better understanding of the current training program was needed for Natalie to proceed. For example, in the Understanding the Problem section of my analysis I stated,

> Within my department at Pearson we use a mix of S-OJT and in class room training. Up until very recently training had been ad hoc with no needs analysis being done. This resulted in a lot of lost productivity as we were all required to attend training on systems regardless if we needed it or not. Recently, the new

> training manager has been performing needs analysis throughout our department to determine when and what training needs to occur, as well as who should attend the trainings (Myers, 2013c, p. 4).

The experience gained from my background in anthropology and as someone who has participated in on-the-job training provided much needed insight into the case; which helped me to identify the problem and present it in a more comprehensive manner.

Problem Solving

In this case I once again use rigid language in regard to my solutions. I state that "…Natalie must conduct a more comprehensive needs analysis" (2013c, p. 6), and go on to use more rigid language such as "should" leaving very little room for other options. In addition, my ability to address all of the possible implications of my solutions is still lacking. Upon reflection this may be because I am thinking in absolute terms instead of flexible ones. By thinking in absolutes I am closing myself off to the possibilities of stakeholders not getting on board with the solution or other hindrances occurring which I need to account for.

Peer Case 2: Paul Lindley

Problem Finding

In this case the problem solving came seamlessly together. All major stakeholders were identified with their accompanying concerns and responsibilities. In addition, the design challenges are recognized clearly and concisely with no finger pointing. While the design challenges are listed out, I provide clear summaries as to the problem and the relationships between them, prioritizing them succinctly. Finally, I am able to bring both my experience and knowledge to bear on the understanding of the problem as I see it.

Problem Solving

The solution for this case is slightly less rigid than the solutions given in the previous cases. While I still use the words "must" and "should" they are not used as often. In addition, I was able to recognize more implications and devise ways of addressing them. For example, I suggest that Paul bring in SMEs to work with his team, but am able to recognize that the SMEs interaction needs to be controlled so that they do not take over the project,

> In order to reduce the potential for the subject matter experts taking over the project from the graduate students the SMEs should be brought in as consultants and not full partners. This will limit the stake the SMEs have in the game and their control over the final outcome" (Myers, 2013d, p. 6).

While not an expert level yet, the solution written for this case is a step forward toward that goal.

Action Plan/Moving Forward

Having reviewed the fours case studies assigned in this course there are some definite areas that I need to improve on in my case analysis. First, and most importantly I need to stop thinking about my solutions in absolutes and adopt more flexible language. Doing so I believe will also help open me to recognizing all the potential implications to my proposed solutions. One possible way of doing this is to review my solutions for inflexible words like "should" and "must" and replace them with words like "could" and "can." In addition, in order to make sure I have accounted for all of the implications to my solutions I can review the stakeholders and examine what impact my solution has on them and what their possible reactions could be. If I follow this action plan I feel that I will continue to improve my case analysis and move further along the continuum between novice and expert.

References

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