

Instructional Systems Design

Formative Evaluation & Revision Plan

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1- Formative Evaluation Processes:

People involved, materials provided, questions asked

I used a One-to-One Evaluation by a SME and a One-to-One Evaluation by 3 Learners.

1.1. - One-to-One Evaluation by a Subject Matter Expert (SME)

The SME is a person with 15 years of experience in teaching ESL in middle school. We used to teach grade 6 ESL together a few years ago, but “Instructional Design” is very new to her. She was very impressed with the process as a whole.

Materials provided to the SME:

1. Instructional Analysis + Learner & Context Analyses
2. Performance Objectives
3. Instruction (strategy for objective 2)
4. Assessment instruments

Questions asked to the SME:

1. Are the materials appropriate for the type of learning outcome?
2. Do the materials include adequate instruction on the subordinate skills, and are these skills sequenced and clustered logically?
3. Are the objectives appropriate and realistic?
4. Is the content accurate and current?
5. Are the instructional materials clear and easy to understand? Are they appropriate in vocabulary, interest value, chunk size, and learner-participation activities?
6. Are the test items clear and appropriate? Are there built-in formal and informal assessment procedures?
7. Can the materials be managed efficiently in the manner they are mediated?
8. Is the cognitive demand on students too high or too low?
9. Does the lesson use whatever previous knowledge and/or experience students might already possess about the subject?
10. Have speaking, listening, reading, and writing been integrated into the lesson?
11. Do materials and activities take into account the learning styles of students?
12. Is there enough time for students to ask questions and interact with material and other students?

The SME’s Feedback:

The SME found the materials appropriate for the type of learning outcome and liked the idea of using the KWL chart at the beginning and going back to it at the end; she also liked the fact that the same questions are used again and again but in different contexts.

The SME said that the materials do include adequate instruction on the subordinate skills, and that those skills are sequenced and clustered logically. She also found the objectives appropriate and realistic.

The SME did find the content accurate and current but suggested that students conduct Internet searches on their own in order to construct knowledge, and then at the end, the teacher would provide them with his/her own version.

The SME found the instructional materials rather clear; she suggested that it would be better to reorganize them so that the instructor can follow them more easily. But she said that they are appropriate in vocabulary (especially thanks to the vocabulary exercises that will help the learners understand the difficult words in the story), interest value (of course depending on the students' answers on the KWL chart), chunk size (as long as the teacher carefully chooses the narrative elements to assign, so as to give narrative elements of the same length and degree of difficulty to each group), and learner-participation activities (which she liked the most because, as she said, "They are so right on target").

The SME found the test items clear and appropriate. Although she found the rubric very exhaustive and accurate, she suggested that it be shortened in order to make it easier for the teacher to correct. This is a suggestion that I will not be following since I believe that the more feedback the students get, the better they will learn and the more they will benefit (even if this would be more time-consuming for the teacher). The SME said that the materials can definitely be managed efficiently in the manner they are mediated and that the cognitive demand on students is neither too high nor too low; it is just at their expected zone of proximal development.

The SME believed that the lesson does use whatever previous knowledge and/or experience students might already possess about the subject, especially that the previous knowledge they are supposed to possess is listed in the entering behaviors. Here she suggested that I add the entering behavior related to word processing and conducting Internet searches.

The SME thought that speaking, listening, reading, and writing have been integrated into the lesson through the following: group work and oral presentations of the narrative elements; the reading of the story; and writing their own stories. She also held that materials and activities do take into account the learning styles of students since the learners will be reading (visual), listening (auditory), and working in groups / on the Internet (kinesthetic and tactile).

The SME believed that there is enough time for students to ask questions and interact with material and other students, however she cautioned about using time wisely and properly planning for the amount of time to allot for each activity.

1.2. - One-to-One Evaluation by 3 Learners

The 3 learners I had to choose (since I am currently not teaching) are my daughter and two friends of hers; the three of them are almost 18 years old. They are not really from the target population, but they used to be ESL students, so they do identify with the intended group of learners. The materials were delivered to the three learners simultaneously. They were asked to do their best to put themselves in the shoes of a sixth grade ESL student (which they were at a certain time in their lives) and evaluate instruction and the materials accordingly.

Materials provided to the 3 learners:

1. Performance Objectives (only for objective # 2)
2. Content: Handouts about the Narrative Elements + a website about them:
<http://www.nadasisland.com/literature/> (based on the suggestion of the SME)
3. Assessment instruments (for objective 2)

Questions asked to the 3 learners:

1. Are the objectives appropriate, relevant, and accomplishable?
2. Did you feel you had the required prerequisite skills?
3. Was the instruction interesting? Was it appropriate or too long/short/difficult/easy?
4. Did you understand what you were supposed to learn?
5. Did you encounter any difficulty?
6. Were the materials directly related to the objectives?
7. Were sufficient practice exercises included? Was the information presentation adequate?
8. Were there any faulty wordings or unclear passages?
9. Were the practice exercises relevant?

10. Did the tests really measure your knowledge of the objectives?
11. Did you receive sufficient feedback on your practice exercises?
12. Did you feel confident when answering questions on the test?
13. What is it that you think needs improvement? How would you change the instruction if you could?
14. What did you like the most about this lesson?

The Learners' Feedback:

The three learners found the objectives appropriate, relevant, and accomplishable. It was hard for them to answer regarding the required prerequisite skills since they do not really represent the target population. However, they did find the instruction interesting and appropriate. They understood very well what they were supposed to learn and were even surprised to see that they themselves did not know before some of the information covered (they had just forgotten it!).

The three learners found the materials directly related to the objectives and said they wished they had been taught like that when they were in sixth grade (I do not know, though, how true this is ☺; had I pretended that someone else had prepared the lesson, I think I would have received more accurate answers. I do not know how ethical this would have been, though).

The three learners loved the practice exercises and thought they were sufficient. They loved all the repetitions in different contexts and said that this would definitely help the students transfer the information being learned and internalize it.

The three learners did not find any faulty wordings or unclear passages. They stated that the tests really measure the learners' knowledge of the objectives. They also loved the idea of peer review and feedback. What they thought needs improvement is the time frame. The activities might need more time than allotted. After I told them that I included the Internet component based on the SME's feedback, they said that was one thing they would have suggested had it not been included. What they loved the most was filling out, at the end of the lesson, the last column of the KWL chart, the one titled "What I have learned": they felt they had accomplished something.

2- Revisions that I will be making based on the formative evaluations

The revisions I will make based on the formative evaluations are the following:

- Revise the entering behaviors in order to include word processing and successfully conducting Internet searches.
- Improve the content of the materials by adding some information under each narrative element.
- Ask students to construct knowledge by researching the Internet for information about the narrative elements they are responsible for then providing them with the handouts.
- Allot enough time for each activity
- Reorganize the teacher's guide

3- How those revisions will impact on the instruction and learners

Introducing the Internet component will help make instruction more interesting to the learners who will be constructing knowledge better than just by presenting what has already been prepared for them. Allotting enough time for the different steps and activities is crucial for the success of instruction.

4- The feedback I received

Only some of the feedback I received during the formative evaluation is what I had anticipated: it is the feedback related to including the Internet in the instructional process. But I definitely see the importance of the time allotted and the reorganization of the teacher's guide.