

Chapter 16

Learning Objects and Instructional Theory

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Editors' Foreword

Vision

- To help instructional theorists utilize primitive, reusable components for building instruction.

Types of Learning Objects

- Content objects
- Strategy objects
- Discourse objects

Issues for Using Learning Objects in Instructional Theories

for content objects

- Deciding on the degree of content specification
 - a. They usually contain strategy as well as content.
 - b. Content can be highly structured (automating) or unspecified (anything)
- Deciding on the scope of the content object
 - a. The larger the scope, the less effective instructionally.
 - b. Reusing is easier than repurposing.
- Deciding on sequences within and among content objects
 - a. Standard instructional sequencing strategies apply.

for strategy objects

- Deciding on the degree of specification for strategy objects
 - a. Strategy can be highly specified (automating) or unspecified (anything).
 - b. At the highly specified end of the continuum, they contain content as well as strategy.
- Deciding on the scope of the strategy object
 - a. The larger the scope, the less effective instructionally, so strike a balance in scope.
- Deciding on the sequence of strategy objects
 - a. Use standard micro, meso, and macro sequencing strategies.

for discourse objects

- Deciding on the degree of specification for discourse objects
 - a. Discourse can be highly specified or unspecified.
- Deciding on scope of discourse objects
 - a. Decide how many types of discourse to support in the object.
 - b. Identify a meaningful unit of interaction in the discourse object.
- Deciding on the sequence of discourse objects
 - a. Sequence discourse objects with special attention to intra- and inter-learning object sequencing, using standard sequencing strategies.

Learning Objects and New Instructional Theories

- Learning objects do not change instructional design or instructional theories.
- But they do call us to design learning objects, causing increased attention to context-related (situational) problems often ignored in the Industrial-Age paradigm of education.
- Open Educational Resources (OERs) are a type of innovation enabled by learning objects. They create a need for instructional designers to offer guidance for such different activities as localizing, repurposing, and reusing learning objects.