

WSU researcher designs multilingual instruction materials for world's largest mall

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Housing 1,200 stores, an underwater zoo, a SEGA indoor theme park, an Olympic-size ice rink, a 22-screen Cineplex and the world's largest gold market, the Dubai Mall is a retail marvel that attracts tourists from around the world. Thanks to one Wayne State researcher, its multilingual, multicultural employees are using an efficient, cost-effective instructional process to learn their job duties.

Monica W. Tracey, Ph.D., associate professor of instructional technology and administrative and organizational studies in WSU's College of Education and resident of Farmington Hills, Mich., was published in the inaugural issue of *The International Journal of Designs for Learning*, a multidisciplinary, peer-reviewed online journal dedicated to publishing descriptions of artifacts, environments and experiences that promote and support learning in all contexts by designers in any field. The paper outlines the development and implementation of an instructional process that trained more than 300 people from Bangladesh, Nepal, India, the Philippines and many other surrounding countries to perform custodial duties at the Dubai Mall, the largest mall in the world. The work serves as a model for efficient, cross-cultural instructional design with potential use in a wide variety of work processes involving learners of different languages and cultures.

"It was a very enriching experience for me," Tracey said. "This region of the world has the utmost respect for education and they fully embraced the expertise that WSU brought to the table. Given the three-month window we had for the entire project, their support was critical."

The project entailed a rapid prototyping process of designing instruction materials for both workers and supervisors of the mall housekeeping staff. With a multicultural, multilanguage learner in mind, she designed a series of processes utilizing colors, symbols and pictures, which were then adapted to the different cleaning programs. The words that accompanied the illustrations were in English and Hindi — the two most common languages among the trainees.

The prototype was put into effect immediately, training the mall's first group of employees for its official opening. Of these, 82 percent passed the required instructional assessment. With the same instructions still being used to train new employees at the Dubai Mall today, the project has been recognized as a resounding success as well as a model that can be duplicated in virtually any instruction materials for multilingual, multicultural learners.

"Here in the U.S. and abroad, our workforce is changing," Tracey said. "More than ever, we need to be able to design and deliver effective instruction for numerous cultures working together. The Dubai project was a starting point for applying the elements of instructional design, including effectiveness, efficiency and appeal for the benefit of the culturally diverse workforce around the world."

More information: To view the full interactive paper in The International Journal of Designs for Learning, visit [scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/i ... jdl/article/view/845](https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/ijdl/article/view/845)

Provided by Wayne State University

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