Indira Gandhi National Open University
Staff Training and Research Institute of
Distance Education

MDE-419
Staff Training and Development in Distance Education

Block

3

IMPLEMENTATIONAL ASPECTS

MDE-419: Staff Training and Development in Distance Education

(New Course in place of ES-319 : Staff Development in Distance Education)

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MDE-419: Staff Training and Development in Distance Education

Course Outline

INTRODUCTION TO THE BLOCK

Human resources development is a crucial part of any organisation/ institution and in the changing social scenario, the importance of that role will increase-quite rapidly. The impact and acceleration of the rate of change on institutions means that the skills of today may not be the skills required for tomorrow. Individuals have now to face the prospect of changing their skills and their careers- perhaps many times during their working lives. This has, naturally, infused a sense of fear: what the future holds for us! This being the scenario, one of the key areas is to enable individuals to welcome change (change for better!) and see it as an opportunity to learn and acquire new skills. Yes, changing attitudes and mindsets is important.

This requires those responsible for training and development to reassess the way the process has traditionally been approached, applied and evaluated. Learning and the ways in the people learn should play a crucial part in this reassessment. This is important in the context of the emerging concept of 'learning orgnisations'. The issues of approach and application have found their places respectively in units 1, 2 and 3 of this block. In the first unit, the focus is on training needs assessment with the emphasis that training should not, under any circumstances, be taken as given. Unit 2 discusses the application part in terms of training methods. Our focus here is not to give you recipe for success in training by adopting a few techniques. (For our purposes, we have used the terms 'methods' and 'techniques' interchangeably). In essence we have presented an overview of training design with the help of a few methods. In unit 3, we have discussed the need for training the trainers in distance education. For this spurpose we have presented here how the potential trainers can actually be oriented in needs collection from various groups of potential trainee clientele, the formulation of objectives and identification of materials and strategies to carryout training. The infinite learner variety which challenges the constant, fixed self instructional training package, the nuances of instructional media including language/ medium of instruction and so on. The last unit (unit 4) in this block focuses on the issues pertaining to language as an instructional medium.

Study Guide

A schematic representation of the design of the units is given below to facilitate your access to the content presented here.

Unit X*

X.0 Introduction
X.1 Objective
X.2 Section 1 (Main Theme)
    X.2.1 Sub-section 1 of Section 1
    X.2.2 Sub-section 2 of Section 1
....
....
X.3 Section 2 (Main Theme)
    X.3.1 Sub-Section 1 of Section 2
    X.3.2 Sub-Section 2 of Section 2
....
....

X.n Let Us Sum Up

Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress The Key

Wherever check your progress exercises are provided they are in boxes to distinguish from the rest of the text

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***'X' stands for the serial number of the unit concerned**

As the scheme suggests, we have divided the units into sections for easy reading and better comprehension. Each section is indicated distinctly by bold capitals and each sub-section by relatively smaller, but bold typeface. The significant divisions within sub-sections are in still smaller but bold typeface so as to make it easier for you to see their place within sub-sections. For purpose of uniformity we have employed the same scheme of 'partitioning' in every unit throughout the course.

We begin each unit with an Introduction followed by the section 'Objectives'. It articulates briefly what we have presented in the unit, and what we expect from you once you have finished working on the unit. In the last section of each unit, under the heading, 'Let Us Sum Up', we summarise the whole unit for purposes of recapitulation and ready reference.

Besides, we have given self-check exercises under the caption 'Check Your Progress' which invariably end with possible answers (the key) to the questions set in these exercises.

What, perhaps, you ought to do is to go through the units and note down important points as you read in the space provided in the margin. (Broad margins in the booklet are there for you to write your notes on. Make your notes as you work through the materials. This will help you prepare for the examination as also in assimilating the content. Besides, you will be able to save time. Do use these margins). This will help you keep track of and assimilate what you have been reading in the unit, answer the self-check exercises and the assignment questions and, easily identify the item(s) to be clarified.

We hope that we have given enough space for you to work on the self-check exercises. The purpose of giving self-check exercises will be served satisfactorily if you compare your answers with the possible ones given at the end of each unit after having written your answer in the blank space. You may be tempted to have a furtive glance at the possible answer(s), as soon as you come across an exercise. But we do hope that you will overcome the temptation and turn to the possible answers (which are not necessarily the best answers) only after you have written yours.

These exercises are not meant to be submitted to us for correction or evaluation. Instead, the exercises are to function as a study tool to help you keep on the right track as you read the units. On an average, each block will have at least one or a part of one assignment. At times an assignment may expect you to work through more than one unit to prepare your responses. You have to work on one assignment per course. Assignments are sent separately and are changed every year.

We suggest the following norms be strictly practiced while you are working through the assignments.

- Write your enrolment number legibly.
- Before you put anything down in words, assimilate what you have read, integrate it with what you have gathered from your experience to build your answer, and preferably prepare a concept map before starting to write it.
- Make the best use of the block and additional reading materials by diligently working through the assignments.

Mail us

At the end of this block, we have provided a questionnaire to be filled by you after you complete reading this block. Your feedback will be very useful for future revision and maintenance of the programme. Please take note of the time you devote in studying this block. Maybe you can complete this block after 4-5 sittings. But for every sitting, kindly note the time separately so that you can categorically say how much time you took to read this block. You can send the feedback questionnaire by post or you can e-mail the same to pkbiswas@ignou.ac.in. In the email, please mark in the subject area – FOR COURSE COORDINATOR-MDE-419. You may also contact us for any difficulties related to the programme in general and MDE-419 in particular.

UNIT 1 TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Structure

1.0 INTRODUCTION

All of us would acknowledge the importance of studying a given problem before finding solutions to it. We applaud the value of analysis prior to action in a situation that warrants action. Irrespective of the sphere of operation – be it an educational institution, a cooperation, a government office, or a social service agency — in the context of training, that initial pursuit of information about the situation is often called needs assessment. But what is needs assessment? How should a trainer think about needs assessment in order to plan and execute a useful one? Why should we do these assessments? What are the questions asked? What are the sources contacted? What tools/methods should we use? These are some of the questions that we need to address ourselves to, before we actually conduct a training programme. In this unit, we shall discuss some of these issues and aim to relate them to the context of distance education.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading through this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the reasons for conducting training needs assessment (TNA) in general;
- comment on the various methods used for TNA and their advantages/ disadvantages; and
- carry out a training needs assessment, when required, in your organization or your own functional areas.

1.2 REASONS FOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT

There are a few purposes of training needs assessment (TNA). When we conduct needs assessments, we are seeking detailed information about factors which are responsible for the success or failure of an organisation in achieving its goals and objectives. We shall consider some of them here.

- **Optimal performance:** It involves asking such questions as what is it that the exemplary performer knows and does that exemplifies success? How should a course writer use a computer, for example? What is it that a counsellor must know about assignment evaluation? What is involved in producing self-instructional print, audio/video packages? Similar questions must be asked about the performance of all other functionaries in the system of distance education.

- **Actual performance:** It entails asking varying questions such as what does a course writer do that makes the learning materials self-instructional? What do the counsellors already know about assignment-evaluation? Why does the management think there is a need for training? What are the employees doing or failing to do? For this purpose, we usually would seek the help of records of employee performance, insider/outsider observations, employee self-appraisal reports etc, and compare their actual performance with the optimal performance aimed at in every functional area.

- **Feelings:** As trainers we would want to know how trainees feel about the topic for training; the significance attached to the topic, and the level of confidence the trainers have in handling the topic, their human attributes as trainers and the overall impact the training programmes have on the trainees. Of course, this is an evaluation exercise, but it would inform us to redesign our training to meet the training needs more effectively in future.

TNA further helps us identify the causes of performance problems on the part of the trainers. One can attribute various reasons for performance problems. We can categorise them as under:

i) **Lack of skill or knowledge:** Even if one wanted to perform better, one just couldn't do it. For example, if one lacks the knowledge essential to writing behavioural statements on performance appraisals or retrieving data from the computer but attempts to impart training in those very areas, the outcome is easily predictable.

ii) **The environment:** It is possible that trainees may not have the tools, forms or work space necessary to perform a task. The classic example is the computer that "keeps going down" or the purchase of a new but inferior video editing board. In this situation, even the ablest trainer cannot perform well.

iii) **Few or improper incentives:** What are the consequences of doing the job badly or not doing it at all? Perhaps the production of quality materials has been ignored in the past, or the failure to respond to student-needs likewise has been ignored. Do hard workers get loaded down with additional work assignments? Questions of these kinds would tell us about the training policy of an institution. If the institutional policies do not spell out the rewards and punishments related to performance, however much you try to train the staff in any area, the attitude of the staff towards their work will be one of indifference.

iv) **The unmotivated employee:** Traditionally we think employees are motivated on the external circumstances and by an inspiring environment. If the emotional and attitudinal domain of the employees are not positively disposed towards the tasks they are asked to perform, then the motivation of the employees slides down and eventually disappears. If the motivation of performers is to be sustained, they must first be convinced of the purposefulness of their action. For example, you are training tutors or counsellors through teleconferencing which involves a lot of preparation at an enormous cost. During the performance you discover that there is no audience at the receiving end. This is sufficient to demotivate you completely and convince you of the futility of the act. Not even a master trainer can sustain his/her motivation in this situation.

Obviously, we have not listed all the factors here. The attempt is to put together a few factors under categories mentioned above. It is quite possible that one can come out with other equally important categories/factors.

1.3 IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

A systematic analysis/identification of training needs involves three processes – (a) orgranisational/institutional analysis, (b) role/job analysis and (c) individual analysis. Let us discuss these processes of *training needs analysis* for our purposes.

Organisational/Institutional analysis

Organisational analysis is a process of studying, collecting information and analyzing the state of affairs of an organisation/institution, its functioning in the light of its mission statements, performance of different categories of personnel ranging from top management to bottom level employees and recording performance problems associated with each job category. Evidently, this effort involves huge investments in terms of cost and time. Precisely because of this reason, we should be very cautious in undertaking this process of needs analysis at the organisational level. However, we should remember that any comprehensive analysis involves analysing the institution/organisation in its entirety. Usually this takes place when the institution concerned desires to prepare a comprehensive training policy for the entire institution. It is, however, customary to identify certain problem areas or individual units within the institution for training needs analysis. This mainly depends on the mindset of 'parts making the whole'. It is possible that it does work sometimes. But, identifying needs or particular units or personnel in isolation may result in the problem of incompatibility: a tension between the 'parts' identified and the institutional objectives/ mandates as a 'whole'. So, we should keep in view the following aspects while doing organisational analysis:

i) The effectiveness/scope of this level of analysis depends greatly on the degree of support it receives from the organisational/institution.

ii) Different types of 'training reviews' require different authority, status and technical competence.

iii) A high order objectivity, analytical evaluation and interpersonal skills are necessary.

Before designing a training programme, it is essential on the part of a trainer (commissioned or in-house) to develop an awareness and understanding about the institution's mandates/objectives, policies, functions, state of affairs of its operations, work systems and processes, etc. This helps the trainer

- identify the intended objectives and the actual functioning of the institution
- identify the reasons for the gap
- focus on those issues/problems which need training interventions.

An understanding about the working of an organisation/institution helps a trainer appreciate its strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats. Further the trainer can come to grips with its development plans, investment programmes, technological progress, products or services planned, workforce status and prospects, etc. The knowledge of the present and the future scenarios serve as a base to identify the different types of training needs and enables the trainer to suggest to the management a comprehensive training plan to meet the immediate and the future requirements.

Organisational analysis, thus, is basically a process of studying and collecting information on the various aspects related to an institution's functioning with a view to finding out its training and development needs.

Normally, we can conduct this analysis using the methods of *observation, discussion, and interview or by referring to documented information.* (We shall talk about these methods at a later stage in this unit). The systematic conduct of organisational analysis is essential because the analysis should provide objective and professional advice on human resources development. This should in turn provide the basis for the top management to decide the nature and extent of the role of training in achieving the organisational objectives. We have given below a few guidelines to such analysis:

i) detailing the objective, scope, terms of reference and duration of the analysis,

ii) obtaining the authority to access relevant information from files and documents on various personnel;

iii) soliciting the cooperation of colleagues/employees at different levels and clarifying the purpose of the analysis (and in the process dispelling their suspicions, if any);

iv) giving advance intimation regarding the time of visits, etc.

v) collecting information regarding institutional objectives/policies and functions – mandated and actual;

vi) identifying external environments that 'affect' the functioning of the institution (including socio-demographic features, economic profile, government policies, market forces, competitive conditions, infrastructural facilities, etc.);

vii) assembling all the information collected, correlating one information with the other and interpreting it to find performance problems at different levels;

viii) cross-checking the information data collected, if inconsistencies/ discrepancies are deducted;

ix) finalising the analysis report indicating various training requirements in order of priority.

What is important in this process is to harmonise the training needs as perceived or felt by individuals with those of the institution. A judicious synthesis between the two is immensely beneficial or both the institutional growth and individual's career. We shall elaborate on this

As institutional training needs analysis would reveal various job positions requiring training intervention. We can select these job-related tasks and carry out a training need analysis oriented to these specific tasks. Once we conduct this, we will more often than not come across the level of performance of individuals. An institution – in our context a distance teaching agency – employs various personnel to perform different tasks, based on their competence level in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude. But, owing to reasons, which cannot be captured in a list, ranging from social to personal, an individual's competence may not fulfill the level of competence required to perform a task (you can easily think of a content expert employed as professor/associate professor/assistant professor and the level of competence required for translating their content expertise in terms of distance teaching materials, in the open learning system). Clearly, the persons need training. But not any type of training would do. The kind of training to be imparted should suit the needs of each and for this purpose we should go for an analysis of individuals' needs.

You may notice that we have given you the idea of general to specific (organisational tasks and then individual) type of training need analysis. Some would like to start from 'individual analysis' and reach 'organisational analysis' (specific to general). Either way is possible and one cannot categorically say which one is better. The question of effectiveness depends on the context in which we operate. But what we should not forget is that we need to analyse training needs at all the different levels of the organisation, job and person, assimilate them by finding out their inter-relationships so as to help both the organisation and the individuals in their development and growth.

Job analysis, is an interact method of identifying training needs: a new or an existing job is analysed to produce a job description, which is then evaluated. The gap between the job description and the knowledge and skills of the current incumbent or the new employees becomes clear which helps design individual training programmes. As is obvious, this method identifies the needs of the individual and the specific job, rather than institutional needs. Further, the job description we arrive at may quickly be out of date.

At this stage, it is useful to think of the 'need' in terms of output rather than input. Usually, as mentioned earlier, we express a need as a gap, weakness or lack of something. (For example, a course-writer needs to know about the preparation of self-assessment questions or needs to appreciate the operation of other functional units in the institution). To turn the need into an objective, we need to think of the end result, i.e., the output. (The date-entry operator for example, can operate the computer with no more than 5% wastage – perhaps we can't allow even this percentage of wastage, however insignificant it may sound. Or the telephone operator can answer the telephone calls within three rings and put it through to the correct person, to a performance level of 99% accuracy). In essence, the training objectives should be specific, measurable, action oriented, relevant and time-bound. Training objectives, thus should address the following:

- Improving knowledge level
- Changing behaviour and/or attitudes
- Specifying time-frames (what the participants will do during the training programme/at the end of the programme and at their workplaces).

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

State any three reasons for carrying out training needs assessment in your situation.

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1.4 METHODS OF CONDUCTING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In training contexts, we decide what the trainees ought to know; we teach/train them how to perform a particular task. They take the cues and use them. Still there are problems. Do you know why? The reasons for offering a training programme vary. Sometimes, it is political, sometimes a personal priority and sometimes a case of a real and pressing need. However, often training occurs because it always has occurred earlier or because it is mandated by the authority. There might be specific performance problems; then again, there might not be. Similarly, there might be new content or might not be.

Once we have successfully identified **'optimal' 'actuals' and 'feelings',** it is of paramount necessity on our part to determine the source of information that we need. Other questions should include

- Where is the source of information located?
- What are the constraints on getting the data?
- Who needs to know that you are involved with this innovation, problem, or priority setting? (Remember that pre-training activity has the potential for extending the training function into every aspect of the institution.)
- What is the impression that this effort will make?
- How do we reconcile competing interests and priorities?
- How do we market our department and conduct needs assessment simultaneously?

The other important step in needs analysis is to select appropriate tools to suit the kind of information sought for:

Different purposes and sources require different tools/methods. The factor that separates effective from ineffective tool-use is planning. Do we know why we are contacting the source? Is our purpose clear? Have we established an agenda or an interview schedule to structure our time? Let us now discuss a few methods. But, first we shall work out the exercise given.

1.4.1 Development Centres

Development centres in some countries function as service agencies to carry out needs assessment, on request from a client, i.e., an organisation/ institution. They use a variety of assessment techniques to ensure the widest possible coverage of skills and attributes. The method used usually is multidimensional in that the technique includes individual group, oral, written and psychometric tests as well as personality and career interest questionnaires. Development centres establish training and development needs for the individuals and the institution based upon clearly defined criteria that transcend the performance of the individuals in their current positions. Further, a development centre designs assessments against clearly identified criteria for specific groups within the institutions so as to effectively meet the requirements of an institution. (Establishment of development centers within the organisation is an expensive affair and may sound too complex for a small organisation). In distance education institutions, the centres for staff development and research are usually assigned the above responsibility.

1.4.2 Human Resources Audit

This is simply to look at the number of employees within the institution and their location within its structure, detailing their age and the number of years in their current post. Once the details are collected, we are to make comparison between the number of employees required for the future, usually for the next one to five years. The analysis will identify the number of vacancies arising through retirement and natural wastage, potential promotion opportunities etc. Used in conjunction with future plans, this exercise will help us identify where there will be serious shortages of resources, potential problems, etc., leading to chalking out plans for training and development which will meet future needs. This is an oft-practised strategy. The process is fairly simple and cost-effective because the sought after information is easily accessible. However, it is mostly resented in academia because plans are often seen as "orders." This can easily be overcome, if the top management interacts with the resenting groups and impresses on the need for it.

1.4.3 Interview

Interview is the most commonly used method for needs assessment. This method requires, first of all, identifying the persons to be interviewed to ascertain their training needs. Usually the interview method is used with senior officials or employees who have unique roles within the institution and who have also specific training and development needs unique to them. However, interviews with a cross-section of the employees are essential to get a clear picture of the situation and the training needs.

There are two types of interviews, 'structured' and 'unstructured' or 'open-ended'. A structured interview uses a number of prepared questions as opposed to the unstructured one, where the direction of the discussion is not controlled rigidly. Through interviews, we can easily identify both 'real' and 'perceived' needs. This technique has drawbacks as well. For example, in an unstructured interview, the outcome will depend upon the direction of the discussion, which may leave out areas of critical importance. Contrastingly, in a structured interview, the outcome will depend upon the questions asked of the individual, and some areas again may be missed. More importantly, the interview provides a subjective view of the individual in areas discussed, which he/she may consider difficult, and it requires the skill of the interviewer in probing those areas and eliciting relevant information.

One may conduct an interview scheduled either face-to-face or at a distance, say, for example, on the telephone. But it strictly depends on the 'purpose' within the needs assessment process. Consider the Table 1.1 just to get an idea about the 'purpose'.

Table 1.1: Purposes of Interview and the Corresponding Media

	Activities	Media
1.	To inform someone about the project	Telephone
2.	To gather in-depth information	Face-to-face
3.	To discuss difficult, complex, or controversial subject matter	Face-to-face
4.	To check out a point of two	Telephone
5.	To enlist support from a colleague	Face-to-face
6.	To look at content that must be illustrated	Face-to-face
7.	To save money	Telephone
8.	To form a working relationship	Face-to-face
9.	To periodically nature a working relationship	Telephone
10.	To get an "initial take" on something	Telephone
11.	To get information from many people	Telephone
12.	To get information from a few key individuals	Face-to-face

To reiterate, the mode of interviewing largely depends on the purpose for which it is conducted.

1.4.4 Observation

We can use observation schedules to look at any job. It involves a trained observer observing an individual on-job for a day or more over a period of time. Observers can either monitor the person for short, two or three hour periods and then make notes or have a structured checklist in which they will make notes against agreed criteria. This method can identify areas other than training needs, for example, inefficient working ways. This method requires an observer who is trained in the method. Observation techniques help the observer see an individual operating in his/her context and in a number of different work situations; if he/she is an academic manager, the observer will see how he/she behaves in course-brief meetings; in dealing with counsellors/course writers/students etc., and in deciding work priorities. The drawback of this technique, however, is that anyone observing another person is bound to influence the way they react. Therefore the observation has to be done over a period of time. Further it is time consuming and can be seen as disruptive by the individual being observed.

Observation schedule

It is a highly acclaimed front-end tool. But, some have reservations about this tool as well, for which the main reason is the belief that observers alter employee performance. Thus, observation is a less effective tool for gathering information about actuals, unless we are working incognito. (But then, it may be professionally unethical). Observation is, however, a very effective tool for seeking optimal performance. If employees know that you are observing, then their efforts will more closely approximate optimal performance. Observation-schedules, more often than not, focus on behavioural processes and not on cognitive ones. After decades of a behavioural orientation to education and training, professionals seem to be now interested more in what an employee thinks about and knows that the work is being done. Very many times, interviews, not observations, get at the kind of information. However, observation provides information about what is really happening at work at two levels. The first level of observation seeks a broad gestalt. At this level, we get answers to questions of the following type:

- What goes on?
- What are the major components of the job?
- What are the most frequently recurring challenges?
- In what order do things usually happen?
- What kind of information is shared?
- What kinds of references or tools are relied upon?

At the second level of observation, the trainer seeks such details as

- What separates effective performance from ineffective performance?
- What kinds of response attract clients?
- Which ways work best?
- How are work areas arranged?
- Is there anything that coordinators of learning (study) centres are doing that appears to be influencing the quality of performance? etc.

However, the above questions may be relevant where the performance is physical or related to psychomotor skills. To get the information about the process of developing a self-instructional unit in print, for example, we have to change techniques appropriately.

1.4.5 Performance Review/Appraisal

This method focuses on the outcomes of employee performance. Training-professionals seek print-outs, records, etc., to capture the details of what clients are doing from the results of their actions. We can examine records to generate the details of performance. We shall elaborate this point.

If an institution conducts performance reviews or an appraisal scheme, it compares the appraisal with the job-specification to find out what is missing. In other words, the institution tries to identify the gap between what should be done or what could be improved in job-performance. Alternatively, the performance review/appraisal scheme may do this by comparing job performance against specific performance criteria/objectives, and may include a section on training needs. The performance review/appraisal is detailed because it looks at the needs of each individual. The analysis of the appraisal can provide useful inputs to the accuracy of information within the job description and the appraisal system. That is, the method can be limited, if the future plans of the institution are not communicated to all employees. For example, a departmental head may wish to expand and develop his/her department based on the past record of performance but may not be aware that the top-management plans to reorganise and the department is to be merged with another.

1.4.6 Questionnaire Survey

A survey is usually an anonymous device for soliciting opinions from a large number of respondents. If you want the opinions of many, and/or statistical significance, surveys are an excellent tool. Surveys, because of the potential for anonymity, are particular effective for gathering the information required. One can prepare/produce questionnaires for part or whole of the institution. Sometimes, however, questions get misinterpreted and fail to elicit the information required. Questionnaires are generally used to identify institutional or departmental needs rather than individual needs. For administering questionnaires, institutions may use assistance form inside the organisation or outside or both in the formulation of questions, rating process, coordination and analysis of the results, etc. The use of questionnaires helps cover a large number of individuals.

However, as in any research context the number of responses can be very low. A response of 50% is workable, and time and effort have to be invested in ensuring that individuals realise the importance of the questionnaire. For example, the respondent should be convinced of on the fact that the outcome of the responses shapes the training and development of the institution.

The two basic question-types are structured items and open-ended items. Structured choice items are far better than are open questions. A forced choice item will say "which one of the following" or "rank this list" or "rate these according to ...." In this case, we provide respondents with a fixed set of options to which they respond in a predetermined fashion.

1.4.7 Review of Plans

A review of the institution's plans for the future gives valuable and necessary information in identifying the training and development needs. It is this information that will enable the priority in training and development to be established to meet future as well as current needs. The only reservation against the technique is that it cannot point to individual's needs and that it cannot identify specific problem areas.

1.4.8 Desk Research

Desk research is a review and analysis of external factors as well as internal. For example, assessing the level of new employees in the institution will help design training programmes to meet their needs. It helps us identify the availability of formal courses and obtain relevant information about them. Through desk research, we can review of the current training and development programmes and ascertain whether or not they are still relevant to meeting the current and future needs.

This can incorporate the techniques of human resources audit and the review of plans. It helps an institution keep up-to-date with outside influences and developments. Though cost effective and simple to do, like the review of plans, it is inadequate for identifying individual needs and so is limited in its application. In other words, desk research cannot be used as a sole method for identifying training needs because it is a process isolated from the people whose commitment and involvement is needed for the training to be successful.

1.4.9 Group Discussion

A number of individuals within an institution may sit together to discuss specific issues. The individuals may be a team within a department or a number of officers at the same level. The purpose of the discussion needs to be clearly defined, i.e., to identify areas of concern or difficulty and areas of strengths and possible actions, needed to resolve these areas of concern and build on strengths, etc. The group may meet several times with the assistance of a facilitator to guide and direct it. The facilitator may be member of the group who has received specific facilitation training for this purpose. Group discussion ensure commitment from the participants and builds team work and recognition of others' strengths and weakness as well as one's own. It identifies need that, if met, can have an immediate impact on the success of the institution. Further, a group discussion helps identify needs of individuals and group training and development needs. It places a heavy premium on the skill of the facilitator to form, guide and stop the group once the tasks have been accomplished. It is also possible, however, that the groups may talk but not resolve issues without some form of feedback form senior officers. Sometimes, it is quite likely that the public nature of the forum may stifle honest discussion.

The suitability of the methods described here for our purposes will depend upon a number of factors such as the culture and size of the organisation, the human resources available, the expertise they can bring to the implementation of such methods, the level of training needs you wish to identify, (i.e., is it an organisational need or for a department or individual?), the amount of time and money available, etc. We, however, recommended the use of a combination of the above methods.

We can undertake the identification of training needs at several/different levels within an institution. We may undertake needs identification at corporate, departmental, team or individual level (including both the job and person). It can also be undertaken by specific groups such as directors/deans/heads of departments/new employees and so on. These are not mutually exclusive. Approaches to needs analysis, however, differ. For our immediate purposes we may identify the following two:

i) Assessing the needs of all the staff to get a full picture of the institution: It is based upon the principle that even employees who may already be competent could be improved further and their strengths should be further strengthened. (This approach usually starts with the top management and cascades through the institution. The Chief Executive (say, a Vice-Chancellor) defines his/her objectives and provides mission statements from which senior officers (both academic and non-academic) derive their objectives. They in turn communicate their objectives to their team and team objectives get defined. In the process, the training and development needs for each group and individual emerge. It might even be the other way around.

ii) Identifying and investigating those areas within the institution which pose operational problems: This approach can identify training needs which will have high priority for the institution. It can also identify areas where problems and issues do not result in training needs but may require an alternative solution or approach. (This approach, is usually more short-term in application and deals with current problems whilst the former is more strategic and development in character. However, indentifying training needs, by exception, has the advantage of making an immediate contribution to the organization 's success).

Putting to use both the approaches simultaneously will prove to be beneficial to any institution/ organisation.

Activity 1

Three methods of conducting 'needs assessment' have been mentioned below. Point out one advantage and one disadvantage in each method.

Note: i) Space is given below for your answers.

ii) We have not given any answer at the end of this unit.

1) Interview

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2) Observation

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3) Questionnaire survey

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1.5 DETERMINING THE PRIORITY

Once we complete identification of training needs the next stage is to analyse the results so that we can determine the priorities. Let us see some guidelines which will be of assistance to us in the analysis.

If the approach taken is the analysis of training and development needs for the total organisation, then, we should do the following:

- Examine the organisational plan and draw out the general themes. For example, is the institution on its way to expand adding a few more faculties or develop new courses?
- Identify the training, which will support these themes and make a direct contribution to the success of the institution. (That is, the institution could make a strategic decision to improve or focus on student service and thus the need for student service training within the plan will appear as a high priority).
- Consider if there are needs which, if not met, will severely inhibit the attainment of the institution's goals. For example, a particular department (say media production unit needs specific training in a technical area) which if not met, will prevent the institution from developing a new multi-media product as quickly as it had planned.

If the level of needs analysis is a particular department, i.e., a team of individuals, the same process as the above should be applied relating it to their objectives. If the approach, however, is to analyse by exception, there may still be a number of needs identified and a limited amount of resources, the priorities still need to be defined. If this is so, we should ask the question, which need when satisfied will make the greatest contribution to the organization?

The analysis of training needs and the determination of their priority are vitally important to decide the value of the training to the institution, and the data on which the training plan will be based. We should note that not all needs are training needs, and sometimes the under performance of a particular unit can be caused by the organisational structure or methods of work. It is necessary to thoroughly investigate perceived training needs to ensure that the actual needs they are correctly identified. The consequences of wrongly identified needs are a waste of money, time and effort on everyone's behalf and frustration because the training may not meet the need, nor make a contribution to the immediate and long term success of the institution.

In essence, needs analysis should provide information regarding:

- whether or not training is appropriate;
- what kind of training is favoured, for whom, and by whom;
- what other supporting interventions (like job aids, training of officers, expert systems, workstations redesign, or incentives) will solve the problem, introduce the new system, or respond to the mandate;
- strategies for involving other related professionals in the effort;
- the content of courses, if training is judged appropriate; and
- how training and other interventions will be received by training providers, customers and others.

1.6 DEVELOPING AWARENESS OF NEEDS

In many training situations the major challenge, or at least the first, is to develop in participants, the awareness of a need. This is essential primarily because most often we conduct training programmes as a routine and participants are simply told to attend. Occasionally, even such programmes prove to be a pleasant relief from the usual work routine. In many instances, however, participants see training events as an imposition, a waste of time, or even insulting. This leads them to feel apathetic, resistant, or hostile. Obviously, training contexts become tense. If we learned from earlier diagnostic work that a genuine need for training does exist, the initial phase of training must be concerned with overcoming participants' resistance. Further, to sustain the interest of the participants what is important is to focus the training on their needs—present and future. People generally welcome training, when they believe that the outcomes of the training would help improve their efficiency. In other words, people resist training when

i) they cannot imagine how they could be more effective or satisfied in their work

ii) they do not believe their work could (or should) be done any differently than they are doing it now;

iii) they believe others are more responsible than they are for how their work turns out;

iv) they do not believe in their own ability to operate differently than they have been.

These characteristics often apply to people who have slipped into bad habits/ routine over long periods of time in a job. They occur most commonly among people whose behaviour pattern is not counterbalanced by sufficient challenges or stimulation to maintain an open approach to their work.

1.6.1 Identifying the Job Needs

They may have come to *identify* the job and themselves with how they have been handling it and their identities as a workforce are defined by what it does. In such instances, to acknowledge a need for change could be threatening. It would seem to imply that they have been doing something 'wrong' all their years on the job or that they themselves are inadequate.

Some would even see learning new skills as assuming total responsibility for what occurs on the job. Some others may resent the assumption that an outsider (i.e. trainer) knows something about their jobs that they themselves do not. More importantly, the general lack of faith in training — what is learnt in laboratory conditions may not be applicable to their field situations - - would make some feel apprehensive about it. And this might be a strong cause for their resistance. Dealing with adults has yet another dimension too. Most of them may not have been in a training situation for a long time or a few of them may have done badly in their studies. If people have come from these situations they may question their ability to do well in training contexts and fear imminent embarrassment or failure.

If any one or a combination of these situations seem to exist, they must be taken into account, if the trainees are to look at the training experience positively and optimistically.

Our role as trainers is to facilitate the trainees to envision that things can be better on their job than they are now; that changes in their own behaviour can lead to improvement and that through the training experience they can be enabled to do what is necessary to move towards realizing that vision. This phase of training calls for methods that shift trainees' view from a "closed" to an "open" orientation.

1.6.2 Skills Needed to Create Awareness

What skills are emphasized in developing awareness of need?

A sense of need exists when people see a discrepancy between what could (or should) be happening in their work and what they currently are able to do. They believe in their own ability to bridge that gap and also in the capacity of the training programme to help them accomplish this goal. Those who come under this category have the qualities of self-awareness, self-confidence, and knowledge of what is possible in their work roles.

When qualities such as these are lacking, we as trainers must be able to develop them. Of course, it is easier said than done. For one, qualities such as these cannot easily be imparted, as they are essentially attributes, which have to come form within. However, bringing an attitudinal change is essential because trainees look differently at training contexts which can be categorised into their perception of the trainer, self and training per se.

The above mentioned points would make a lot of sense if you compare the roles and functions of academic and support staff of a distance teaching university with their counterparts at a face-to-face university.

1.6.3 Perceiving the Trainer

Trainees who doubt the value of learning new things see the trainer as irrelevant or intrusive. They do not see him/her as being on their side, nor able to see their positions as they do. This being the usual situation, the trainer's task is to work towards understanding the viewpoints of the trainees and communicating the awareness to them. This role of a trainer in such situations is of paramount importance. With proper guidance, the trainees articulate their needs, putting into words the moments at which they themselves are likely to feel less productive or satisfied with their work than they would like to be. Once this is established the trainer's task will indicate how the intended experience can relate to those needs and how it helps the trainees act more effectively in their work situations.

A word of caution

We should be very careful while presenting this message. It should not diminish the trainees' dignity or the quality of their previous efforts. The trainer is someone who is a specialist, someone who has invested greater attention or done something innovative in a particular aspect of his/her field, work life, and who is sharing the fruits of that endeavour with the group. The trainer's confidence must be based on his/her own expertise or sense of self-worth and not on a demeaning comparison of his/her own abilities with those of the trainees. For example, a distance education expert imparting training to academics on the preparation of self-learning materials may be an expert in instructional design, but the trainee academics would be experts in their own fields. Here the specialist trainer should not imagine or create an impression that s/he is superior to others who have come to attend the training programme. Some elements that enhance the credibility of trainers are:

1) *expertness* (providing evidence of the trainer's demonstrated ability or knowledge, usually when he/she is introduced)

2) *trustworthiness* (by being honest and frank in presenting oneself to and interacting with the group and by relieving participants' concerns about being evaluated by the trainer) and

3) *dynamism* (indicating genuine caring and involvement through enthusiasm, effort, eye contact and careful preparation will encourage participants to attend receptively to the trainer's message).

1.6.4 Trainees' Self Perception

When trainees see how a programme fits into their lives and see some benefits and success for themselves emerging from it, they are most likely to value and invest in it. Sometimes, these possible outcomes are clear to them. Sometimes we must clarify them as part of the training programme itself.

We can motivate the trainees extrinsically by highlighting the rewards training can bring and intrinsically by encouraging them to identify values within themselves which they can satisfy through the training. To further the discussion, extrinsic motivation grows s the outcomes of training become clear and appealing to participants. We can enhance this process by specifying the training objectives as concretely as possible and by doing so in ways that relate to how the trainees can make immediate use of them. Intrinsic motivation grows as trainees see that improvement in their performance will meet their personal needs better than before.

1.6.5 Training

The way we plan and execute training prorgrammes affects the involvement of the trainees. 'Learner Controlled Instruction' (LCI) is immensely helpful in making a training programme effective. This is based on the premise that learning has a quality of personal involvement and it is self-initiated. LCI approaches the learner with a clear statement of objectives to be achieved, an explanation (or sample) of the evaluation that will be used to demonstrate satisfactory achievement of the objectives, a list of the resources (materials, activities, and people) available to help the learner master the objectives. This list may be referred to as a "learning map" since it describes useful "stopovers" on the route form the trainee's position at the start to his/her ultimate goal. Once the basic parameters of the training are established, we should provide the learners with opportunities to make decisions regarding several aspects of the training: This should include

- **Pacing:** some learn slowly than (but ultimately) can do just as well as) others,

- **Sequencing:** when particulars are allowed to determine where to begin their work and how to proceed, they often can make more individually appropriate decisions than can a trainer who is unfamiliar with their backgrounds and interests.

- **Problematising:** Training-inputs should contain the trainees' own problem situations. When they are asked to report on what they found to be worthwhile in self-selected reading, when they suggest topics for group discussion, etc., they would see training as directly relevant to their needs.

Obviously, a trainer in this situation takes the role of a "facilitator". He/she mediates between the learner and the resources available, which can include printed materials, audio-video aids, case-studies, field trips, and so on, rather than acting as a mere mouthpiece for the content of the programme. However, learner controlled instruction need not be the sole method of instruction. It can be integrated with other appropriate approaches. Nonetheless, LCI methods involve trainees in making decisions that procedure more relevant, memorable and motivating learning experiences.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

Identify at least 3 reasons (from the point of view of trainees) why training is usually 'taken for granted'.

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1.7 FORMULATION OF OBJECTIVES

A systematically designed training programme must determine learning objectives in consonance with the objectives of the organisation/institution, trainee-categories and trainer-types. These objectives usually refer to qualitative statements describing expected modification of competence and behaviour in a trainee after having undergone a training module. This modification does not occur either in isolation or by chance or arbitrarily, as is mostly supposed in many training contexts. A systematic approach to training warrants meticulous planning at every stage. Training objectives serve as a standard specification of an output to which the trained behaviours must conform ensuring the quality of the product after training. This is of strategic importance not only because it defines and controls quality of products but also because it substantially influences all the subsequent stages of the training system.

A statement of objectives serves as an end towards which we should direct our entire training activity. In fact, we develop statements of objectives on the basis of each identified training need. Since mostly, more often than not, we carry out training need analysis in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude, training objectives also tend to fall into these categories. We shall look at a few of them here.

1.7.1 Cognitive Objectives

Knowledge component of training is more educational in nature and develops the perception and understanding of the trainees. Cognitive objectives provide the trainees with the required knowledge/understanding of subjects, situations, procedures, etc., which are considered necessary to perform a task/job. But they interpret and apply this understanding in their own way to specific situations. The implication is that cognitive objectives are less amenable to behavioural expressions and the behavioural outcomes are unpredictable. Knowledge inputs to achieve cognitive objectives are of complex nature. Since knowledge inputs like theories, principles, etc., are derived form different sources, they may reflect ambiguity and divergence of opinions which are more common specially in the field of social sciences, creating the problem of uneven understanding which adversely affects uniformity of job behaviour in the learner.

But conceptual and theoretical knowledge certainly broadens the outlook and mental horizon of the trainees and stimulates their analytical, critical and comprehending faculties. These materials also indirectly but favourably influence the skill improvement process as well as develop for positive attitude. Thus, despite certain limitations, cognitive objectives serve useful purposes in differing degrees. For example, they are highly unstructured and require more of knowledge inputs of diverse fields like conceptual, behavioural, technical, analytical and communication than those of skills.

1.7.2 Conative (Skill) Objectives

The concern of conative objective is with the formation of improvement of know-how, art of doing things or methods of job-performance. Since skills are specific to a particular job – course editing, for example – it is essential to decide training objectives with reference to skills in behavioural terms which can be called cognitive objectives. The following are characteristics features of this type of objectives:

- **Job-centred:** a cognitive objective specifies the work behaviour required of the trainee at the end of his/her training.
- **Predictable:** unlike cognitive objectives, conative ones are easily predictable. They are not subject to individual interpretation and application in one's own way because they do not basically provide to the trainee the 'what ' of the job but the 'how' part. Thus, we can predict the behavioural outcomes.
- **Customised:** conative objectives can be tailor – made to suit time and learning requirements of the trainees and their organisation.

1.7.3 Affective Objectives

In learning processes, attitudes of the trainees play a crucial role. Positive attitude is a prerequisite for learning knowledge and skills. As you may be aware, attitude is a subjective aspect and is formed in a individual on the basis of his/her knowledge, experience and relationships with other people. Although it is complex phenomenon, a first step any training programme should be towards helping the trainees develop positive attitudes. Our discussion so far clearly reveals that we cannot decide training objectives in isolation. Nor can they be imposed from top without the knowledge of the training requirements of the trainee – clientele. We should therefore decide on the objectives through the collaborative efforts of the organisation and the trainee – groups.

1.7.4 Specific and Overall Training Objectives

Organisational analysis, job-oriented analysis and individual analysis reflect the team work resulting in training specifications. These training specifications are generally skill-oriented rather than knowledge-oriented because of the emphasis given to skill-component in a training system. This demands that we have to determine objectives on the basis of the training specifications. One can visualize two types of training objectives in this context: *specific training objectives and overall training objectives.* The former may be defined as a statement of ideal or standard specification of performance in line with each training specifications for which a trainee gets trained. Thus, there will be a series of *specific learning objectives* depending on the number of items under training specifications. Each of these objectives acts as a criterion behaviour in the learning process of the trainee guiding the trainer to use it to facilitate learning. After the learning experience, trainees must be able to demonstrate standard performance as per specific learning objectives and any differences will indicate deficiencies in the training. As the name suggests, these objectives should be specific, concrete, tangible and measurable, facilitating time-bound result. Writing of specific learning objectives denoting expected behaviour modification in respect of each skill or task gives an exhaustive list of sign-posts that guide the trainer.

We can treat *overall learning objectives* as key objectives which intend to guide the overall results a training programme has to achieve. We may regard the overall learning objectives as statements of major commitments, critical performance and overall out come to be achieved/fulfilled by synchronising specific learning objectives. Thus, they constitute expected results of training in its entirely as against the specific objectives which focus on the outcomes of the various components of a training programme and their interdependence.

As we are aware, training objectives may denote two aspects: quantity and quality. As the term means, a quantitative objective concerns with the number of persons to be trained during a particular period of time at a particular cost. In contrast to this, a qualitative objective is associated with the standard of competence to which the trainee will be trained. We should note here that training is an expensive proposition which, therefore, must strike a judicious balance between quantity and quality. Both aspects are important for a training programme and they are not mutually exclusive. You can easily relate the foregoing analysis of training objectives to training situations in distance teaching institutions. You can formulate objectives of the above types when you design training programmes for course writers, tutors, counsellors, support-staff, administrators and the regular academic staff themselves. Depending on the priorities of training, you could set the objectives specific to each category of staff, each situation and each task to be mastered or each behavioural change to be effected. Besides systematic planning and careful execution of a training programme, the importance given to it by the institution of the trainees too will determine how best the objectives are achieved. A well planned and systematically conducted training can also fail to achieve its objectives if the trainees treat the training programme as a pleasure trip or their institution treats it as a mere ritual devoid of any serious purpose.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

What is the importance of formulating training objectives?

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1.8 LET US SUM UP

Before one actually gets down to the business of training, one should be very clear about what exactly the trainees' need in order that they function better in their workplaces, once the training is over. In essence, training needs analysis is of paramount importance in the training design process. And this exactly is the focus of the unit. In this context, we have discussed the rationale for and the processes involved in carrying out training needs analysis. This unit, as a consequence, presents various sources and tools for identifying needs. Prioritising the needs and designing a training progamme accordingly are also important. We have also focused on creating awareness of needs in training contexts and translating these needs into training objectives. All these are essential for ensuring the effectiveness of training.

1.9 CHECK YOUR PROGESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

The following may be three possible reasons, among others:

i) Your organisation/department is new and wants to train the personnel for the first time to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to develop distance education programme.

ii) Your staff are highly qualified in their respective academic disciplines but have no idea about distance education and/or instructional design.

iii) You have been offering correspondence education for some years but now your organisation wants to modernise it through multimedia based distance education.

Check Your Progress 2

Of many, three reasons for taking training programme for granted are:

i) That the trainees feel that whatever has been imparted in laboratory conditions may not be useful for real-life situations.

ii) That the trainees may have fallen into a habit-trap and feel that what they do is the correct way of doing and it could not be done differently

iii) That the trainers believe that others, not they themselves, are responsible for how their work turns out: it is those others who need training.

Check Your Progress 3

Training objectives serve as a standard specification of an output to which the trained behaviours must conform ensuring the quality of the product after training. This is of strategic importance because it defines and controls quality of products and substantially influences all the subsequent stages of the training system.

UNIT 2 METHODOLOGIES FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Structure

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Self development is closely linked with an organisation's preparations to achieve its goals and its ability to respond to the changing situations. The success of a good staff development programme would depend on the choice of training methods to impart it. Usually organisations leave the choice of selecting training methods to a trainer or to a small team of trainers. What do we do in such situations? Generally, we opt for a method or a few methods which have been used earlier and proved to be effective. But the methods we would have found useful and effective in one context may not be so in another, simply because the trainee-clientele differs, among other things.

In theory, you can use any training method you choose to teach anybody anything. In practice, however, there are a whole range of criteria which should be applied to training methods before you can be sure of the right one. Selection of methods essentially depends upon factors such as cost involved, the nature of the content/subject matter, the learning styles of your trainees and the objectives of your institution/organisation. (Institution also contributes to the selection of method to a certain extent). We look at some of the training methods most regularly used, see what is involved in each, and identify the areas and situations where each is most likely to succeed.

Training, particularly the choice of training methods, is linked to our perception of 'change' and so we need to begin our discussion with a few reflections of the dynamics of change.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we have discussed the need for selecting the right training methods for the right purposes/situations. After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- explain how one should go about selecting right training methods to suit a particular context;
- explain the process of arriving at the correct decision concerning training methods; and
- criticise and evaluate the methods discussed in the context of your organisation/institution.

2.2 DYNAMICS OF CHANGE AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Change is inevitable in an organisation and change is a process. As such, it is always occurring in any institution either for maintaining the system's stability, or transforming it to move in new directions. Though both functions are needed, problems occur when people and organisations are either too stable or want to change too rapidly. For example, if organisations become too rigid and do not plan for change in relation to new markets and personnel, they soon begin to lose their efficiency.

The change process would show that there are certain assumptions on which staff development programmes are based. These assumptions have certain valid implications for the institutional arrangements for training. The assumption that change is a necessary process would imply that the goal of training is to influence the directions and rate of change. For example, if the old fashioned print-based correspondence courses and the institutions offering them have to adapt to the multimedia technology based open distance learning, then the aim of the training programme should be to remould the thinking of the policy makers, planners and the staff to recognise the need for it and persuade them to make such arrangements within the organisation as to implement the changes. When problems arise – and they are bound to arise – the training programmes intended to solve them should recognise the multiple causes behind them. In this case, the implications are to admit everyone's limitations, including those of the trainers and aim at a training which would encourage collaborative efforts and development of skills necessary to implement the new ideas. Some changes may result in paradoxical situations and the trainers should be frank enough to admit the consequences.

Change does occur or is brought in at two levels: within the existing structures (called first-order changes) and by changing the structures themselves (called second-other changes). An example of the first kind is to allow more autonomy to the existing departments of distance education and an example of the second kind is to set up new structures such as open universities within the system of distance education in a country. Depending on the kind of change intended, the goals, strategies and methods of staff development will vary.

When change is thought of as a process, it becomes apparent that problems within the system have multiple causes which mutually influence each other. Trainers may need to convince clients that seemingly opposite qualities are, in realty, compatible and integratable. Therefore, people and organisations do not have to choose between competition and cooperation, aggressiveness and passivity, anger and love, thinking and feeling. Rather, competency calls for an ability to use multiple characteristics depending on the situation and the people involved.

The point is that trainers need to assess which order of change is needed and wanted by a group, decide whether training can accomplish that change, and/or determine whether first-and second-order changes can be compatible. This will help decide on the choice of methods.

Finally, we should not be tempted to conclude that the first-order change is ineffective and the second-order change is always preferable-it is not consistently true. A series of first-order change often lead to second-order change, at which point new norms are incorporated into personal and professional relationships. The sequence of change is often necessary. Second-order change usually alters the power structures in relationship and institutions and, therefore, employees often resist, if proposed too soon.

There also are identifiable phases of change, recognition of which can help trainers diagnose problems and design their training programmes. The phases *are unfreezing, changing, and refreezing.*

Unfreezing connotes a readiness for change, for new information and skills. It necessitates the presence of some level of uncertainty, dissatisfaction, or aspiration which must be combined with a level of trust so that the fear produced by uncertainty opens rather than closes people to experimentation and new information. Unfreezing is the first essential phase in the overall change process. It requires moderate uncertainty and maximum trust to fulfil the requirements for productive change and effective systems.

The second phase of the change process is labeled **"changing"**, which is the actual assimilation of new information and the learning of new skills. At this point, we would like to suggest two general concepts for trainers to remember when planning for a change.

- *It is preferable that trainees attribute their learning to themselves, not to the trainer or the instructional activities.*

- *The probability of long-term changes is higher, if trainees understand the paradoxical process of change mentioned earlier and understand why people alter their attributes and behaviours.*

The third and final phase is **'refreezing',** i.e., the stabilizing of changes that may have occurred. Just as supporting and restraining forces are important to consider during training, they are just as important in the refreezing or reintegration phase. People return to back-home environments that contain forces (not present in the training context) which will affect the stability of change. Methods to help trainees re-enter their home environments involve

- Dealing with trainees' anticipated problems at the end of the training session.

- Helping them plan for building the mechanisms or channels through which their goals can be reached, such as support groups or institutional channels.
- Planning ways that trainees can publicly commit themselves to their goals.

The way in which change is conceived and planned for affects the substantive outcomes of training programmes and it is against this context that we should see the importance of choice of training methods. At this point, you may think of the situation in your own institution/system and try to relate the ideas discussed here to the kind of institutional changes you are thinking about.

2.3 FACTORS AFFECTING TRAINING METHODS

When we select a training method, we need to ask questions about that method. We need to know whether it is right for us – in our situation. Further, using training methods effectively requires a sound foundation of *learning principles and a learning model.* We shall first review the learning cycle by presenting a theoretical model that will help you appreciate the stages trainees go through and our role during each stage.

When we design a training programme, it is important to make our decision on which methods to use. And, this decision emanates from our understanding of how people learn. Learning cycle includes three stages:

- learning activity
- participants' (i.e., learners') response
- application

Let us discuss each of these stages here.

Initially, we involve trainees in some activity that we have selected from the many learning methods and experiences available. This activity might be relatively passive, such as reading or observing a demonstration, or very active such as solving a case or participating in a role play exercise. The purpose of learning activity may be to encourage **inductive learning** through reading or **deductive learning** through experience. In either case, the learning activity provides the basis for understanding a concept or performing a task or both.

Once this is over, we need to know the response of the trainees about the learning activity. This is a crucial part of the learning cycle because it encourages them.

i) *to identify the impact of what they have been exposed to,*

ii) *to analyse both feelings and information,*

iii) *to continue their focus on the experience or learning.*

Having done this, the trainees move to the stage of **application.** At this stage, they can begin to make generalisations, draw conclusions and transfer them to their everyday life. Learning now moves form the **abstract to the concrete.** At this point, a review of information, concepts and theory is appropriate because it serves to augment whatever else has been learned earlier. We can present the learning cycle diagrammatically as follows:

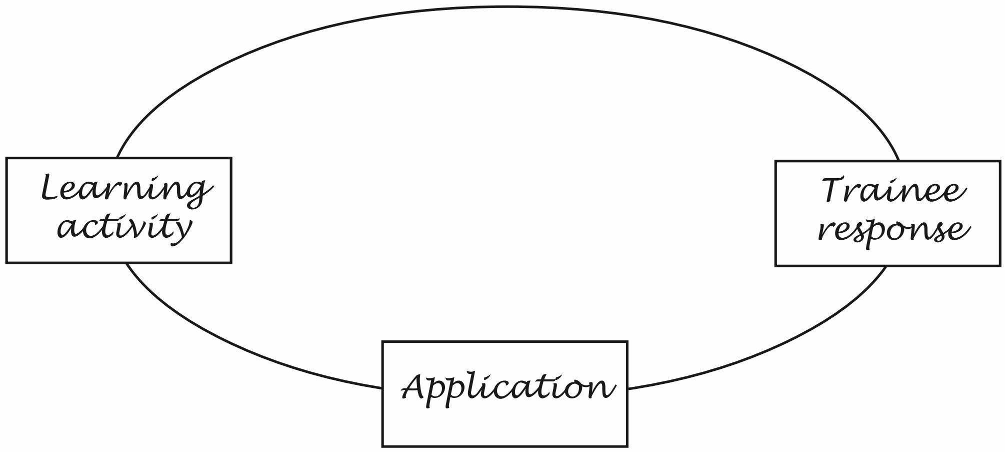

Fig. 2.1: Learning cycle

As trainers we should also know adult learning principles (andragogy) for better performance in a training context. What usually happens, perhaps inadvertently, in a training context is that we apply the principles of child learning (pedagogy) which perhaps we are familiar with. Often this backfires – the training imparted becomes ineffective and at times is resented. As the scope of this unit does not include a detailed discussion on the adult learning theories, we have presented here the salient features of adult learning (as contrasted to child-learning) in Table 2.1. This should suffice as far as our present purpose is concerned.

Table 2.1: Differences between Child-and Adult-Learning

Child	Adults
Relies on others to decide what is important to be learned.	Decide for themselves what is important to be learned.
Accepts the information being presented at face value.	Need to validate the information based on their beliefs and experiences
Expects that what they are learning will be useful in their future.	Expect that what they are learning will be useful for immediate purposes.
Has little prior experience to fall back on and so is less-biased.	Have much past experience to draw upon and so many have strong biases.
Has limited knowledge structure to be used as knowledge-resources.	Have significant ability to serve as a knowledgeable resource for facilitation and group members,
May have less active participation in the learning process.	Are mostly problem/issue-centred. May participate actively. Are mostly content-centered.
Learns (usually) in a teacher dominated environment.	Function best in a collaborative Environment.
Has no responsibility in planning (It is the teacher's responsibility	Share in planning.

Table 2.1 should give us an idea about the importance of deciding on appropriate methods for imparting training. Further, within this general framework of the principals of adult learning, we should also be able to identify the learning styles of individuals.

It is possible that you arrive at the perfect decision concerning your trainees and the content-areas (to be imparted) and yet you may be in a tricky situation. Your institution may not be inclined to resource the methods you have chosen. This common predicament – you have conceived an ideal solution, but you cannot deliver it – can be overcome/avoided if we adopt a methodical approach. Let us ask ourselves the following questions to shape our strategy:

- *What training skills and experience can we call on?* : In practical terms, we need to think at the very early stage of planning, the person who would deliver the training programme. (Some would object to this 'who' question because it is legitimately felt that it has the potential to switch the focus away form the trainee to the provider. It becomes all too easy to ask 'what we can give' and only 'what trainees need'. This being a valid claim we should be cautious and avoid falling into that trap. But the question 'who' in the present context remains valid. For example, we cannot entrust the task of simulation or role playing to a person who is not familiar with these methods).

- *How quickly/easily can we develop new resources? :* When we analyse a training context, we discover that the trainees are not happy with the programme. However, the training as scheduled will occur but it might not be as effective as possible. This situation – where we cannot cover what we have committed to – is a serious gap in our training. When we face 'gaps'/'limitations', we as trainers react differently, according to temperament, of course, but also according to the situation. For some of us, it is easy to develop the skills of the people. For others, the solution is, in the short term, to restrict the output of the training function in the light of available skills, but to press for a development budget at the earliest opportunity.

- *What should be the location? :* Suppose that you are working with an organisation which is spread across the country. The administration/ management can be complicated: the sheer amount of information concerning who is doing what, when and with whom can be overwhelming. In such situations, we need to ask a few fundamental questions:

  i) when the focus of the training is same, should identical training programmes be run on different sites?

  ii) is the training unit, if any, better split into autonomous units, relating to one policy-making nerve-centre?

  iii) is each site to become a 'centre of excellence' for one specific subject area?

The answers to these questions will influence our choice of training methods. For example, when we conduct identical training programmes on two or more sites, we must find a method which guarantees a high level of uniformity or consistency of message. When we choose centres of excellence, the one-to-one skills of subject experts may come to the fore. And, where training departments have a degree of autonomy, you, as a training coordinator may find yourself called upon to compare and contrast different methods and make recommendation.

Besides identifying all these training resources, we should also keep in mind the issue of time. Some methods, for example, take longer to implement than others. One can organise a *lecture* at fairly short notice, but we cannot commission a *video recording* and expect to see it on the screen the next day.

Perhaps the latter is a good method for 'reflectivity' but it takes time. Having touched upon the change-dynamics and training resources, now we need to talk about the expectations of an organisation/institution. Experience shows that there are two situations in which an organisation/institution influences our choice of training method:

- *preference*
- *specific objectives/certain methods and evaluation.*

What does 'preference' here mean?

There are many reasons why certain training styles develop and hold sway in an organisation for years. One, a very common one at that, is when senior colleagues recall their own training. Some may think, for example, 'chalk and talk' method is good enough because it has suited them. Obtaining a flipchart and pens is a major concession wrung from these people — so you must realize that flying in the face of intractable opposition is not always the best way. Instead, we recommended that you:

- Build up a reputation as a thoughtful, successful trainer before you attack any really ingrained myths and prejudices
- Persist in seeking the benefits of any new approaches, which means explaining; describing; getting trainees to give feedback and providing reliable evaluation data.

How do 'objectives' and 'specific evaluation' influence the choice of methods?

Your organisation will have established its own objectives. These will allow you to plan a logical learning sequence, starting with basic concepts and anticipate the types of learning necessary. You will have to make sure, in appropriate tests and assessment techniques that your organisation requires. The logical sequence of objectives provides an equally logical sequence and content, methods and assessment.

You can proceed further, after working out the exercise given below:

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

List the training resources we have just been talking about.

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2.4 SOME TRAINING METHODS

The foremost criterion for deciding on a methodology for a training programme is to see how suitable it is for achieving the learning objectives of the programme (which are based on trainee needs). Here a choice must be made among several equally appropriate methods, after having considered, several factors: specificity of objectives; trainer experience; trainee experience; trainers' prior contacts; trainees' prior contacts; trainee homogeneity/heterogeneity, budget and time. Let us discuss some of the training methods here:

2.4.1 Presentation

In any training context, presentation is very important. Many training programmes fail in spite of rich information-inputs, mainly because of the way the inputs are presented. Whether the duration of our presentation is five or fifty minutes long, we need to prepare and present it properly. The crucial six steps that need to be paid attention to in the preparation for a presentation are

i) **Determining objectives for presentation:** Our answer to the following questions should help us determine our objectives for the presentation:

- Who suggested that the presentation should be done-you/your superior/top management?
- When and where will it happen?
- Is your presentation a part of a larger design? If yes, what precedes or follows yours?
- How much do you know about the topic?
- Should the presentation be technical, theoretical or practical?
- Why are you making this presentation?

ii) **Analysing the audience-profile:** This second step requires us to analyse the audience for whom the presentation is intended so that we can gear it to suit them. In order to analyse the clientele, we are to look into these questions:

- How much do they already know about the topic?
- What is their attitude towards the topic – hostile/approving?
- Are they attending this presentation voluntarily or is it mandatory?
- How open-minded are they–eager/neutral/resistant?
- What presentation techniques might attract their attention?
- What presentation techniques might get negative reactions from them?

iii) **Preparing a preliminary outline or plan:** Once we are clear about our audience, we need to prepare an outline of the presentation—obviously, basing it on everything we know so far about the participants. One can start with identifying topic sentences/main ideas and put them down one by one. We shall then arrange them in an order that suits the clientele. Topic sentences will provide clues for developing presentation-outlines.

iv) **Selecting/preparing visual aids:** For each of the main ideas identified, we may think of providing some visual aids. This would help present the matter more clearly. Depending on the resources both in terms of cost and expertise we can opt for one or a combination of a few of the following aids: videos/films/flip charts/ transparencies/handouts.

v) **Finalising the presentation outline with details:** Once the above steps have been considered, we are now ready for finalising the draft presentation. In finalising it, we should first make sure that our points are in a logical order. We should further identify places where we would like to present the visual aids. It is always a good idea to break the lengthy presentations into meaningful and manageable chunks for easy consumption. For this purpose, we can even indicate in the outline when we may be pausing for answering questions, etc. Spaced and controlled pauses facilitate interaction – individual and group.

This is not all. We should also plan well to introduce the presentation. You may consider the following choices:

- Direct statement of what will be presented and why it is important to your audience.
- Indirect opening using something that is of vital interest to your audience and would lead into your topic.
- Vivid example or comparison that leads into your topic.
- A useful quotation that relates to your topic.
- Important statistics.
- A story that illustrates the message in your presentation.

vi) **Practising:** It will be a rewardin experience if we can have a practice session. Supposing it is not available because of various reasons, we can practice standing before a mirror. Sometimes, it is also possible to find a willing colleague/partner who cares to sit through when you practise and give you feedback.

Finally, we should also plan in advance as to how we will summarise and close the presentation. It is important to restate the main ideas and end with a positive, direct appeal for action or vividly review the purpose of our presentation. Sometimes a final example, a question or a story works well.

2.4.2 Problem Analysis/Solving

The primary skills employed in problem analysis are using a sequenced problem-solving process and using creative thinking to generate ideas. Problem solving can include several steps:

- Identifying the basic goal(s) of the organisation.
- Identifying which forces in the situation obstruct and which aid in achieving that goal.
- Disentangling interrelated difficulties into distinct issues to be addressed.
- Identifying who is involved and what their points of view and vested interests are.
- Distinguishing what information is factual and what is being inferred by participants.
- Determining short-and long-range goals for relieving the problem situation.
- Determining a chronological sequence regarding what goals need to be pursued first and which can be postponed.
- Identifying alternative strategies for achieving the goals.

- Identifying criteria for selecting from among the alternative strategies. Projecting the possible consequences of employing each strategy.
- Developing an action plan that details what strategies will be used, who will do what, when, where, how, and so on.

The creative thinking process encourages trainees to expand the limits of approaches available to them beyond those immediately evident, to include new possibilities that they might not have used or thought of before. This process also can include several steps:

- Thinking very positively about the ideal outcomes they would like to achieve.
- Generating possible solutions without applying immediate criticism as to their viability.
- Building upon ideas thrown out by colleagues, combining worthwhile elements of ideas given, using conceptual breakthroughs in others' thinking to stimulate fresh approaches in their minds.
- Comparing the situation they are in to those in other contexts that are analogous to it.
- Continuing to generate unusual, far-fetched ideas even after an obviously useful one has been proposed, that is, to cutting off the listing of possibilities prematurely, while still operating within the scope of old ways of thinking.

Enhancing the use of skills like these can add depth and variety to trainees' ability to analyse effectively whatever problems they face.

What are problem analysis training methods?

The primary mode of developing ability in problem analysis is the case study, or variants of this form. This method teaches through concrete examples. It provides trainees with a stimulus that takes into account the ambiguous, multifaceted, complex nature of many management situations. They must respond to the case in a way that requires the skills of problem analysis, so they experience how to address in an effective way to any problem that might arise for them.

Every case study describes a situation containing a problem that cannot be solved in only one simple, obvious way. The problem is of a kind that could arise in many work settings. Hence, in considering how to respond to it, trainees gain insights into that kind of problem and into the process of problem solving in general.

What assignments make studies useful?

For trainees to gain the ability to use the skills of problem analysis, they must be asked to work on the cases presented to them in ways they would not ordinarily use – ways that direct them towards a deeper, more analytic examination of the case situation. There are several alternative methods by which learners can be asked to work this way with a case.

The first is most common. The trainees read the case, meet in small groups, and are asked to come up with answers to a few basic questions within a set time limit. To answer the questions, they must apply problem – analysis or creative-thinking skills to the case situation.

A second alternative is used in the **"syndicate"** approach to training. Trainees are presented with "briefs" describing in detail a specific case of a general area of the training-content. These are reviewed in groups of about 10 members each (a "syndicate"). Each breaks down the problem into specific assignments which are allotted to individuals or to small teams of syndicate members. They do their individual task and then prepare reports for the syndicate. Their findings are incorporated in a written report which is presented to a plenary session, where it is again discussed, together with reports from other syndicate groups.

Another, much more elaborate, variant on the case study is the action project. From the foregoing details, we can see that learning from cases can manifest in several ways:

i) written or oral reports to specific problem analysis questions.

ii) reports given to larger training groups.

iii) letters or a report to the sponsoring organisation itself.

iv) actually taking part in diagnosing, planning, and carrying out solutions to the problem posed by a host organisation.

Problem analysis, using primarily one of the many forms of case analysis described here will develop in trainees the ability to move from a narrow specialised perspective on work processes to one that encompasses many viewpoints and a long-range outlook.

2.4.3 Simulation

A simulation is a practice situation set up in a training programme which duplicates as closely as possible selected components of real-life work settings (and their inter-relationships) so that the trainees can experience making and carrying out choices involving those components. Simulations are called "games" and "structured exercises" in some contexts. They differ much from case-study work in that the situation is a fictious one, although analogous to actual work-contexts, and the trainees become actively involved in performing work functions during the process. They differ form role playing (which we will discuss the later)in that simulations usually *exaggerate reality, run for a much longer period of time, involve more complex interactions among people and yield learning outcomes that are less under the control of the trainer and based more upon trainees' own individual choices and inferences.*

Although research on simulation is scattered and skimpy, virtually all investigations, no matter what the simulation studied, agree that they are enjoyable, motivating, and involving. Thus, they provide a welcome break from more passive training methods and often are inserted for just this purpose, especially in lengthy sessions.

People who associate learning only with formal classroom activities see simulations as a frivolous waste of time and do not take them seriously. This tendency must be countered by stressing why a simulation is being used at the time it is being introduced to the training group and by debriefing the simulation in such a way that trainees understand how it relates to their lives. Although they are time-consuming as compared to other training methods, simulations can also compress a wide variety of work experiences, especially for positions which involve many responsibilities and many options, into a relatively short period of time compared to that needed for on-the-job training.

Furthermore, when the simulation ends, the participants can look back at what they did and evaluate their actions in the light of a variety of criteria.

A simulation can focus participants' attention on specifically selected dimensions of a work role, thus eliminating the distractions that arise in more comprehensive training methods or in real-life settings. Further, it can be used to expand participants' perspectives beyond the limited range of their previous positions or their own narrow, vested interests. Learning new options can evoke anxiety among trainees, but simulations provide an opportunity to sample new roles in a playful, relatively risk-free environment.

Simulations can sensitize participants to inner feelings and values in themselves and others of which they might otherwise remain ignorant.

How is a simulation created?

Packaged simulations may not be appropriate for many training solutions. Their cost, their length, their content, and so on, may render them unusable. If trainees still wish to include a simulated experience, they may have to create it themselves. This process often requires more effort than is called for in preparing most other training materials, but its rewards can make that extra time quite worthwhile.

The first step involves identifying the instructional objectives for the simulation. The next step is developing a scenario for the same. This includes a description of the work situation the players will be in, the roles they will play, and the pattern of interaction among them. The next stage is to develop the way the game will be played, the rules the players must follow and an accounting system for the game (which would include procedures for decision making by people in the key roles, methods of providing feedback on the quality of their decisions and ways for displaying the results of the scores based on the decisions made).

The final step in the process of creating a simulation is giving it a trail-run to determine its effectiveness and to make final modifications.

The overall approach described here for creating a simulation may yield very different specific game plans depending on the training situation in which the simulation is to be used. Creating one's own material provides maximum assurance that the exercise in that case will fit appropriately the time, people, and purpose for which it is intended.

Training programmes that provide stimulating, practical lectures and simulations enlarge the participants' repertoire of options, that is, what they are able to employ in dealing with situations they encounter back at workplace. They are more ready, therefore, to act in ways that are appropriate to the conditions or contingencies that exist. They are more informed, skillful and flexible than they had been before the training.

2.4.4 Role Playing

Role playing serves primarily as an *opportunity to rehearse or practice the kind of interaction that is likely to arise in the near future.* Thus, it usually is *briefer, simpler, and more realistic than a simulation.* Trainers also use it to achieve more concrete objectives, and they can plan, interrupt, or repeat a role play to steer it in the desired direction.

Role playing is often used to follow up a didactic message or a group discussion at the point where there must be a progression from *knowing to doing or from thinking and talking* about a process to using it. An enactment of a scene that could arise in a workplace, it can fill several functions. If some trainees are to watch others role-play, it can offer a model of exemplary behaviour to imitate, demonstrate errors to avoid, a reveal complications in a situation that the observer had not considered. If all the trainees participate in role playing simultaneously, it can offer them practice in using a method that is new to them, a chance to get feedback on how well they themselves handle a particular situation and an experience, the dynamics of which can then be analysed and discussed to develop deeper understanding and better skills.

There are several formats which fit under the general rubric of role playing. Each is somewhat more appropriate than the others for achieving specific kinds of learning objectives. We will consider the various types and relate each to the purpose for which it is best suited.

Role-playing sessions may be either structured or spontaneous. A structured session is planned in advance; the characters' roles may be written out and it usually is included to provide a demonstration or practice of a general procedure to be taught.

A spontaneous session includes elements proposed by the training participants themselves.

Role playing in a small group involves everyone simultaneously in the activity, allows for exploration of participants' social interest and provides the privacy needed for discussing issues in vulnerable areas. Since the trainer is not at hand, these sessions can perpetuate undesired methods or be dominated by one member of the group, hence, it is important to use them only after groundwork has been laid thoroughly – by covering recommended techniques, by providing explicit instructions about what the group members should do and possibly by appointing, an observer for each group, who regulates the process.

Finally, in some role playing cases, all information about the situation and the people involved is open and available to everyone; in other situations some data are covert, available only on the role description given to each of the players. Open enactments are useful for practising techniques to be used in a risk-free setting. Covert situations often are more — we often have to deal with people whose motives or goals are not immediately apparent. (This is often called a 'hidden agenda'). They force attention away from themselves and onto the other persons. What actually is on the players' minds emerges during the interaction. Role players enter covert situations feeling more wary, wanting to avoid misinterpreting the roles players and/or looking foolish. Hence, to minimize inhibition, the covert approach also should await the development of mutual respect among the trainees.

How is role-playing led?

Role playing requires that trainees try out a way of interaction which they have not used before. At the same time, they are doing something that seems closely related to acting or performing. Both factors are likely to produce some self-consciousness, awkwardness and even rejection of the activity itself. Role playing, therefore, must be introduced carefully. Enthusiasm of trainers who like and value role playing also is contagious and usually facilitates the use of the technique.

Its values as a training technique, as well as its specific purpose at the point it is being used, should be clearly explained. The players' anxiety can be relieved by stressing that it is not a performance, that learning can be drawn from errors as well as accuracy in following the recommended procedures and that attention should be focused on what they themselves are saying or feeling, not only how they look to others. The trainers also might demonstrate how to begin and carry out a scene. Participation of the trainer, if possible, proves to be a great help.

There should be a clear bridge between the role playing and what has occurred before the training and/or in the participants' work lives. In other words, they should see it as an extension of their prior learning (for example, a preceding lecture or case study) and as related to other real everyday needs. The latter connection is stronger, if they themselves propose the problem or the situation to be role played. These ideas can be gathered by surveying the group before the training begins for suggestions about situations they want to learn, how to handle them better, or by giving them a checklist of sample situations from which to choose at the session itself.

The next step is forming the group that is to do the role playing. Usually, this involves two parties: one person playing himself/herself and another playing the customer, subordinate, job applicant, or whomever the trainee must deal with. Often, a third person participates as an observer (or, if it is a public role play, all the members observe). It is best for people not to enact scenes with people they work with. Experimentation with new behaviours is best done with strangers. To mix a large group, the trainer should first calculate *what is one-third of the group's total number, then count people off in seating order form one to the one-third total,* starting over after that *until everyone has a number but only three people have the same number* and finally assign scattered *spots in the room for the three people with each number to rendezvous and carry out their role play.* If the group does not divide evenly into the desired group size, the odd person or two can be asked to volunteer to act as observers of the whole process and to comment, at the end of the session on differences noted among the groups as he/she wandered about the room. Random numbering is another way to select the groups.

How can structured role plays be created?

A role play can be prepared prior to a training session when you know what situations the trainees will be facing, when you know the problems you want them to overcome, and/or when you know the behaviours you want them to perform. The first step in doing so is to identify the typical or critical incidents they must be prepared to handle.

How can videotaping enhance role playing?

Role playing provides a chance to carry out an advocated or customary behaviour and to learn immediately and frankly how others react to it. With videotapes they can also see and hear for themselves what they come across. This opportunity is especially appropriate for those who fill a typically public role, whose outward appearance and demeanor are essential to their effectiveness.

2.4.5 Brainstorming

It is a group exercise in which everyone contributes facilitating a pool of ideas. Basically, it encourages lateral thinking because brainstorming does not lay any restriction on the nature/kind of ideas. The basic tenet of brainstorming is to go for **quantity:** generate as many ideas as possible without making any value judgements on them. This process does not allow any scope for reviewing or commenting.

Running a brainstorming session should entail:

- defining a problem or an issue as a simple question or statement,
- giving participants a couple of minutes to note down their private thoughts first,
- going to each person in turn, asking for one word or a short phrase; transcribing their exact words on a flipchart without comment,
- making it clear that anyone who cannot think of something is entitled to simply say 'pass' : minds quickly go blank if someone else has just made the point one wanted to make,
- keeping the process going until several people say 'pass' and then taking any remaining ideas from anyone.

If you need to have a follow-up activity, you may consider using a flipchart in some way so as to categorize ideas and/or prioritise points. One should be very careful in conducting a brainstorming session because it has advantages and disadvantages as well. The advantage of brainstorming is that it requires a high level of involvement from all trainees and provides an opportunity to 'speak one's mind' in a friendly environment. Further the activity gets everyone thinking about the whole subject and quickly. We can list the following as the disadvantages of the activity:

- drifting of the point and developing wrong points,
- uncritical processes, that may allow inappropriate ideas to get through,
- evading nuances and finer, more subtle points,
- loud and anarchic situations.

However, with proper supervision brainstorming can be made very fruitful and an active exercise which can motivate the trainees to participate, and provide new points and ideas about the issues being discussed.

2.4.6 Case Study

A case study is a story which documents a situation or event involving characters. It may be either a case illustration or a case problem. The former describes decisions made in a given situation. In this case, the trainees' task could be to constructively criticize the decisions or identify faults or mistakes. The latter poses the problem facing the characters. We may ask the trainees to analyse data, make their own decisions and come out with their defence. It should be clear that there need not be only one 'right' answer.

Obviously, we have not discussed all the methods of training. Our intention ways to give you some idea about the design of your training programme and touch upon a few training methods which may be more effective in many contexts than, for example, lecturing. However, we have also dealt with lecturing under the caption 'presentation' in order to highlight the point that even lecturing can be made effective, if it is planned and executed properly. In other words, *no single method is better than the other – each one is as useful as the other, provided the method suits the context and clientele.*

2.5 SELECTING APPROPRIATE METHODS

Despite what we have been discussing so far, it is still possible that we find ourselves in a dilemma. The indicators may not give us a clear signal one way or another. And the more methods/techniques we examine, the more likely it is that we are going to come across a certain proportion which could be delivered through one of the several training methods. How should we gear ourselves to a situation of this kind? How can we make sure that one method will be effective in the given context?

Whether the signals from our basic indicators focus on one method or more than one, eventually we are going to have a choice. Let us think about the choice. What are the best consequences, if it goes right?

We can, to a certain extent, envisage that the consequences of success will include

- meeting/exceeding the trainees' expectations
- developing individual careers
- empowering and motivating individuals to learn
- meeting individuals' goals
- improving the performance of the institution as a whole
- identifying plaudits (as revealed by the trainees)
- increasing the degree of confidence in the training function
- feeling of job security (by the trainees)
- making the institution/organisation to allocate more resources for subsequent training programmes.

Before you proceed further, work out the exercise given here.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

What would be the worst consequences of the choice if it goes wrong? What might be the implications?

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Development testing is the answer for our predicament of selecting the most appropriate method. This can be cost-effective, efficient, quick and can provide us with reliable information on which to base our final selection. The test must be planned and implemented as a project, because there is a sequence of actions to be gone through if we are to be sure that the developmental test itself is a success. A systematic and methodical approach entails the following:

Fixing time scales: If you are in a situation where you have to conduct a training programme in a week's time, and yet you are not sure which method(s) you are going to use, you are asking for trouble. (This situation is not uncommon!) If this is so, either you have mismanaged the selection process, or your organization does not have a clue about the purpose of training. (If the latter is the case, we need to educate the organisation about the nature of the training job and purpose of training). We have to ensure that there is sufficient time to developmentally test the methods we have tentatively selected to implement the training programme. Planning, therefore, is of paramount importance. Developmental testing should not be taken as an unwanted extra.

Choosing samples: We need samples of the methods or materials we want to test, the trainee-population and if possible, where applicable, the training team. Obviously, our samples should be representative because what we are attempting in sampling is to gain information about a small part of something which will enable us to build up a picture of the whole.

Carrying out the test: To ensure the cooperation of the sample population, we need to clearly tell them that we are engaged in a developmental test – if they don't know it already. The circumstances of the developmental test should mirror the real-life circumstances as nearly as possible. By way of trainee-feedback we can easily assess whether the method(s) could be improved and how; was/were too easy/hard/just right/relevant/appropriate and why?

Collecting the results: Once we complete the sample of the training, we should gather the feedback the trainees and trainers have been providing during the test. This will give us valuable information about the possible effectiveness of the method(s) used. This stage is crucial because this should guide us in selecting appropriate/relevant/method(s) for the future.

(In any case, evaluation of training is an on-going process and so it is likely that you will be constantly evaluating your training programmes. We shall discuss, at some length, about this area in section 2.6 of this unit).

Besides what we have discussed, **checklists** are a useful way of ensuring that all the necessary arrangements have been made prior to the start of training. Consider the following:

- Is the training room of sufficient size? Do you require additional rooms for group activities?
- What layout do you want, i.e., seating arrangement? Usually, we have U-shaped arrangement for training programmes. It allows the whole group to interact with one another and with the trainer.
- What training equipment will be needed during the training programme?
- Do you require an overhead projector (OHP)/audio/video equipment, etc.?
- Do you need a video camera (say, a camcorder) for purposes of 'reflective' activities? (see unit 2, block 2)
- Is there any need for special equipment (e.g. computer terminal and screen)?
- Have the participants been provided with stationery?

- Do you require name tags for delegates/participants?
- Does your training context require library books, etc., for purposes of reference?
- Have you made arrangements for keeping the training room clean with sufficient lighting, ventilation and temperature?
- Has the arrangement for refreshment been made during the training? (It is always good to find out individual preferences. Some may like to have tea, some, coffee and so on. There may be some who would prefer to have black tea/coffee with an extra spoon of sugar/without sugar.
- Have you decided what is to be provided for lunch? (Personal preferences come to figure here as well.)
- Have you ensured that the training room will be available to you? (It is possible that sometimes, some other meetings may have been planned in the very same room.)
- Are the toilets nearby?
- Have you talked to the security personnel – in case of security problems, say, fire, for example?
- Have the delegates/participants been sent programme-schedules, information brochures, theme papers, and details about the venue for the training programme (if the delegates/participants are form outside)?
- Have you thought of any social activities during/at the end of the training programme?
- Have you arranged for uninterrupted power supply?
- Have you identified attendants to assist you during the training?

One can add other items on to the list. For example, one can mention about the audio system (microphones), acoustics of the room, etc. What we have presented here are some of the arrangements/precautionary measures we should take before we actually start a training programme.

The following are some basic do's and don'ts for training sessions:

i) Do ensure that the trainees are made to feel at ease – the sooner you do this the better. (One can think of various 'icebreakers' here – though we have't discussed them in our units).

ii) Don't forget to advise the trainees/delegates of the administrative and facility arrangements, if the training is conducted in a place which is unfamiliar to them.

iii) Do make sure that you hold delegates' attention and are aware of those who have "switched off" (one should be very careful to communicate with the latter – in a subtle and sophisticated manner).

iv) Don't rush through presentations; take your time and consciously pause to allow the trainees to ask questions, allow time for them to reflect on the 'experience'.

v) Do check trainees' understanding of the information conveyed throughout.

vi) Don't allow interruptions to the training sessions from outside (as far as possible!)

vii) Do speak clearly and with clarity.

viii) Do use training equipment as an aid and not as a crutch.

ix) Do ensure that the trainees know what they should do as an immediate follow up to the training activity. (For example, preparing an action plan to implement what they have learned from the programme in the workplace.

x) Don’t expect the action plan of the trainees to be long. It is better to get one thing implemented successfully rather than try to do too much at one go.

xi) Do ensure that the trainees leave enthusiastic and motivated.

xii) Don’t fail to follow up and evaluate at a later date to see how much of the training has been transferred into the workplace.

2.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have talked about the relationship between training and the dynamics of change in an institution, the design of training programmes with particular reference to the selection of training methods and the evaluation of training. We have argued that no single method can be seen better or more effective than the other. The implication is that the efficacy of the methods primarily depends on the context in which we use them and the clientele for whom the training is intended. What proves to be an effective method in one situation need not necessarily be so in another context. Further we have said that this unit deals with only a few methods/ technologies which we feel are mostly underused (in relative terms) – the common and oft-repeated method being lecture-cum-discussion. In essence, we have said that selection of an appropriate and relevant method of training is of great significance to achieve the training-goals.

2.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

The training resources we have talked about are:

i) the expertise available (ii) the budget allocation iii) training location and (iv) the time factor

Check Your Progress 2

The consequences of failure would be exactly the opposite of those we have listed under ‘success’. The implications in either case are that the stakes are high. There are a lot of people involved and they depend on our choice of methods and so it had better be right. We should make every possible effort to make sure it is right before we start.

UNIT 3 TRAINER TRAINING

Structure

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Distance education institutions are usually put in a predicament when they get down to the business of training. When the concept of distance education itself is relatively still at its formative stage in most parts of the world and training is in the process of being acknowledged as a necessary component, identifying trainers is not an easy task. In many cases, for training, distance education institutions rely on their own staff. This situation raises various issues: who are these staff members? What training would they themselves have received? Who would have trained them, etc. In such a situation we need to identify potential trainers who would train others, and train themselves too. Training trainers entails sensitising them with the potential trainee-needs and orienting them in formulating objectives and identifying training experiences and activities. The focus of this unit is essentially on these tasks. It discusses how a group of trainers can be oriented towards identifying training needs and objectives, deciding the content and formulating strategies for training of trainers.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- identify various trainee-groups who will be your potential clients at a later stage,
- formulate (on the basis of your trainee-profile and needs) statements of objectives to satisfy the needs identified,
- describe/prescribe relevant materials (content-inputs) and strategies, and
- organise training programmes for potential trainers, when there is a need.

3.2 TRAINING TRAINERS: A FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING

The overall aim of any initial training of a distance teaching institution will be to acquire in-house self-sufficiency to conduct such training as would be necessary for new full-time faculty members, part-time coordinators, course-writers, counselors and editors, and those ,officers who join its various academic departments /schools and service divisions.

The specific objectives of the training programme would be to:

i) identify training needs of different categories of the personnel (teaching and non-teaching).;

ii) evaluate the various training programmes and materials available at the institution for each category of trainees;

iii) propose training objectives for each group of trainees;

iv) discuss the content, scope and strategies of training required; and

v) plan and conduct trial training sessions on specific topics.

Such a training programme can be planned for 5 days in such a way as to reach the set target in 5 phases and after every phase, a discussion can follow to review what would have gone before and take stock of the rest for purposes of further action and planning. On the first day, a detailed plan of the first phase may be chalked out as follows:

i) identification of trainee groups,

ii) survey of the needs of each of the groups identified, and

iii) evaluation of training materials available.

After having identified the sequence of activities to be undertaken, a brainstorming session can ensure to list down possible needs of the staff and those who are associated with the instruction. The following may possibly emerge as the operational areas which would determine the categories of training needs of the institution.

i) Assignments/Evaluation

ii) Audio-Video materials

iii) Basics about distance/open education, the university, distance learner, etc.

iv) Communication

v) Counselling

vi) Course evaluation and maintenance

vii) Curriculum development

viii) Print materials

ix) Team work/Team management

The participant trainees may be divided into groups and each group can identify a few units (academic and administrative or support services) and collect information about their needs. Simultaneously, the participants may pool together the training materials available. These materials should be evaluated with a view to examining the adequacy of the available materials in meeting the needs specified and plugging the ‘gaps’ through follow-up activities. The participants themselves can examine the materials but a thorough scrutiny by the master trainers may be necessary.

Once this is done, the second phase of the activity should start with a review of what has been achieved so far. During this phase, the participants must be asked to formulate statements of objectives with respect to each of the needs identified and described and suggest the possible scope and contents to actually realize those objectives. Each group can present a report on the objectives, scope and contents to meet the identified needs of various staff-categories of the institution.

The third phase may be devoted to specify viable strategies to be adopted for carrying out the plans to achieve the objectives formulated. After spending one or two days on this task, role playing activity can be introduced as the fourth phase of the training programme The following criteria may be useful for assessing the role-playing activity:

- A trainee's own understanding of the subject matter
- collection/arrangement of information and its appropriacy
- interesting and clear presentation
- promoting activities
- handling of questions and discussions
- time budgeting and resourcefulness

At this stage each participant should identify a topic from among the needs listed earlier by the group he/she belongs to and conduct trial training sessions. Each of the role-playing activity may be allowed 45 - 75 minutes. In the last phase, the participants should be asked to evaluate all the earlier activities with a discussion on the follow-up activities.

The following points may emerge from the last phase:

- higher level or advanced training programmes need to be planned for retraining of the same group;
- all the functional structures, i.e., Headquarters, Regional Centres and Study Centres need structure-specific attention,
- coordination in-house and at the national level is necessary to achieve the objectives of the institution, and
- essential streamlining and defining the work-role of the staff is necessary.

Each one of the participants may be asked to submit a brief evaluation-report on His/her trial training sessions. Later the Resource Persons can look at each of the objectives set for the various activities and assess the degree of success. Various suggestions would come up to carry-forward the work done during this type of initial training.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

Identify the steps which you need to take to organise an effective training programme.

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3.3 POTENTIAL TRAINEE GROUPS AND THEIR NEEDS

As mentioned earlier, the first phase of the training is to:

i) identify potential trainee-groups,

ii) survey the needs of the trainee-groups, and

iii) evaluate training programmes and training materials available vis-à-vis the needs of the trainee-groups.

Obviously, the purpose of this task is to identify the gaps and/or the mismatch between the training available and the needs. The trainee participants may possibly identify their future trainee-groups as follows:

i) full-time academic faculty in various schools/departments/

ii) full-time non-teaching/technical staff in the various divisions and schools/departments,

iii) members of expert committees for various academic disciplines,

iv) part-time course writers who would be writing the units/lessons,

v) part-time faculty (co-ordinators/counsellors of various study centres, script writers and editors), and

vi) potential students (of various programmes/courses).

In order to identify the basis of a survey of training needs they (the participants) may have first brainstorming sessions. The process would usually lead to the identification of the following areas based on which training needs may be surveyed:

i) basics of distance and open education and relevant knowledge about the distance teaching institution(s)

ii) curriculum development

iii) communication technology and other technologies

iv) print materials (writing self-instructional materials, etc) and their place in the instructional process

v) audio/video materials (scripting, identifying areas for audio/video programmes, etc.)

vi) assignments/evaluation (policies and procedures)

vii) course evaluation and maintenance

viii) counselling and tutoring

ix) team work, time management, etc.

The resource persons, at this stage, must help the participants formulate relevant questions on the above items for interviewing the potential trainee groups. As part. of the first phase, simultaneously the participants must pool together the available training materials for purposes of evaluation. Such an exercise is necessary to map out the training materials and assess the adequacy of the materials available vis-a-vis the surveyed needs. The gaps, if any, must be filled before starting the intended training programme, whatever type it may be.

It is expected that the trainee-groups will report the following as the common needs of any new institution:

i) **Introduction to Distance/Open Education and the Institution**: Brief history of and the need for the institution, its organisational structure, -academic and supporting agencies, the different programmes being run by it ; the role and functions of various wings, specific knowledge about the types of learner it attracts, its variance and psychology, a broad comparative overview of other open universities etc. Introduction to distance education would include the philosophy, history and development of distance education, its potential, the relationship between open and distance education, characteristics of distance learners, their preoccupations, aspirations, socio-economic background, etc.)

ii) **Print Material:** Knowledge of house style and its variations, unitisation and principles behind writing self-instructional materials, writing of objectives, course writing, editing and proof reading, copy editing, idea of font-sizes, layout and copyright rules.

iii) **Audio-video programmes:** Identifying areas appropriate for an audio or a video presentation, and choosing of format, planning, preparing and writing a 'programme' brief and an academic note, knowledge of the process of production, knowledge of relevant technical expressions and training in the presentation of audio-video programmes.

iv) **Evaluation:** Knowledge of the principles, purposes and types of evaluation, the purpose of assignments and the preparation of a good assignment; special training in preparing computer marked assignments, monitoring of assignment-responses; preparation of question banks and knowledge of grading system, and its conversion to point scales and the relative merits of grading and marking (i.e, computing).

ii) **Job Description:** Some job analysis should be provided to the new employees at the institution who should know exactly their roles and operational domains. (This specially entails orienting the personnel to work in teams in the distance teaching situation).

Apart from the common needs specified above, trainee-group specific needs must also be identified. We shall discuss them in the following sub-sections.

3.3.1 Full-time Academic Faculty

In addition to the common needs listed above, the faculty may have the following training needs specific to their functions:

i) **Curriculum Development:**

- Principles of curriculum development
- Rationale behind the structure of a particular course, and the various courses linked to each other to constitute a programme
- The process of course planning.
- Conducting needs surveys to determine the kind of courses to be developed
- Assessing the difficulty level of a course, so that it could meet the needs of a heterogeneous group of learners.
- Knowledge of 'credits' or marks required to pass a course and the reasons for allotting a particular number of 'credits' to a course

- The evaluation scheme (formative and summative and the rationale for it)
- Programme evaluation

ii) **Student Support Services:** Knowledge about counselling and functioning of study centres, and the constraints under which counsellors function are the essential training inputs required in this area.

iii) **Training for Practicals:**

- Designing of practicals and the formulation of objectives according to the level of students (for science courses mainly)
- Designing of format for notes relating to practicals and evaluation of practicals.
- Training the counsellors for purposes of handling practicals
- Making of videos relating to practicals

Besides items i, ii,iii above, there are a few general needs which a training programme should address:

i) **Theoretical background:** Basic knowledge of theories and domains of learning, rationale behind programmed texts, etc., psychology of adult learning, basics of educational technology, the continuously growing theoretical base enriched by inter-disciplinary experiences and the closeness between communication technology and the cognitive sciences.

ii) **Development try out:** Preparation of feedback formats and questionnaires; pre-testing techniques and methodology; how to modify the course material on the basis of the feedback etc.

iii) **Team work:** Knowledge of work norms and work distribution appropriate to distance education system and ability to develop and maintain team spirit.

iv) **General skills:** Awareness of time management and the resources needed to accomplish each task - right from the formulation of a course to the time it reaches the learner; basic knowledge of computer use, working on word processors, office management, record maintenance and retrieval, conducting of different types of training programmes such as workshops, orientation programmes, group discussions, seminars, field visits, etc.

Some of these needs may be partially met through the distance education literature available in the institution, its brochures and the reports of previous workshops /orientation programmes.

After assessing the adequacy of the available intellectual resources, the master trainers should make appropriate suggestions to fill the gaps in the minimum arrangements for the staff to learn on their own in an informal way.

3.3.2 Part-time staff

Part-time staff such as course writers, editors, script-writers, coordinators and counsellors has their own functional needs.

Course-writers, Editors and Script Writers

Most of the needs of these groups would be similar to those of the full-time faculty members though in a modest way. But they should be briefed about the target audience for the courses being launched, and these groups may not have continuous stake at the institution as the full-time faculties have.

Counsellors and Coordinators at the study centres

Institutions may have different patterns of staff **at** their study centres. But every centre must have both academic and administrative staff. We call the academics 'tutors ' or 'academic counsellors' and the administrative heads of the study centres 'the coordinators'. The counsellors need to be trained in the following areas:

i) ***conducting counselling sessions:*** counsellors/tutors need training in what counseling session should involve to make it academically fruitful; knowledge of how counselling sessions should be different from lectures; the management and scheduling.

ii) ***dealing with personal problems***: how to deal with non-academic problems that might impinge on students' academic performance.

The coordinators may have the following needs:

i) ***organizing counselling sessions*** : how sessions should be organised in accordance with the dispatch schedules of the materials

ii) ***managing study* centres:** managing the available physical facilities, keeping financial records as well as other records, payment of bills, maintenance of study centres, etc.

iii) ***identifying counsellors***: criteria for selecting efficient counsellors and identifying the prospective counsellors for the study centres

iv) ***monitoring counsellors***: evolving feedback mechanisms to monitor the work of counselors

3.3.3 Full-time Non-academic/Technical Staff

Administration Division of a distance teaching university will typically have:

A Registrar, Deputy Registrars, Administrative Officers, Section Officers, and Consultants. If they are new to the system of distance education, then, they would need training in the following areas:

i) *Coordination:* this would entail identifying areas of difficulties in the various wings of administration and coordination between them.

ii) *PRO functions:* knowledge and skills to give correct information about the institution to the public, including students and potential students

iii) *Knowledge of decision making bodies:* the jurisdiction and the powers and functions of various statutory bodies

iv) *Training in administrative functions:* arranging transport, office management, allotting accommodation, providing communication facilities, putting in the right kind of advertisement for courses and posts, the whole range of supplies and maintenance of the institution's records and property.

iii) *Interaction with outside agencies:* skills to deal and negotiate with government agencies, ministry and the relevant outside agencies

iv) *Framing rules and statutes:* accurate knowledge and ability to assess the special needs of the university while framing rules and statutes

v) *Financial matters:* skills of preparing and processing bills, etc., quickly and efficiently.

viii) *Arranging workshops:* arranging venue for conducting workshops, meetings or seminars; arranging food and accommodation for outsiders, etc.

If the institution has separate units for Student Registration and Evaluation, then the staff would have the following needs:

i) *Designing of forms and advertisements:* knowledge of target groups and programmes/ courses according to which admission forms and advertisements could be designed.

ii) *Computer training:* This would include knowledge of basics and data processing techniques. Also, how to optimally utilize the computer for all the jobs that need to be done.

iii) *Time and resource budgeting:* How to optimally use time and resources for maximum and a well coordinated output.

v) *Monitoring:* knowledge of links in the process of monitoring all the major operations including evaluation.

ii) *Maintaining records*: training for maintaining and retrieving records of learners.

Electronic Media Production Centre/Audio-visual centre

The Directors, Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors, Producers and Production Assistants, Research Assistants, Camera Persons, Editors, Graphic Artists, etc., will have the following needs:

i) *Technical training:* Generalized training for producers in both audio and video (even though they may be specialists in only one of them); training in producing educational programmes; training in computer graphics and animation; training in operating new equipment (which should be made available from time to time); training in new techniques of production.

ii) *Script Writing:* training for producers in writing scripts for educational programmes.

iii) *Research:* training in how to conduct research systematically and give the feedback to the Electronic Media Production Centre, or the audio-visual centre, the impact of media on students, how audios and videos should be handled in counselling sessions, how students react and accept them, i.e, divising feedback mechanisms.

iv) *Counselling:* knowledge about how audios and videos would be put to use in counselling sessions and what a counselling session would entail.

The Computer Division

The technical operators and supervisors of the Computer Division, if there is one would have the following needs:

i) *Computer graphics:* training on computer graphics which could also be used for production of audiohide0 programmes and the print materials in need of graphics.

ii) *Programme techniques:* training in new programme techniques, as well as techniques applicable in the given system.

iii) *Coding system:* need for evolving one type of coding scheme for all types of programme.

iv) *Interaction with academics:* need to be briefed about the expectation of academics, requirements for the designs of the raw data supplied by them and the types of report they would require from the Computer Division for purposes of course development and research.

v) *Nature of Assignments:* understanding of Computer Marked Assignments and how they would be evaluated in the system.

Full-fledged training programmes may be necessary to meet the above needs.

The Library Staff

The library staff needs training in house-keeping operations as their essential need. This wold includes documentation and computerization for library purposes. Training of this kind would help in computer research, as well.

Materials Publication and Distribution Division

The staff in charge of publishing and distribution of the course materials would have the following training needs:

i) *Copy editing:* knowledge of course-format and house style.

ii) *Printing:* knowledge of different aspects of printing, awareness of book design, graphic art, and stages of the process of printing.

iii) *Store Keeping: how* to store materials systematically, use mechanized storage systems and packing of materials, and account for materials.

iv) *Despatching:* handling of large despatches efficiently; knowledge of problems relating to postal services; colours and codes of various courses; accounting and documentation.

v) *Ability to use Technology:* how to use telex, computer, fax, e-mail etc, creating data bases and maintaining them efficiently.

Regional Services Division at the Headquarters

The Regional Services staff posted at the Headquarters would need training in:

i) *Conducting orientation programmes:* to decide upon the context and objectives of orientation programmes for Regional Directors, Assistant Directors, Coordinators and Counsellors.

ii) *Monitoring:* how to monitor study centres and the input of coordinators and counsellors; how to evolve feedback mechanisms and obtain feedback about training programmes conducted for coordinators and study centres.

iii) *Maintaining records:* to keep files and records, and retrieve them.

iv) *General training:* use of computers, fax systems, etc.

v) *Evolving notation systems:* to have uniform notations in the routine operations.

In addition to the above, it would always be useful to include the needs perceived by the internal staff in informal situations, and those which can be derived from the responses and reactions of the public and the students about the strengths and weaknesses of the institution.

3.4 MEETING THE NEEDS: OBJECTIVES, CONTENT AND STRATEGIES

You should note here that needs analysis, though a laborious exercise, is a less challenging one as compared to meeting them in a phased manner through professional training programmes.

Having surveyed the needs of the trainee-groups and identified t-he mismatch between the actual needs and training and/or training materials available, the Resource Persons can suggest to the participants as to how they should formulate the statements of objectives and prescribe possible scope and contents to actually realise the needs. The participants in groups, may discuss the scope and contents as well as the modus operandi to carry out the suggested activities, while formulating clear and achievable objectives, specifying the scope and prescribing content-input to meet the training needs identified. We shall discuss here the issues and processes involved by providing you with just two illustrations of meeting the needs of a) the full-time faculty and b) the part-time faculty. These illustrations, we hope, are representative enough to enable you to set the objectives and select the content to meet the training needs of all other trainee-groups in your institution.

3.4.1 Full-time Faculty

You may quickly recall or refer back to the training needs of the full-time faculty members newly appointed at a distance teaching institution. The training package intended to cater to the identified needs of the full-time faculty members of the institution should have the following objectives and contents as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Meeting the Needs of Full-time Faculty

Objectives	Content
1) To specify the work domains of the different categories of academics.	1) What each academic's job consists of in general, as well as subject specific demands?
2) To explicate the importance of team work	2) How to work in a team, how to supervise team work and manage the consequence of teamwork, if it is not functioning.
3) To identify the characteristics of a distance learner	3) The heterogeneity and psychology of distance learners, and adult learning theories
4) To plan, design and develop the curricula	4) Presenting a case of launching a programme; identification of needs of the target group; how to decide the objectives, course content duration and credit values of a course; awareness of the resource constraints; how to decide media choice and the evaluation system for a course; and how to design interdisciplinary and application-oriented courses.
5) To budget time	5) The time taken in each stage of course development; identification of course writers; to allocate audio/video reduction time, etc.

Objectives	Content
6) To prepare self-instructional materials(S1Ms)	6) The need for SIMs, the principles of SIMs, how to choose a format suitable to the objectives of the course, how and why of objectives, how to prepare and use concept-maps, how to write and edit material to meet the course objectives, relevant tips on proof reading, A brief idea of designing lay-outs, and awareness of copyright laws.
7) To prepare a programme guide	7) The essentials of a programme guide
8) To prepare and monitor assignments	8) The purpose of assignments in the DE system; how to formulate the objectives of assignments and prepare them in line with the grading system; how to evaluate an assignment, different kinds of comments; how to utilize monitoring of assignments for monitoring the courses and the counsellors
9) To prepare question banks	9) Collection of questions, testing these questions for validity and reliability, preparation of different types of questions for different purposes, storing them for easy retrieval.
10) To analyse the validity and reliability of items	10) The concept of reliability and validity; measuring of reliability and validity
11) To identify areas to be tackled for the A/V medium; to write a brief/an cademic note/ a/ script/media notes	11) Media selection and media mix
12) To participate knowledgeably in the production process.	12) The basics of AN production techniques, and how to present a programme
13) To pre-test the course material	13) Identifying a sample group, testing the course package, analysing and utilising the feedback for improving the course
14) To explain the functions of a counsellor	14) What the purpose of counselling is, the tutoring and counselling functions of counsellors, the difference between counselling and tutoring, how to orient the counsellors for general and specific (discipline) purposes.
15) To selcct a counsellor	15) The traits of a good counselor
16) To edit/maintain/revise withdraw a course	16) How to obtain post-production feedback from students and counsellors and how to utilise it for revising or withdrawing a course and maintain a correction-evaluation file
17) To evaluale a programme	17) Purpose of evaluation, designing evaluation programmes, criteria for evaluation, collection and analysis of data to evaluate the evaluation system.
18) To maintain files/records, fill in various kinds of forms, write different types of letters and notes	18) Filing system, a brief idea of financial procedures, drafting notes, etc
19) To utilize computer facility/ word processor	19) Basics of computer utilisation, use of computers for editing, data analysis, etc.

An overall strategy may be suggested as follows:

i) On entry each academic should be given a handbook on job-orientation, team work, characteristics of distance learners, process of curriculum development, development of SIMs, and assignments, evaluation and monitoring of assignment responses, retesting of draft course materials and assignments, , presenting feedback on counselling etc., separate handouts on each of these can be given for prior reading.

ii) Workshops on curriculum development, preparation of SIMs, assignments TMAs/CMAs), practicals for science courses, and production of audio/video materials may be conducted

iii) Orientation of varying durations on distance teaching and counseling may be given.

iv) Support from the training unit, if it exists, in the area of pretesting and feedback, assignment evaluation and counselling may be sought.

v) Consultancy support from inside the country/abroad and the trained persons available within the institution may be enlisted

vi) Circulation of 'reports of study-visits abroad/inland

vii) Divisional/school/department library for support.

Having identified the objectives, contents and the overall strategies, a detailed note on strategies can be prepared as mapped in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Details of Strategies

Strategies	Details
1. Booklet (to be given on entry)	1. The nature of work to be done by each category of academic (4500 word handout)
2. Attachment to Senior Faculty	2. How they have to interact with other organizations and with the university across Schools/Divisions (15 days)
3. Seminar	3. Spirit and basics of team work. People from different disciplines should speak on how they have worked in a team(1 or 2 seminar)
4. Booklet (Distance Learners)	4. Theories of adult learning; psychology of adult distance learners; heterogeneity of distance learners (A 5000 word Handbook)
5. Video	5. Case studies or some interviews with adult learners (Case Studies) (20-25 minutes) Face-to-face orientation where Orientation (face-to-face) discussions can be held on the above aspects with distance education experts (1-2 days)

Strategies	Details
6. Workshop/case studies from other open (Curriculum development and Planning)	6. Identification of the level and the needs of target University systems groups; presenting a case to launch a programme; deciding objectives, level, duration, density, assignment, different media components and credit value of a course, deciding on interdisciplinary, application oriented, and advanced courses, allocation of work to identified course writers, production of audio/video materials and time allocation for each stage of production process. (6 days with materials and charts of activities involved; attachment with a course team for a specified period of time)
7. Workshop preceded by theoretical information through handouts - specific and general (preparing SIM)	7. Need for and principles of SIM; choosing a format; concept mapping, how and why of objectives; writing and editing; time allocation for each job; graphic design. (Workshop - 7 days. A I000 word handbook on SIM; video on production process and a brief visit to Divisions concerned).
8. Workshop; handbook and group discussion (Assignment preparation and Assessment)	8. Purposes and preparation of assignments; assessment of assignments; commenting and grading, monitoring assignment responses; reliability and validity of items selected and preparation of question banks.
9. Handbook and workshop; attachment to audio/video production division (Production of audio/video materials)	9. Use of media in Distance Education, strengths and weaknesses of individual media, media selection and media mix, formats, script writing which includes programme briefs/academic notes etc. (Handouts of about 1000 words); basics of production (camera work, editing, etc). Actual writing (programme brief, academic note and script). Actual production of programmes, shooting and editing (A 9 day workshop).
10. Handout; reports on pre-testing (undertaken by any school); seminar (Pre-testing packages)	10. Purposes, techniques of pre-testing, collection and utilisation of feedback, revision. (A 3 page handout and/or a one day seminar and actual pre-testing of a course, field study with the help of an expert).
11. Manual/Orientation sessions for counsellors, periodical visits to study centres; existing video materials supplemented by more examples.	11. Purposes of counselling, functions of a counsellor, problems faced by a counsellor, training/orientation of counsellors. Handout (3 pages); 1 day orientation on how to orient counsellors; field visits to have first hand information.
12. Manual (identification of counsellors)	12. Who an effective counsellor is (A five page manual).

Strategies	Details
13. Booklet; group discussion, orientation; workshop at which feedback forms, etc. could be developed for a particular course (Course Development).	13. How to maintain a course and why. (A 2 day workshop) Day 1: Why maintenance, how maintenance is different from revision etc; means to collect feedback, maintaining corrections/evaluation file, errata sheets, decision taking subject to the stock and popularity of the materials, cost involved, time constraints, etc. Day 2: Preparation of feedback sheets etc. (for a programme), which can be developed with occasional direct instruction from the resource person.
14. Attachment to experts, consultancy services with regard to programme evaluation (then those trained can organise workshops)	14. Essential know-how regarding evaluation of course materials, student performance, impact of the university on the society and the educational systems of the country.
15. Handout cum seminar (either together or the handout can be given a week in advance) on basic knowledge of computers and their uses.	15. The components, of a computer, the various kinds of languages and some of the kinds of jobs that a computer can be used for (A 1000 word handout with graphics and photographs to show hardware terminals and components). A two-hour seminar on what the handout covers, stressing the various ways in which we can use the facility.
16. Training workshop to use word processors for 3 days (2 hours a day). These could be held by the Computer Division till the need is fulfilled or attachment to a professional as and when possible on an individual basis. Seminar/ Booklet.	16. Actually using a word processor.
17. Demonstration (Conducting a Workshop etc).	17. Various ways of conducting workshops, etc. (Talk and discussions for 2-3 hrs. a pamphlet of 1000 words approximately.

3.4.2 Part-time Faculty

As mentioned in section 3.3, the part-time faculty would include part-time course writers, counsellors, coordinators, members in expert committees and script writers. Mostly these groups come from campus based face-to-face educational settings. Though their needs appear to be similar to those of the full-time faculty, they differ in their intensity. Whereas the full-time faculty have the need to thoroughly reorient themselves to work in the system for longer periods often throughout their career, part time faculty associate themselves with the institution for relatively short durations and with little stakes.

The objectives, training content and the strategies, therefore, would vary only in degrees of intensity and the quantum of information to develop an understanding of the system. The training programmes for the part-time faculty, focusing on the following three categories for our immediate purpose has to be illustrative. The three categories are:

i) Course writers,

ii) Coordinators, and

iii) Counsellors

Tables 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 indicate the objectives, contents and strategies identified for training respectively the course writers, the coordinators and the counsellors.

Part-time Course writers

The scope of the training package can be set to provide the course writers with the basics of distance/open education and nuances of writing self-instructional materials as given in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Training for Course Writers: Objectives, Contents and Strategies

Objectives	Contents	Strategies
1) To explain the basic features of distance education	1) Difference between distance education and other systems of education; philosophy of distance education and its implications	1) A handout on distance education sent along with the letter of offer to the writers, lecture-cum discussion and a general overview through a video
2) To identify the unique characteristics of distance learners	2) Knowledge about target learners; and their characteristic variations, psychology of distance learners and adult learners.	2) A handout on adult psychology and adult learners.
3) To describe the features of the institution	3) A brief history, organizational structure and academic activities of a DE institution.	3) Copies of the institutional Act and brochures (the relevant ones) to be sent; face-to-face interaction.
4) To explain the rationale behind a particular course structure	4) Level of the target group their previous knowledge and standards assumed; outline of the course	4) A handout with relevant course outline (sent in advance) and face-to-face interaction with the faculty.

Objectives	Contents	Strategies
5) To explain what unit design is	5) Principles of SIM and its pedagogic implications; features of SIM and functions thereof; variations in format; house-style of a particular programme; level and scope of content; how to pretest and incorporate the feedback in the unit and idea of concept mapping.	5) A self-instructional unit (with explanations) to be sent; face-to-face explanation by DE experts (could be supplemented with a video and faculty experts highlight the house style decided on for a particular course).
6) To explain the role of simple language and conversational style	6) Need for using simple words, active verbs, simple sentences and addressing the learner directly to relate the material to the affective domain of learning.	6) Distance education experts talk about the overall importance of the needs specified being supplemented by talks with subject experts (specific examples may be picked up from the materials sent or the writers could be asked to pick up examples).
7) To prepare assignments	7) Purpose, function and types of assignments; academic communication and evaluation; scope and number of assignments, their frequency etc.	7) Studying and handling of sample assignments and discussions being followed by a video on two-way communication, subject specific instructions be given.
8) To describe the assessment system	8) Types of evaluation; purposes of various types of evaluation; grading-its advantages, issues involved, weight etc.	8) Lecture-cum-discussion (Illustrations are essential)
9) To describe the role of multi-media package at the given institution	9) Functions and limitations of various media and the choice of media in the context of a subject	9) A lecture on multi-media approach demonstrating the use of audio-video parts for various disciplines
10) To identify areas in need of audio and video programmes	10) Notion of 'briefs' and academic notes and how to write them identification of areas which need audio and/ or video programmes, duration of programmes	10) Samples of 'briefs' and academic notes; discussion with subject experts and producers (hopefully with a grounding in a particular subject) present throughout the session.
11) To write for practical field based courses (School-specific)	11) Outlining and designing of practicals and field trips and relating them to theoretical inputs;	11) An outline of practicals should be sent in advance to the writers. A one day workshop —

Objectives	Contents	Strategies
	reporting on practicals and field trips and evolving methods of evaluating the practicals and field work.	in the morning session. discussion on experiments innovatively designed for the students and demonstrations may be discussed and in the afternoon session a lecture on how to write for practicals including a discussion on how to tabulate results may be organised.
12) To adhere to work schedule	12) Explaining the importance of working according to schedules and outlining the schedule itself.	12) A manual

As an alternative to the strategies recommended in Table 3, a two day comprehensive workshop for the course writers may be organised. In which they could be exposed to the basics of distance/open education and its relevance to the given country, the genesis of the institution concerned, the principles/functions of self-instructional material and its role in distance education, the importance of media selection, etc. A practical, exercise oriented session should be included in the workshop, besides the necessary theoretical inputs. After a particular period of time, say, two months after the two-day workshop, a one-day workshop should be organised as a follow up activity. In this programme, through a discussion the first drafts (of materials) developed by the course writers' could be commented on and suggestions for improvement made.

Part-time Coordinators

The training needs of the part-time coordinators who manage the study centres would warrant a short training programme of one or two days based on the objectives, contents and strategies as given in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Meeting the Training Needs of Coordinators

Objectives	Content	Strategies
1) To be able to work within the constraints of time and budget	1) Activities at a study centre; human management and information/feedback management	1) Orientation programme: audio, video and print should be supplemented with the previous experience of old timers.
2) To be able to divide work load rationally	2) Student convenience; accommodation; travel and Distance	2) A lecture-cum-discussion
3) To utilize funds at his/her disposal under proper heads and make effective use of physical facilities.	3) Honorarium for counselors and acquisition and use of physical facilities	3) A manual
4) To keep track of information about the study centres in prescribed formats	4) Records of students, counsellors and staff	4) A manual

Objectives	Contents	Strategies
5) To consider qualifications and experience of prospective cousellors and assess their suitability for particular courses	5) Nature of course and knowledge about the target group, qualifications and skills of a counsellor and/or tutor.	5) Brochure; orientation programmes
6) To monitor work of counsellors, students attendance, turn-around time of assignment responses etc.	6) Nature and role of assignments, evaluation procedures, comment-types, importance of immediate feedback.	6) Handbook and a one day orientation programme
7) To give proper information and guidance about the institution, its courses etc.	7) Complete understanding of the concept of education and open education, the courses, the administration .etc.	7) Handbook

Part-time Counsellors

A workshop of similar duration' can be arranged for the part-time counsellors. But the objectives, content etc. for meeting their needs would be different from the previous one with 'greater emphasis on the academic inputs – distance education, instructional design, educational media, theories of learning, learner psychology etc.

Table 3.5 presents the constituents of a training package proposed for the part-time counselors.

Table 3.5: Training of Counsellors

Objectives	Content	Strategies
1) To talk knowledgeably about the distance education system	1) How different open/ distance education is from the conventional and correspondence education, etc.	1) A pamphlet, Discussion
2) To appreciate the need for SIM in the distance mode of teaching/ learning	2) Need for SIM and knowledge about course structures and how they are interlinked; rationale behind unitization etc.	2) A lecture-cum-discussion (2 hours); or a video
3) To integrate audio/ video materials effectively in the counselling sessions.	3) Role and purpose of audio/ video materials in the system	3) A video followed by a lecture- cum-discussions (3 hours)
4) To evaluate and write comments on assignment-responses	4) Role and purpose of assignments; significance of comments, knowledge about the grading system, etc.	4) Lecture (1 hour)

Objectives	Contents	Strategies
5) To handle counseling sessions effectively; thorough understanding of course materials and assignments.	5) What counselling entails and how it is different from lecturing1 tutoring etc; philosophy behind the overall structure and content of the course concerned and the corresponding assignments.	5) Lecture (1 hour)
6) To listen to students' problems sympathetically and help solving them	6) Significance of establishing useful rapport with the students (to break the feeling of isolation).	6) A pamphlet, Discussion
7) To maintain a corrections file and keep a record of student attendance, performance etc.	7) Need for corrections file and how to maintain it; need to keep a file for student profile.	7) A video
8) To efficiently schedule time	8) How delay in sending the responses etc, would cause frustration in students.	8) Discussion, a video

Before we proceed further, let us pause here for a minute to do an exercise.

Activity 1

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

Having identified your trainee-groups and their needs, you should now list (i) the objectives (ii) content areas and (iii) strategies for training.

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3.5 HOW TO CONDUCT TRAINING SESSIONS

The success of a training programme cannot be ensured by the preparations alone, for ultimately it depends on the efficiency of the resource persons who impart training. The resource persons should have a thorough understanding about the different components of the training programme and their own role in conducting training.

The following check list would be useful for the trainers to play their role effectively:

i) Familiarity with the area chosen, i.e., one's own understanding of the subject matter.

ii) Degree of appropriateness, i.e., collection and arrangement of information to suit the audience.

iii) Presentation, i.e., interesting and clear presentation.

iv) Involving the audience in the activity, i.e., promoting activity or active interaction.

v) Management, i.e., handling of questions and discussions in an effective manner.

vi) Time budgeting.

vii) Resourcefulness, i.e., tactics/presence of mind, etc.

vi) Correct judgment of the prior knowledge of the audience on the topic under consideration.

ix) Choice of the right strategy which should work when new terms and concepts are introduced.

vii) Establishing proper linkages between what is being imparted in the training sessions and the actual job situation of the trainees.

xi) Adequate treatment of the items listed for discussion.

xii) Use of proper techniques to begin and end the presentation.

xiii) Being flexible and open to receive new ideas from peers and the trainees.

xiv) Avoiding mechanical approaches to concepts and strategies which do not convey the message to the trainees.

xv) Adopting a self-critical and reflective approach to one's own way(s) of conducting training.

The above check list can be helpful only when the trainers have adequate resources. They must have adequate time to collect the necessary information and they should anticipate the possibilities of changing or giving up some of their plans, if the course of the training takes such a turn. In any case, the achieving of the objectives must be treated as more important than sticking to the original plan, which, though meticulous, may not work in certain situations and with certain audiences.

The process of collecting information should become a continuous one whereby trainers could collect the latest information, pool it and analyse it periodically and share it with fellow trainers. Such a practise would enrich a trainer's own understanding besides benefiting from the feedback and suggestions from colleagues.

i) The trainers should use different training techniques. (Only one kind of presentation, i.e., lecture-cum-discussion aided by the overhead projector is usually followed by trainers in many situations. We should try different techniques which we have discussed in Unit 2 of this block).

ii) Ideally, each trainer should evaluate each of the sessions he handles. Some of the criteria suggested in Unit 4 of Block 2 for evaluation of training programmes may be useful here. The following suggestions are useful, and so, deserve your attention.

Every training programme should end with the question "What next?"

The resource persons (i.e. master trainers) may possibly identify the following as answers:

i) the areas which were not touched upon during the session(s) ,

ii) how to diversify the training network,

iii) how to carry over what has been achieved in the training programme.

We shall elaborate each of the three points.

i) **Areas which were not touched upon during the workshop**

At times a few areas which you wanted to discuss thoroughly might not have got concentrated attention mainly because of want of time. Whether or not the trainees should focus their attention on these areas too, can be discussed. If they f e l that they should know about the areas the resource person wanted to discuss, then the resource person should try to extend the session for another 10 or 15 minutes or accommodate those areas in the subsequent training sessions or programmes. The trainers should anticipate the unexpected turns of events in the course of training and be prepared for elements of surprises. However, the core content should be transacted and all adjustments like deviations, digressions and shortening of discussions should be made in tune with the main focus of the session.

ii) **How to diversify the training network**

The trainees may come from one institution or from many. Whatever the case may be, after the training, the trained participants must act as members either individually or as a group to involve different categories of personnel in their own institutions as future trainees. Suppose you and another colleague of yours have received training in distance education, you could act as the core trainers group and train the other categories of personnel working in the different departments or units of your institution. This will give you opportunities to enrich your training potential and also enable you to transfer your knowledge and skills to other areas of training. For example, your training experience in training course writers can be used to train other categories of academics as well as administrators, provided their training needs are correctly assessed, the right content is chosen and appropriate strategies are adopted. In other words, your training in one areas of distance education should prompt you to move on to other related areas too. An imaginative trainer is one who is capable of diversifying his training skills as well as the training network.

iii) **How to carry over what may have been achieved during training**

Since training is an ongoing activity some follow up activities will always be necessary. The insights and experiences gained through one training programme can always be used for the future programmes. Secondly, the initial training in a specific area would need additions/improvements as the knowledge in the field grows and the range of activities within the field expand. Attempts must be made to compound new inputs with what has already been acquired and then apply them in practical situations. New ideas would inspire the trainer as well as the future trainees. Training content, thus gets enriched and the new training needs are also met effectively in a professional manner.

A well planned comprehensive initial training to create a core group of trainers in your institution would indicate all or some the following consequent upon the training:

- The staff (including the senior staff) need undergo orientation and training from time to time in accordance with a well planned training schedule.
- The institution should make provision for developing various training packages for various categories of staff.

- Sufficient time should be allocated for persona11professiona1 development which would in turn help strengthen the system as well.
- Programme evaluation should be started at a very early stage.
- Academic activities and the work pressures on the faculty should be streamlined to ensure effective and qualitatively better services.
- Monitoring of academic and administrative activities should be started at all levels.
- The institution will have to activate research covering all its crucial activities.
- There would be a need to launch a journal of distance education reflecting the views and the needs of the institution, the country or the region.
- There should be one central training unit which would coordinate and conduct all the training programmes with necessary support from the various academic and supporting units of the institution.
- Time-lag in sending course materials, evaluating assignments and in declaring results can be taken care of if the staffs concerned are given proper Orientation/ training.
- Academic orientation is essential for the audio/video producers or academics could be appointed and trained for audio/video production.

Many other specific training needs of the institution may be discovered and relevant training programmes can be designed and conducted by the central training unit drawing on the expertise of the core trainers group. Finally the core trainers themselves would realise that they need to update their knowledge base and acquire new skills, particularly in using communication technology, from time to time to remain in the business of training as effective master trainers.

3.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have shared our experience of training trainers with you. In the main, we have emphasised the following steps:

i) identifying the potential trainee-groups and their felt needs

ii) formulating training-objectives to meet those needs

iii) describing the content required and strategies for conducting training for various categories of personnel.

3.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

The steps may be as follows:

- identification of actual needs of the staff
- review of the training materials available
- physical arrangements for training
- group formation and specific activities for each group

UNIT 4 LANGUAGE ISSUES

Structure

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Consider the following:

Lord Macaulay as President of the Indian Committee of Public Instruction had proposed "the creation of a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern" a class of persons, Indians in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect." (Kachru, 1983)

Macaulay was truly prophetic when he visualised the birth of a new class of privilegentia. This class has remained true to its master's wishes. One reason why many among the vast Indian-language speaking community hate English is because they hate the way they are enslaved by this class of English-speaking Brahmins who occupy the educational institutions, the bureaucracy, the judiciary and the media.

Thus, we have a different kind of cold/class war. The privilegentia that speaks, reads and writes English determines the levels of discourse and even the issues. It also sets the lifestyle and social values. Then there is the English process which sets the agenda while (regional) language press is either granted a secondary status or is driven to chauvinism to keep its identity. The English media gets a whooping 57 per cent share of the advertisements, the Hindi gets about 20 per cent while the other 14 Indian languages have to be content with 23 per cent. Can one actually prove that the entire 200 million strong middle class makes its shopping decisions on the basis of advertisements appearing in the English media? (The Times of India, April 17, 1994)

The questions that we are faced with are:

- What is the status of English in the Commonwealth today?
- What is the background to its present status?
- How equipped is the average Commonwealth learner to deal with academic demands in a second language?
- Can we assume a uniform set of standards in relation to language competence?
- Assuming that no such standard is available what kind and range of language needs are we talking of?

In this unit, we intend to present a profile of learner types, and their language needs against the particular socio-educational scenario behind them. This will then be the base on which the rest of the discussion of this part of the unit would rest. As you work through this unit, we would like you to reflect on your own situation as part of a second language speech community which uses English for various academic purposes. In the continuum that we are about to present, where exactly would you place yourself? As we move through our discussion, your own answers will provide a specific flavour to the points made, thus extending them to various local situations.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

At the end of working through this unit, you should be able to

- List the salient features of a typical Commonwealth distance learner in terms of his/her competence in the English language;
- Describe the socio-educational and socio-political factors behind this scenario;
- Identify the various categories of learner-types;
- Explain the reasons for developing English for distance education purposes (EDEP);
- Describe the salient features of EDEP;
- Analyse the features of LAC in relation to EDEP; and
- Explain how LAC contributes to learner training in the DE context.

4.2 THE SOCIO-POLITICAL FACTORS AS DIRECTIVES

What constitute the Commonwealth countries today were colonies of the English-speaking colonial powers. In all of them, English-language based education was introduced by the colonial rulers. The motive was to facilitate and ease the working of the colonial administrative machinery.

Subsequent to the World War - II, the colonies became independent and as independent countries they began to devise their own systems of education. But they had to depend on English as the medium of instruction extensively in some cases and partially in some others. This is the perspective in which the existing educational/ELT (English Language Teaching) situation has to be viewed.

The ELT situation of a particular place depends greatly on the official language policy.

The first Prime Minister of Independent India said:

> "…for an indefinite period - I do not know how long - I should have, I would have, English as an associate, additional language which can be used, not because of facilities and all that, but because I do not wish the people of the non-Hindi areas to feel that certain doors of advance are closed to them, because they are forced to correspond - with the Government, I mean – in the Hindi language. They can correspond in English. So, I would have it is an alternate language as long as people require it and the decision for that, I would have not left to the Hindi- knowing people, but to the non-Hindi knowing people". (Nehru, 1959).

We may them say that multilingualism is one of the major reason for the dominance of the English language in India today. If the state decides that English is not be promoted as the language of education, its influence is going to decrease as the schools will not teach it; if it is decided that English is to be used as the language of commerce, institutions will focus on English for commercial purposes only. Malaysia, for example, has discarded English for educational purposes. Thailand has never used it for such a purpose. In Vanuatu it is one of the languages of education besides French and Bislama, but in Singapore it is the undisputed language of education and also an official language.

Consequently, these countries not only treat their ELT issues differently, but also perceive their educational problems differently. So much so, for a particular problem they may not accept one and the same solution. In India, English is an official language and also the language of higher learning. But it has to contend with eighteen strong regional languages. Born of socio-political compulsions, it is the state policies with regard to the use of English which in the final analysis outline the treatment that is to be given to it – i.e., the extent of utility, the domains of its use and the financial support needed to sustain it. It emerges, then, that ELT experts should first view these diverse situations and then suggest solutions for specific difficulties that arise from particular situations. (Koul and Creed, 1990)

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Space is given below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

i) Explain why the ELT situation in a country depends on the state policy?

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ii) Briefly describe two cases where the state policy has determined different ELT situations.

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Learner populations: an overview

In most Commonwealth countries, because of the historical reasons outlined above, the learner populations are divided into four groups. Koul and Creed (1990) classify them as follows:

i) Those who caught on the tide of Western based education early during the colonial period: Their progeny of today have a strong education base, many of them have had their education in Britain or some other advanced country. Usually they are good billinguals with very high levels of competence in English. We call this category A.

ii) A large population, most new urbanites who caught English based education rather late during the colonial period: These people are engaged in trade and commerce, lower level services and other urban occupations. Their progeny are in most cases, second or third generation learners. Generally, they are billinguals, but their competence in English is not as high as among the members of category A. Working through courses which use English as the medium of instruction is usually not too problematic for them; they do mange these courses as well as the help they need to work through them. Let this be category B of the people.

iii) Those groups who are mostly first generation learners: These are the people who have till now followed the traditional occupation of farming or other labour-intensive occupations and have had no contact with formal education so far. Wherever possible, these learners mostly depend on vernacular medium of education. Usually, their competence in English is very low and they cannot work through courses in English as the medium of instruction. Let this be category C.

iv) Generally, the colonial period remained oblivious of a fourth category of people (category D) – the tribals. Most of the Commonwealth countries have sizable tribal populations which have just started coming into contact with modern civilization.

Getting on to tasks like reading and writing do not belong to their culture. In many cases, their cognitive behaviour is entirely adverse to academic activities. For these learners, studies through English medium may be very difficult. They can manage vernaculars, but in most cases their vernaculars have no scripts and so cannot be used as languages of education.

The above classification is more or less applicable to the UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand as well. This includes the vast number of immigrants as well as their own tribal populations (Koul and Creed, 1990).

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

Briefly describe the various categories among the learner population in the Commonwealth.

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4.3 THE SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL DYNAMICS

The socio-political factors discussed above, function as directives to the diversity in the ELT scenario. In other words, they lend direction to the diverse ELT needs in the Commonwealth countries. At the operational level, these directives give rise to the country-specific socio-educational dynamics. In the following subsections, we shall extend the case that we outlined briefly in section 1.2. We present the case of India because the facts are readily available. Do pause as you read through this section and think of the situation you find yourself in. As you process this material, we would like you to compare this case with your own context and notch up similarities and differences.

4.3.1 Learner Categories in India: A Case

Taking up the discussions of the diversity in learner populations from the earlier subsection, we present the case of India here. The differences are analysed in terms of:

- Learner type
- School type
- Socio-economic status
- Teacher type, and
- Teaching material type

Socio-economic status: From this point of view, the entire country may be divided into three groups. For the sake of convenience the idea is schematized with the help of concentric circles. Do study figure 1.

S_1 represents the majority which constitutes the lowest income group. The second stratum represents the middle income group S_2. This group is smaller than S_1 and the third, S_3 consists of a small minority which has the highest per capita income in the country.

- **Learner types:** Most of the learner population at the lower stages of learning comes from S_1. Most of these learners are first generation learners and the social background they come from is not congenial to any kind of academic exercise – no extra learning at home, nor any possibility of reinforcement of what is learnt at school and no help, parental or otherwise. The learners from Sare better equipped in relative terms - - to handle academic pursuits. These learners happen to be the children of teachers, middle level administrators etc. Their social background provides them with some reinforcement at home, opportunities/resources for extra reading and so on. The learners from S_3- a small minority – come from highly educated families or/and very rich parents. The initial schooling of these learners is often at the public schools where high quality education is sold at exorbitant prices. The learners from S_1 on the other hand are found in government schools while learners from S_2 are found in schools which, in terms of status, stand in between the public schools and those run by the government/ local bodies.

The suggestion then is that there is inevitable correspondence among the socio-economic group type (Sn), the learner type (Ln) it supplies, the school type (Sln) that educates this type of learners, the teacher type (Tn) such a school employs and the type of teaching materials/aids (Tmn) such teachers use in their classes.

You must remember that linguistic competence of these learners *per se* may not vary at all. The binary division of the learner population results from the variance in their readiness to learn/use English. In other words L_3 group may be better prepared to learn English because of the other supportive factors while L_1 groups are not in a state of readiness to learn English. What is true of India is also true of most Commonwealth countries, despite local variations.

4.3.2 Inferences

The socio-political and socio-educational aspects (as outlined above in the form of a an illustration) shape the ELT situation in various Commonwealth countries. In this sub-section you will find a summary of the key points of this situation as observed by Koul and Creed (1990).

General Situation

i) Hardly any country in the Commonwealth can claim to be linguistically homogeneous,

ii) Language teaching in classroom situations remains uncertain, unbalanced and unsystematic because of the socio-political pressures.

iii) The absolute number of English-speaking people is generally on the rise everywhere.

Classroom situation

i) Most approaches are teacher dependent – lecture type, at best lectures and drilling go together.

ii) Most language classes are large with students having varied levels of competence and motivation.

iii) Very little attention is paid to productive reading and writing skills.

Learning materials

i) Generally, there is a shortage of good teaching and reading materials – course books, supplementary reading, etc.

ii) Libraries are undeveloped in general and remain underutilized (if in order) for want of other facilities.

Teachers

i) British teachers of English are not seen any more in most of the Commonwealth countries.

ii) Local teachers of English are often unqualified and untrained for the task.

iii) Wherever qualified and trained teachers of English are available, they are in short supply.

Training facilities

i) Very few countries have developed their own training facilities to train teachers of English – pre service and in-service.

ii) If these facilities are available, they are inadequate and ill-equipped.

Need for English

i) Whatever the socio-political pressure, the need for English is not questioned. What is questioned is the field of application where it is needed most. Different countries respond to this issue differently.

ii) English for academic purposes and international links remains an undisputed need which each country is eager to fulfil at any cost.

4.3.3 Clientele for Commonwealth Distance Education Systems

The distance education (DE) system has emerged as a means to cater to the needs of the disadvantaged and underpriviliged sections of the society. Hence it emerges that categories B and C (see section 1.2) are the clientele of the DE systems. It also emerges that this clientele is most homogeneous and needs helps as far as learning through English is concerned. Category B, the largest clientele of the DE in the Commonwealth today, happens to consist of urban and semi-urban populations. Category A, at the moment, does not fall within the umbrella of the DE systems. This may change when DE grows in status with the passage of time.

With the success of national movements against the colonial powers and the subsequent formation of democracies, commitment to equal opportunities of socially relevant education for the masses became a political imperative for every party that came into power in these states. DE as a newly found tool promising to fulfil this commitment is taking special steps by way of offering specially designed courses for groups belonging to category C. In most cases these courses are made available in vernaculars and small percentages of students who manage through the system do get into courses normally looked up to by category B.

As far as the Category D is concerned, different countries have initiated different programmes, specifically aimed at mass literacy besides those pertaining to health and child care, personal hygiene etc. Category D is passing through a phase of socio-cultural transition. On the cognitive intellectual plane, they have just started to move from oral learning culture to written learning culture and on the socio-economic plane from isolated tribal economy to mainstream, regional economic cultures. We regard them as a special clientele of DE.

This process of elimination brings us to categories B and C which constitute our main clientele. They make the strongest claims on any international initiative for providing diverse courses, improved access to whatever is available elsewhere and training to generate expertise to improve the local situations.

This identified clientele seems to be divided into two broad groups on the basis of their competence in English:

i) those who do not have enough basic linguistic competence to cope with courses in English.

ii) those who have reasonable but not enough English to manage texts on their own.

4.3.4 ELT Scenario in the Commonwealth

- The average Commonwealth distance learner brings with him/her a backlog of language and learning needs.
- This is gravely underestimated, if not disregarded, by the DE material producers.
- The factors contributing to this situation are:
- a transmission perspective of education
- a lack of awareness of the particular demands of a distance delivery system
- inappropriate and ineffective ESL support strategies
- insufficient training for material producers
- limited institutional infrastructure
- lack of access to appropriate resource materials.

These limitations were indeed serious in view of:

- the fact that most of the Commonwealth distance learners come from educationally deprived areas;
- the massive expansion of English medium DE courses for ESL/EFL learners; and
- the promotion of increased exchange of DE materials.

4.4 ENGLISH FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION PURPOSES: SOME CONSIDERATIONS

In the light of the limitations of the Commonwealth distance learners, we accept the need for additional language support. This is equally applicable to the communicational language needs of trainers in the distance education who do not have adequate linguistic competence in the language they use as an instructional medium. The context of distance education is specific in nature, scope and the demands that it makes on its learners. Therefore, it is reasonable for us to argue that distance educators, as a matter of priority, should develop and promote awareness of English for Distance Education Purposes. Essentially this argument makes a case for four key objectives. They are:

i) An English across the curriculum language policy within distance education courses of ESL learners, where ESL development is integrated into mainstream subjects in contrast to the commonly uses parallel general ELT and study skills courses.

ii) A heavy emphasis on ESL reading and writing development. These skills should be practised as interdependent, integrated tools of communication in contrast to the traditional view of these skills as independent language processes.

iii) An expanded view of the nature of readability and in particular readability for ESL. Materials developers need to consider alternative ways of:

- Facilitating an ESL learner's comprehension from an English medium text
- Developing an ESL learner's abilities to comprehend from an English medium text.

iv) As far greater emphasis on methodology the recommendation here is a shift away from transmission style teaching to a more engaging, task-based, interactive learning methodologies.

Now, we shall elaborate a bit further on some of these points.

An English Across the Curriculum (EAC) policy represents a recoginition of:

- the extent to which language – the medium of learning – and learning are crucially related
- the diversity of language and the diversity of demands that are made upon it within different subject areas
- the effectiveness of courses based on learner's functional needs
- the effectiveness of learning a language through a focus on contextualised use of language
- a shift away from the view of language as something to be learnt for its own sake towards the view of language as a vehicle for the transmission of ideas.

An expanded view of study skills suggests a move away from the assumption that there are universals of academic behaviour and that the learners possess inherent, invariant styles of learning. It argues for a less prescriptive, task-based, learning-oriented methodology which takes account of the different learning styles and language needs. The aim of this approach is to help the learners consider the factors which affect their learning and through guided experimentation discover the learning strategies that suit them best.

The ESL development should therefore aim to enable learners to:

- acquire communication skills *within context,*
- identify and practise a wider range of language skills and learning strategies and,
- develop strategies for learning through *English,* i.e. use text as a vehicle for information.

The learner training/study skills component should aim to enable learners to:

- consider their own learning attitudes and preferences,
- experiment with different learning strategies, and
- take more responsibility for their own learning.

It should provide the learners with:

i) *Pychological preparation.* e.g. activities to build confidence for experimenting with language,

ii) *Methodological preparation.* e.g. activities to help learners understand and use meta language (i.e. language for describing language and language learning) and to become aware of the rationale behind activities,

iii) *Practice in self-direction,* e.g. activities which provide learners with opportunities to make choices about their learning.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i) Space is given below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

i) Briefly describe the "key objectives of EDEP".

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ii) Explain how the learner training component (within EDEP) prepares the distance learner at three levels.

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There is thus a clear need to develop and promote awareness of the EDEP issues and also to integrate EDEP into existing and new DE materials and courses. How are we then to achieve this end? The implications of this stand are to be seen on two different places:

i) the level of curriculum design and implementation.

ii) the methodological issues of study skills and learner training.

4.5 FUNDAMENTALS IN DE SYLLABUS DESIGN

We started this discussion with a basic assumption that certain basic curricular issues need to be addressed if the distance educational enterprise is to succeed. We articulated these issues in the form of three questions – why, for whom and by whom and the what and how of a course/programme. In essence, these questions pertain to the content, design and delivery and the target group of a course/programme. Distance education as a system combines educational enterprise with industrial operations on a large scale. Therefore, these implications become even more emphatic. One of the major reasons why this should be so is, for example, because of the nature of international collaboration in the area of DE. The specific manifestation of such a collaboration may be the exchange of expertise, that of materials, or transfer of credits. An instructional designer must necessarily keep the above questions in mind while he/she works to facilitate the learning processes. Let us take up these questions for a more detailed discussion.

Open and DE systems of education evolved from the convergence of three major post war educational trends. The first of these concerns developments in the provision for adult education, the second the growth of educational broadcasting and the third the political objective of promoting the spread of egalitarianism in education ! (Perry, 1976). Present efforts of international cooperation in the area of open and distance education are partly an extension of these trends and partly a result of the convergence of some additional trends – such as the need for global economy in education, possibilities opened up by communication technologies and greater awareness with regard to the need for improving educational environment globally. This outlines, in abstract terms, an answer to the question why a course/programme at the outset.

This discussion in the earlier units (particularly units 1 and 3) dealt with the issue of learner variety and a wide spectrum of learner needs which require to be catered to. Here we are concerned with students who have reached a threshold for taking courses available in English. We must accept the fact that this student population presents a broad spectrum of English language competence in terms of linguistic, discourse-based and pragmatic parameters. Further most of these learners are not trained self-learners. With this student profile, we have the answer to the question *for whom*! The design aspect of the materials – the primary responsibility of the instructional designer, in a sense – would depend on the profile of the target group. More importantly, the flexibility issue of self-instructional materials is directly related to the variety of learner needs.

In the context of distance education, the content of a syllabus takes the shape of tangible educational materials – whatever be the form and technological base - which are distributed over distances. It is these educational materials which constitute *the what* of this educational enterprise.

Learner training, particularly in the areas of study skills is a crucial component of preparation in the DE context. It is argued that in the DE context reading and writing are important as processes in themselves and the entire endeavour of teaching-learning is concerned more with these processes than the products of these pocesses. If this is the case, it is but natural that these processes should mark a 'discourse exchange' in which course writers, language teachers, students assessors/tutors and assignment markers are active participants. It follows, then, that the ideal way of meeting this challenge is to promote the *language across the curriculum approach* in course preparation. This becomes the business of the instructional designer on the one hand and the students on the other. The answers to the question 'by whom' and 'how' emerges in this manner.

4.5.1 Status of ESP and Content Mix

Does this look familiar to you?

Instruction lines:, " Type 1 "Fill in the blanks with correct articles or prepositions".

Type 2 "blanks with appropriate logical connectives."

What do you think is the difference between 'type 1' and 'type 2'?

Which of them seems more familiar to you?

In most cases in the developing countries teaching of English has been first literature-based and then language-oriented with emphasis on correctness of form and system. An element of improvement in the teaching of English came in when the basis shifted to rhetorical structure with emphasis on rhetorical and cohesive devices. The change in the exercises (We tried to show you how those changed by means of an example above) was but a manifestation of this shift in emphasis. In either case the learner is expected to work on a model which is made available to be copied and/or followed. It took more experience and experimentation to realize that a model, be it language focused or discourse-focused, remains a demonstration of a product created by someone else. It does not show the processes that produced it for a learner or student who needs to read and write effectively and purposefully; insights into processes are more significant and better guides than the specimen products of that process.

Secondly, heavy dependence on 'products' has led to the belief that reading and writing are linear phenomena and through them all learning is too is so.

By these, what do we mean here? You realize that when we do serious reading and writing, we are also thinking simultaneously. In other words, we react to what we read and/or write and ideas flow and fuse constantly to modify the processes. Purposeful reading and writing are then accompanied by thinking and when these are focused on a topic/task/assignment, the processes are recursive. These processes are to be built according to a plan which is not complete and perfect in itself. The plan too keeps changing as one builds the thinking and learning sets and it gets revised over and over again till the 'desired learning' is achieved.

Given this phenomenon, how can we achieve a balance between content and language teaching? You may recall that we outlined some of the common problems facing us when we attempted this step in the earlier units. It is only recently that language and content teachers working in L_2 contexts have gradually come to realize that tackling problems of L_2 and those of learning a particular context may best be taken care of together. In other words, language need to be seen as an entity that stands apart from the content; tackling problems in one area amounts to tackling of problems in the other. Depending on the levels of awareness, administrative cooperation and other facilities different institutions have been working on different models to promote the kind of pedagogy that is suggested here.

4.5.2 ESP and Context Mix: Models

As a case in point, we present two models here;

Model 1

There are institutions where the L_2 teacher and the content teacher have pre-course meetings to decide on a language syllabus which is best suited for the students of that content, i.e. discipline. The L_2 teacher gives the planned course separately, in certain cases before the students take up the actual content courses. In others the L_2 and content courses are given concurrently but there is no dovetailing the two.

Model 2

In this case, the L_2 teacher and the content teacher start in the same way i.e. with a discussion of what is best to be taught in each are. They prepare their teaching plans collaboratively. Then they arrange the time table in such a way that when the students actually join the course, the content class gets reinforced by the L_2 teachers through the language teaching and vice versa.

There are, of course, other possibilities and practices – some more advantageous than others. New approaches are emerging as new insights are gained with experiments.

What we have discussed so far, pertains to face-to-face situations in advanced countries like the UK. We should remember that operationally face-to-face teaching differs from DE in a number of ways. Given the fact that we are interested in linking content teaching with language teaching, can we transfer these models to DE in absolute terms? How many of these ways of fusing language teaching and content teaching can be made possible in DE contexts? Before answer these questions, let us understand the notion of LAC more clearly.

4.6 LAC: AN EXPOSITION

The *language across the curriculum* movement (LAC) is an educational reform movement which began in the sixties as response to the neglect of language use in L_1 secondary schools and centres on the practical questions of integrating the language curriculum within the general curriculum. It sees a key education issue as the struggle of learners and teachers with the challenges of appropriate language use in various situations and seeks to promote the idea that effective language use is the shared responsibility of every teacher in every subject, not only of the teacher of language alone. Although LAC policies were developed to improve the use of language in L_1 schools, they are equally, if not more relevant to second language learners (L_2). After all, it is not reasonable to expect learners of limited English proficiency to succeed where native speakers between the two terms:

> *Where we talk about 'English-medium' or 'Malay-medium' education we are simply referring to which of a number of possible languages is used as the means of instruction, when we refer to language across the curriculum we are concerned with how the language is used: what kind of English, for example….is involved in learning science, or in learning history of mathematics.* Halliday (1975).

However, in situations where the language of learning is a second/foreign language, that language is traditionally taught as a subject in itself, involving the mastery of language items which are not necessarily contextualized or where contextualisation is a peripheral consideration. For example, where language is explored in a given context with the language course, the relationship between the language and context is often tenuous. Topics, situation and subject are frequently regarded as a convenient backdrop of the display of particular linguistic features.

Have you heard this before?

"So long as they understand the underlying concepts, I am not fussed about their grammar."

"I am a history teacher, it is not my job to teach composition or correct grammar."

Does this sound familiar to you? What is your own reaction to these approaches?

Traditionally, in second and foreign language situations, there is very little overlap between the concern of a language course and a subject course. This compartmentalising of ‘content’ and ‘language’ teaching is reflected in the illustrated above antagonism between the two sets of teachers.

The basic assumptions underlying this approach are:

i) A language course is to be used for deferred purposes i.e. in the services of various other subjects in future.

ii) The learners will automatically be able to transfer and deploy their language skills in a wide variety of cases.

The problem with this approach is that the learner is not *taught how to transfer* these skills.

The type of language needed for school includes not only all the domains of language (phonetics, phonology, inflectional morphology, syntax, vocabulary, discourse, pragmatics and paralinguistics – including both structure and semantics), with all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) to be mastered in each domain but also use of these domains, skills within each subject areas to be mastered (language, arts, maths, science, and social studies).

This has several pedagogical implications. First of all, it implies a far more language rich context than is allowed in the strictly teacher-controlled environment of rule-based classes. Secondly, there is a need to relate the language being taught to the content which carries it. In contexts where English is the medium of instruction, this suggests that language teaching should not be divorced from the teaching of the various subjects within the school/university curriculum. It implies a much greater degree of cooperation between subject teachers and English language specialists. It would also suggest that the widespread practice of teaching language to ESL learners in withdrawal classes/courses is counter-productive, that strategies ought to be developed for taking the language teacher into the language leaning situation rather than taking the language learner out.

4.6.1 Content-based Second Language Instruction

The LAC movement has influenced second language instruction in theory and practice and has contributed to a growing awareness of the importance of language, particularly one that serves as the medium of teaching and learning to all its users in an institution. In particular it has contributed to a growing body of L2 content-oriented language teaching approaches where language instruction has been integrated with subject matter instruction to varying degrees. These include the cases of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), English for Specific purposes (ESP) and Immersion Education in Canada and United States.

It is important to point out that context-based teaching should not be interpreted in the narrow sense of teaching highly specialised varieties with restricted words and grammar (although it is true to say that there are plenty of examples of this). Naturally there will be some features which are typical of a particular context of use but these differences should not obscure a larger area of common ground that underlines languages use. Content-based teaching should therefore not be regarded as product rather than as a range of approaches to language learning based on learners’ needs. Having said so much for the nature of content-based approach to second language teaching it stands to reason that we should move on the explore the rationale behind this approach. We shall do that in the following subsection.

4.6.2 Rationale Behind Content-based Second Language Teaching

Despite the differences between the various approaches within this area in terms of their methodologies, strategies and materials, they tend to have certain common, underlying features.

The objectives and language content of each course are defined according to the learner's functional needs in the second language.

Content which is perceived as relevant by the learner is assumed to increase motivation and thus to promote more effective learning.

They apply the pedagogical principle that teaching should build on the previous experience of the learner, by taking into account the learner's existing knowledge of the subject matter and of the academic environment as well as their second language knowledge.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

Briefly describe the pedagogical implications of LAC.

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4.7 LAC: DISTANCE EDUCATION CONTEXT

Let us go back to questions raised at the end of subsection 4.3.2 and elaborate on the models presented there.

To integrate content with language teaching, it is suggested that three sources be used to identify language learning objectives in a content-based programme.

- The Lcurriculum
- The content curriculum
- Learner's assessment of academic and communicative needs and continual evaluation of learners *developing* language skills.

We may then prepare the study materials in such a way that instruction in the discipline-content and the language-content get dovetailed with each other and that the learner picks up the language needed for the discipline along with the discipline. Further both the discipline specialist and the ELT/ESP expert have to prepare guidelines that need to be followed by tutors in assessing the students' work. This will on the one hand ensure a uniform and mutually agreed upon scheme for the process of teaching/learning and provide a possibility of improving the materials on the other.

Having outlined the general approach let us now get down to the specifics. For purposes of DE, autonomous English language courses can be justifiable only for such students who have not reached the threshold. A case in point here would be Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. Beyond the threshold stage language across the curriculum seems to be the only way out. This may be achieved in various ways.

Approach 1

The conventional ESP approach: An ESP expert, in this case, looks into DE materials of a particular area – be it social sciences, sciences, etc. – and identifies the lexis,, syntax and discourse features specific to the area concerned and builds an ESP course incorporating instruction in these elements. This should give rise to a number of ESP courses. These courses can run concurrently with the respective discipline/content courses. The students have to integrate the language learnt in the ESP course with the content of their respective disciplines.

This approach is better than providing no language support at all. However, this does not meet the requirements that we have been discussing so far, i.e. contextualized content/discipline-specific linguistic input.

Approach 2

In this case, the content teacher and the L_2 teacher interact with each other at the stage of course development. This interaction should result in indentifying the content-specific vocabulary, syntax and discourse features. Further they should also be in a position to gauge the requirements of pragmatic competence as far as writing and reading needs are concerned. This shall, in turn, shed light on the possibilities of learning 'how to learn', scope for integrating reading and writing skills, background knowledge and formal schemata etc. as well as cultural differences. The L_2 teachers will have to take up this exercise in relation to each and every course to be launched.

The most significant aspect of this approach is that it leads to the preparation of a language teaching/support programme that is entirely relevant to the content and the teaching of the context in question. This programme may be made available to students as a parallel or a supplemental programme going together with the main content programme. The two courses could be taken simultaneously or at different times as the two exist as two separate entities.

In this case, the assignments on the two components will have to be assessed by two different assessors which must increase the cost of the course. The cost of the course will also increase because the supplemental L_2 component will be prepared separately. Another possibility is that assignments may integrate content and language tasks to be assessed by the content specialist which he/she will find difficult to manage. Yet another variation is that this content specific language support is incorporated with the content-course itself, with some assignments and tasks on the content and some on language and some that integrate the two.

The only downside of this approach is that the divide between the language needed and the content it belongs to is still visible, and from the students' point of view, irksome. This, then, takes us to the third approach.

Approach 3

From the discussion above, it emerges that decisions need to be taken on:

- The language content in relation to the desired discipline content.
- Discourse and pragmatic features needed for the learning endeavour to be successful.

The most ideal way of preparation DE materials to satisfy these interests, then, is that ELT/ESP experts and content specialists sit together to devise the syllabus/course and also to decide on the features mentioned above. In the process, they may also see what additional elements may possibly be compatible with the discipline content under consideration. This will help them devise the tasks in such a way that the learner masters the content and the content-specific language simultaneously.

The suggestion is that there is no overt language teaching involved in the design. On the contrary, the interaction of the learner with the text is so programmed that most learning tasks contribute to both the learning of the content and that of the relevant language.

This approach, to be implemented effectively, has a significant implication for course preparation and human resource development in the area of DE.

4.8 COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

The increasing interest in content-oriented and content-based language learning is related to the 'communicative approach' to second/foreign language learning/teaching which takes contextualisation as a basic premise and linguistic variations a central concept in materials and methodology.

Some important theoretical principles underpinning communicative language teaching are:

- Language is a system for the expression of meaning
- The primary function of language is for interaction and communication
- The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses
- The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional communicative meanings as exemplified in discourse. (Richards, and Rodgers, 1986)

From the late 60s onwards, the communicative approach began to challenge (and continues to challenge) the hitherto predominant Ltheory and research which took for granted the primacy of syntax and largely described second language learning as "a continuum of gradually complexifying syntactic systems'. This approach defined language proficiency with reference to communicative rather than linguistic competence. In other words, it involved not just knowing certain linguistic rules but also having the ability to use those rules creatively, effectively and appropriately in communication. The development of communication abilities, it was suggested, should be the focus of teaching objectives since 'communicative abilities embrace linguistic skills to grasp the content of a given subject or communication.

Where rule-based language teaching would suggest that meaning exists ready-made in the language itself (i.e. in the format features of sentences), the communicative approach advances the idea that sentences assume meaning within a broader discourse, a broader context.

From this perspective communication is viewed as an interactive process rather than a set of discrete learning outcomes and a learner is seen not as a passive recipient of meanings, a decoder, but an active participant who taps into a range of knowledge sources and resources, linguistic and otherwise, to 'negotiate' meaning within a communicative situation, i.e., when trying to put across and interpret meanings.

4.8.1 Process vs. Product

Essentially, the communicative approach represents an expansion of the view of language as something we have to include in something we do. Furthermore, the 'strong' version of the meaning-based, communicative approach puts forward the claim that language is acquired through communication, i.e. through 'doing'; that it is not only a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of the language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself (Howatt, 1984). This represents a shift in emphasis from *learning a language to use to using a language to learn* and thereby 'incidentally' acquiring language. This to emphasise, viewing language as a vehicle for information rather than as a linguistic object, as a study in itself. CLT promotes a much more learning-centred and experience-based pedagogical approach.

This shift has broadened the focus of course designers out from an exclusive concentration on the outcomes of products of instruction, i.e. the knowledge and skills to be gained by the learner, to an increasing emphasis on the processes through which knowledge and skills might be gained. After all, knowing a language rule does not mean that a learner will be able to use it in communicative interactions. Rules of a language syntactic, phonological, and others. Tell us nothing about the mental processes or procedures people actually use a language.

This broadening of the concerns of language education suggests that learners need to be provided with wider exposure to language and increased opportunities not only to manipulate the formula systems of the language, but also to make use of their communicative abilities. They need to be actively engaged in coping with and negotiating meaning in order to stimulate and develop their underlying communicative abilities. In teaching terms this means than the traditional focus of both native and second language class on the awareness of linguistic form is subordinated to a focus on acquiring information through the second language where, taking the example of text materials, text is used as a vehicle for information rather than a linguistic object itself; and that language should be recognised as something which is complex, and which develops in ways that rarely match simple syllabus descriptions. In addition to syllabus specification, a much heavier emphasis is now placed on syllabus implementation, i.e. methodology.

4.8.2 Communicative Task-based Approaches

As a direct result of this approach, interest has focused on the development of leaning activities or tasks which promote a learner's cognitive as well as communicative skills. For example:

Situation: You are a tourist in London, on a shoe-string budget and all set to explore the city by yourself.

Task: You need to get to Hyde Park. You do have a map but you can't read it very well. You need to find out whether you can take the Tube and if yes, at which point. How would you do that?

The situation given above is a rather simplistic illustration of a contextulised language learning activity. The problem is given and its solution engages learners in a communicative task. At other levels, the same task can involve searching for and/or evaluating a particular part of the text. The claim is that the learner's ability to use the language creatively and appropriately will be developed by engaging them in a situations which oblige them to use language purposefully and spontaneously to get information. In addition, such a context offers room for learners to develop strategies for interpreting and using language outside the classroom.

Tasks, therefore, refer to a range of work plans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning and promoting learner autonomy. A task is a language learning endeavour which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task. Such tasks could be as follows:

- exploration by the learner of language and learning
- challenge and critique by the learner of language learning and the syllabus.
- negotiation by the learner of language learning and the syllabus.
- interaction and interdependence among learners and teachers, and among the data, resources and activities of language learning.
- the creating of tactical accounts as a means of evaluating language learning and action and as a means of critiquing curriculum guidelines.
- providing comprehensible input and procedures for engaging that input.
- accommodating differentiation among learners.
- problematising language learning and classroom action.
- managing language learning.

Check Your Progress 5

Note: i) Space is given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

What are the basic principles underlying communicative language teaching?

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4.9 LET US SUM UP

Issues relating to the language needs of Commonwealth distance learners in general and various kinds and levels of support needed for these learners to ensure effective learning are the concerns of this part of the course. This unit, being introductory in nature, sets the ground for discussion by tackling certain general features of the ELT situation in the Commonwealth. The scope of this unit includes the following:

- Socio-political factors (more or less common to all those countries which are former British colonies),
- The socio-educational dynamics in such countries after they gained independence from colonial rulers,

- The clientele for Commonwealth DE system (including their common problems, and strategies adopted to combat those limitations), and
- Some key issues relating to language support mechanisms.
- The case of EDEP in the light of the needs of the average commonwealth distance learner
- The evolution and salient features of LAC
- The rationale behind content-based language teaching
- The relevance of communicative language teaching in relation to LAC

4.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

i) The nature of the use of a second language and the training needed for such use are both determined by the state policy. If the state decides against the use of a language for official purposes, it will decline both in terms of user-capacity and user-value.

ii) In India, English is still an official language for communication and education whereas, Thailand has never used it for such a purpose. Malaysia too has discarded English for educational purposes. Their approaches to ELT are therefore different.

Check Your Progress 2

There are, in broad terms, four categories of learners of English:

i) Those whose parents received English education during the colonial period- the upper crust of society who are third or fourth generation learners.

ii) Those who are second generation learners- the middle classes.

iii) Low income groups, who are first generation learners.

iv) Tribals and other groups who are still in the throes of socio-cultural transition.

Check Your Progress 3

i) The integration of ESL development into mainstream subjects, emphasis on reading and writing skills, an expanded view of readability and emphasis on 'interactive' teaching methodologies.

ii) The learner training component (within EDEP) aims at enabling the learners to consider their learning practice and attitudes (psychological preparation), to experiment with different learning strategies (methodological preparation) and to take more responsibility for their own learning (self-direction).

Check Your Progress 4

The content and objectives of each course are built around the learner's functional need in a second language. This is intended to increase motivation. The underlying principle here is that acquisition of new knowledge is based on the learner's former existing knowledge.

Check Your Progress 5

Language is a system for the expression of meaning. The basic principles of CLT are:

i) The primary function of language use is for interaction and communication.

ii) The structure of a language reflects its functional and communicative uses.

iii) The primary units of language are functional meanings exemplified in discourse.

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