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in this issue

EDITORIAL

HURIA is the first journal of the Open University of Tanzania and this first issue appears about three years since the founding of the University. HURIA is an interdisciplinary journal which is intended to be a forum for exchange of views and ideas between academicians and scholars in various fields but particularly in distance education.

The launching of HURIA is very much in line with the objects and functions of the University which are amplified in the following extracts

"(i) to preserve, enhance and transmit knowledge by teaching and conducting research through various means of communication including the use of broadcasting and technological devices appropriate to higher education, by correspondence, tuition, residential courses and seminars".

"(ii) to promote the educational well being of the community generally through distance education methods".

It is therefore the hope of the Editorial Board that HURIA will fulfill this role and thus facilitate some intellectual contacts amongst academicians in several African Universities and even beyond the continent's borders particularly in matters concerning distance education.

The launching of HURIA has also been catalysed by the fact the Open University of Tanzania is the first single mode distance education university of its kind south of the Sahara, offering degree courses through distance learning.systems. As we go to press, the University of South Africa (UNISA) is just about to launch a similar program in distance learning and in doing so become Huria's (the University) comrade-in-arms in this very important mission. It is also the hope of the Editorial Board that HURIA will facilitate intellectual contacts between academicians in these African Universities.

Finally, like any other academic journal, HURIA is also intended to be a publication forum for research papers and results on non-distance education matters and one article in this issue is an excellent example of a publication on non-distance education research. Indeed, HURIA should strive to be a reputable national/international journal.

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AN IDEA TAKES SHAPE: THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA'S EARLY DAYS

Prof. Geoffrey Mmari

Introduction:

About two decades ago, the Government of Tanzania approached the British Government requesting for assistance for a joint study on the development of educational media! The study was officially launched by HE Ambassador Nicholas A. Kuhanga at that time Minister for National Education who stated (British Council 1979:2) "... the Government would soon have to come to a decision on setting up another university and it would like to avoid the heavy investment in residential accommodation, lecture rooms and libraries which accompany conventional institutions. They would like guidance on the possibility of establishing an 'Open University'."

A 14 person team was formed (8 Tanzanians and 6 British with Joint Chairmen - 1 Tanzania and 1 British) and addressed itself to the various terms of reference including one on establishment of an Open University; (British Council 1979:1). On this, the Study Team recommended (British Council 1979:51-52) "The University of Dar es Salaam represents the only viable centre for this activity. Hence a Correspondence Institute (Extension Department) should be set up within the University and be under the control of the Senate of the University as any other Institute, i.e. through a Board. The University staff will provide the teaching input with a small coordinating and clerical staff to man the Unit."

issing from the Kuhanga Committee recommendations and were also not pproved by Government during the early drafts. Sentiments of MPs and mands of the general public applying for admission led to an early troduction[12] of courses in these two disciplines.

nings moved fast after the Presidential assent in December, 1992. The inister responsible for Higher Education announced in the Official azette[13] that lst March, 1993 would be the date of the commencement of tivities of the University. Early April, 1993 saw the appointment of a ancellor,[14] a Vice Chancellor[15] and Chairman[16] of University uncil. By August 25, 1993 it was possible to convene the first Council eeting since there was already a quorum by this date. To await a full uncil was not practical since some of the constituencies[17] were not yet place e.g. the Students organization.

eps to get international recognition followed with the official visit of the NESCO Director General on 26th July, 1993. He unveiled a plaque on unfinished building and invited guests sat under covered temporary uctures out in the open space. This event had an important significance ce it drew the international community's attention to the birth of this w University. Some made promises[18] for assistance, including NESCO which donated Desk Top publishing equipment a few months er.

e Association of Commonwealth Universities in London admitted[19] JT as member of ACU on receipt of copy of the Act establishing the iversity, names of the top Executives, budget of the University plus a v technical details on the admission policies, range of courses etc. ile it took sometime for the Association of African Universities[20] and

the Inter-University Council for East Africa[21] to respond to application of membership, the quick response from ACU was very timely given the nature of the new University.

For the rest of 1993 work went on to recruit staff and invite applications from students. So much was done so that by 18th January, 1994 it was possible to conduct a special ceremony where the Chancellor was installed and students given their study materials. The colourful ceremony was held in the open like the July 1993 one but this time in front of the completed Building of the University's head office.

Altogether 766 students were registered[22] for four degree programmes namely the BA, BA with Education, BCom, BCom with Education using study materials purchased from the University of Nairobi. During the preparation years, arrangements had been made to visit the University of Nairobi which had been offering degree courses by distance methods since 1985. Since it was impractical to ask all students to come to Dar es Salaam for all their work, nine Regional Centres[23] had already been identified. Each Regional Centre was responsible for a cluster of other Regions. To each Regional Centre were sent subject coordinators and Part-time subject specialists to meet the OUT students or to invigilate Timed Tests or the Annual Examinations.

Early 1994 the Council was in a position to appoint a Deputy Vice Chancellor[24] responsible for academic affairs, a Registrar,[25] a Secretary to Council[26] and a few other key staff. And this way, the University took its first bold steps into existence.

GROWTH OF THE UNIVERSITY

The University coordination office had a core staff of three plus a secretarial staff of three in 1991/92. The number had grown to 37 academic and 43 administrative staff by 1996/97. This group includes Deans of Faculties, Finance and Stores staff, Administrative Officers for Examinations, Admission, Recruitment, Planning and Student Administration.

The University has hired essential services provided by private firms for security, cleanliness and health at the head office. It has also deployed staff in some of its Regional centres[27] which have grown from nine in 1994 to seventeen in 1996. The maximum will be reached in 1997 when it is expected to have twenty-one such Centres.

Whereas the Act establishing the University provides for three Faculties initially, a fourth was established effective January 1995 when LLB courses were first offered and this is the Faculty of Law. In the pipeline is the Institute of Continuing Education whose Regulations were published in the Official Gazette on 26th July, 1996.

The most dramatic growth is in the number of students who have increased from 766 in January 1994 to over 2,800 in January 1996 and expected to exceed 4,000 in January 1997. As students have grown in number and progressed from one year to the next so have increased the number of courses taught. There are currently over 90 courses taught for which Timed Tests and Annual Examinations are set. To meet this demand, the number of study materials purchased from Nairobi has increased. The most notable achievement here is the number of study materials written and published locally. There are now 33 Titles already published and either in use or soon to be distributed to students.

It is too early to measure the growth in quality of the University programmes since no one has graduated so far. Comments from external Examiners[28] as well as from Part-Time staff indicate that some of the students compare favourably with their peers in the conventional universities. Measured by enquiries from within and outside the country it can be said that the University's programmes are drawing attention we cannot ignore.

PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

The UNESCO consultant's report puts the University's growth at 18,500 students by end of its fifth year of existence. It also projects a diversified student population consisting of those on degree programmes as well as those on non-degree programmes and other awards. The projected enrolments are shown in the table 1 below:

Table 1: Projected Enrolments

Programme	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
BA(Education)	500	1,000	1,500	2,000	2,500
Foundation Courses	-	1,000	2,000	3,000	4,000
BSc (Education)	-	-	500	1,000	1,500
Development Studies	-	1,000	2,000	3,000	4,000
Diploma in Management	-	-	-	500	1,000
Continuing Education Programmes.	-	1,000	2,000	3,000	4,000
B.Com	-	-	-	-	500
Diploma in Distance Education	-	-	-	500	1,000
TOTAL	500	4,000	8,000	13,000	18,500

Source: Kinyanjui, Peter E. *Project Document for the Proposed Open University of Tanzania, UNESCO and COL, July 1993.*

The actual performance to-date is shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Actual Enrollment 1994-1996

Programme	1994	1995	1996
BA	188	239	317
BA(Education)	359	486	613
BCom	196	291	457
BCom(Education)	23	40	81
BSc	-	32	119
BSc(Education)	-	61	187
LLB	-	355	867
Foundation Courses	-	-	141
TOTAL	766	1,504	2,782

Source: The United Republic of Tanzania *Higher and Technical Education Statistics in Tanzania 1991/92-1995/96,* Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, July, 1996, Dar es Salaam University Press.

The disparity between the UNESCO Projected figures and the actual can be accounted for by the absence of non-degree programmes. The Institute of Continuing Education responsible for such courses was gazetted on 26th July, 1996 and for this reason, such courses could not have started.

The UNESCO figures are also based on optimistic response based on a large pool of source of students. The University's own projection is 1,000 new degree students per annum based on the reality that there is a restricted pool of students and that some of them cannot afford the fees.

In terms of programmes it is expected that postgraduate programmes will follow in two years time given the number of enquiries and short duration of such programmes. These will be at both the Masters and Doctoral levels. To do a proper job, strengthening of the staffing situation will be necessary. Likewise it will be necessary to improve on facilities needed for launching such programmes.

In terms of study materials, much work awaits the University since some disciplines do not yet have study materials produced. Procurement of such materials from overseas is a necessary course to take but production locally, is preferred.

Means of communication are changing rapidly and the University will need to adopt these as quickly as possible. Limitations to their use in certain places are expected and alternatives will have to be provided.

To help students complete their programmes, it will be necessary to strengthen services such as establishment of Study Centres near their locations. Future of the University and future of the students will depend on the extent to which facilities get close to the students and are properly utilized.

Establishing an institution of higher learning under difficult economic constraints is a great challenge but they are surmountable.

Footnotes

1. British Council *Educational Media in Tanzania, Their Role in Development Section One: Report of an Anglo-Tanzanian Study Team,* London January/February 1979.

   _____ *Educational Media in Tanzania, Their Role in Development Section Two: Economic Considerations,* London January/February 1979.

   _____ *Educational Media in Tanzania, Their Role in Development SectionThree: Technical Considerations,* London January/February 1979.

2. United Republic of Tanzania *Presidential Commission on Education: Mfumo wa Elimu ya Tanzania 1981-2000 Juzuu la Kwanza,* Printpak MTUU, February 1982

3. His Excellency Ambassador Nicholas A. Kuhanga was Minister for National Education in 1979 and Vice Chancellor, University of Dar es Salaam when, on lst September 1988 he was appointed Chairman of the Committee on the Establishment of an Open University in Tanzania.

4. (i) As an example, while the Kuhanga Committee recommended 14 Zonal Offices, the Ad Hoc Committee recommended 20 Regional Centres on the Mainland and one in Zanzibar in response to a Cabinet decision to make sure the University reached every Region.

   (ii) Another example, while the Kuhanga Committee recommended six Schools (or Faculties), the Ad Hoc Committee settled for three Faculties as suggested by Government.

5. United Republic of Tanzania *Kuanzishwa kwa Chuo cha Mawasiliano Huria - Waraka Na.28/1991,* Dar es Salaam.

6. These were later revised to read as follows in the final text.

   (i) In cooperation with the national authorities and experts, assess available resources and future needs relevant to the establishment of the Open University of Tanzania.

   (ii) Prepare a project document for the establishment of the University. This document should be prepared according to the guidelines approved by UNDP.

   (iii) Identify the role which this proposed University can play as a Sub-regional information, training and production centre within the framework of the regional programme for the development of distance education in Africa (RPDEA) RAF/91/009; this should include all relevant background as well as the substantive, organisational and financial support of the Commonwealth of Learning for Project RAF/91/009 in general, and for the establishment, and the sub-regional role, of the Open University, in particular.

   (iv) Submit the project document in two copies, for UNESCO's approval no later than April 30, 1993.

7. Kinyanjui, Peter E., *Project Document for the Proposed Open University of Tanzania,* UNESCO and COL July 1993.

8. United Republic of Tanzania, Act No.17 of 1992, *An Act to Establish the Open University of Tanzania and to Provide for Matters Connected Therewith or Incidental Thereto,* Government Printer, 1992.

9. *Ibid.* Fourth Schedule.

10. United Republic of Tanzania, Act No. 18 of 1995 *An Act to Amend Certain Written Laws,* Government Printer, 1995.

11. Council of the Institute of Adult Education, *Hoja za Kuiomba Serikali Irekebishe Mswada wa Sheria inayokusudia Kuanzisha Chuo Kikuu cha Mawasiliano Huria: Kifungu Na.64 na Ufafanuzi Na.4,* Institute of Adult Education. November 27, 1992.

    This appeal was written seven (7) days before Parliament debated the Bill seeking to establish the Open University of Tanzania. Government response to this appeal is not available.

12. United Republic of Tanzania *The Open University of Tanzania (Establishment of the Faculty of Law) Order 1996,* Friday 8th March, 1996 Government Notice No.39 Government Printer, 1996 The effective date of the Faculty of Law establishment order is 2nd January, 1995.

13. United Republic of Tanzania *The Open University Act (Commencement) Notice, Act 1993,* Government Notice No.55 of 26 February, 1993 Government Printer, Dar es Salaam 1993.

14. The first Chancellor so appointed was Hon. Dr. John S. Malecela (MP) at that time Prime Minister and First Vice President, United Republic of Tanzania.

15. The first Vice Chancellor so appointed was Professor Geoffrey Mmari at that time Coordinator of the Open University Planning Office.

16. The first Chairman of Council was Hon. Basil P. Mramba (MP) at that time Member of Parliament representing Rombo.

17. The first Council was attended by 8 out of 20 prescribed in the Act. Since according to the Act one third of the members in office for the time being shall constitute a quorum, provisions of the Second Schedule Section 10(1) were abided with.

18. The Open University of Tanzania *Newsletter* Issue No.4 September 1993 page 2 OUT, Dar es Salaam, 1993.

19. The Association of Commonwealth Universities Yearbooks E.g. *Yearbook 1995-96* Vol.II page 1,276 ACU, London, 1995. See also the Open University of Tanzania *Newsletter* Issue No.5, December 1993 page 4.

20. The Open University of Tanzania was admitted as member of the African Association of Universities in 1995. See also the Open University of Tanzania *Newsletter,* Issue No.13, December 1995 page 3.

21. The Open University of Tanzania was admitted as member of the Inter-University Council for East Africa in 1994 See also the Open University of Tanzania *Newsletter,* Issue No. 13, December 1995 page 3.

22. The breakdown was -

    BA 188, BA with Education 359, BCom 195, BCom with Education 24.

23. The Regional centres were deployed as follows:

Regional Centre	Regions covered
1. Dar es Salaam	Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, Coast
2. Mbeya	Mbeya, Rukwa, Iringa, Ruvuma
3. Mwanza	Mwanza, Mara, Kagera, Shinyanga
4. Arusha	Arusha, Singida
5. Moshi	Kilimanjaro, Tanga
6. Tabora	Tabora, Kigoma
7. Zanzibar	Unguja, Pemba
8. Mtwara	Mtwara, Lindi
9. Dodoma	Dodoma, Singida

24. The first Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) was the late Professor Beatus J. Chijumba with previous experience as Principal, Institute of Development Management (IDM); Principal, National Institute of Transport (NIT) and Associate Professor at the University of Eritrea.

25. The First Registrar was Dr. Egino M. Chale with previous experience as Senior Lecturer, University of Dar es Salaam; Director, Southern Africa Extension Unit (SAEU) and staff member, Institute of Adult Education.

26. The first Secretary to Council was Mr. Z.J. Mpogolo, retired educator whose last post was that of Director of Adult Education, Ministry of Education and Culture also Expert to Mozambique and Director of the Lake Literacy Project.

27. By 1996 the following persons were deployed in seven Regional Centres

Regional Centre	Director/Person Incharge
Dar es Salaam	Mr. H. P. Kimaty
Kilimanjaro	Prof. A. S. Meena
Mtwara/Lindi	Dr. M. A. Ndaka
Songea	Mr. Bahati Chale
Morogoro	Mr. Flat Mfangavo
Dodoma/Singida	Dr. D. Y. Kinshaga
Zanzibar	Mr. H. Mwinyichande
Mbeya/Rukwa	Mr. Lazaro Swai
Tabora/Kigoma	Mr. M. Dasu
Mwanza	Mr. H. A. Shungu

28. The Open University of Tanzania *Newsletter* Issue No.10 of March 1995 (pages 2-3) and Issue No.14 of March, 1996, OUT, Dar es Salaam.

29. The Open University of Tanzania currently provides tutorial backup service to ten (10) students registered with the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) for the Masters in Distance Education. IGNOU is in charge of the Rajiv Gandhi Fellowship Scheme and cooperates with the Commonwealth of Learning which funds it. Coordination of the identification of students and processing their applications to COL is done by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education.

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL CONTEXT ON DISTANCE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN AFRICA

Prof. Joe K. Ansere

The social milieu of a country necessarily exerts influences on the development of institutions that are created to perform all kinds of functions in the country. Educational institutions are perhaps more vulnerable in this regard than other institutions, because, of their role as transmitters of societal values and traditions from generation to generation and because of their role as modifiers of human behaviour. All educational institutions are susceptible to these influences, but perhaps open learning institutions are more so than others because of their revolutionary and all-embracing nature. The case of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOU) will be used to illustrate the problem.

In April 1983, the NOU was established under an Act of Parliament (Ojo 1984). The idea of the establishment of university was the brainchild of Shegu Shagari, the then President of the Republic of Nigeria, and was supported very strongly by his political party, the National Party of Nigeria. In May 1984, a little over a year afterwards, the NOU was suspended following the military overthrow of the government. This action shattered all the hopes as well as the preparations the new university had made for its take-off. The preparations included the setting up of offices in Lagos and Abuja (the new Federal Capital of the country), recruitment of staff from within and abroad, procurement of equipment and material and the writing of the Foundation Year courses. Other preparations were the broadcasting of lectures to orient the prospective

students to the new system of learning and formal advertisement of the programme in the mass media calling on students to apply.

The suspension of the university opened the floodgates for the revival of the opposition against it. The NOU was said to be too expensive and that the needed infrastructures did not exist in the right quantities and qualities. These incidentally were the official reasons given by the military government for their action. In addition, some people wondered whether the country had local expertise to handle a programme of that nature, and whether the open university was all that urgent in relation to the priorities of the nation at the time. Some members of the traditional universities suggested that it would be better for the money earmarked for the NOU to be utilised for the improvement of the existing universities, or at best for the establishment of distance education programmes within existing universities. The academics also poured scorn on the ability of the NOU to maintain standards, in a way agreeing with Kingsley Amis' contention that "more means worse" and Ashby's fear that the expansion in higher education will put at risk "the thin clear stream of excellence". The point was also made that there were too many unemployed university graduates for the production of more graduates to be justified.

How much credence can one give to these arguments? The answer is that very little credence can be accorded these arguments. The argument about expensiveness of the open university has already been proved to be wrong. Open learning systems, according to Rumble (1976), Laidlaw and Layard (1974) and Ansere (1982) cost much less than conventional learning systems, mainly due to their wide catchment and resultant economies of scale. It is true that the infrastructural facilities in Nigeria are inadequate, but the use of courier mailing services howbeit expensive and

the heavy dependence of the open university on the print media, rather than on the electronic media could provide adequate solutions to the problem. As regards the argument about the lack of local expertise, it can be said that the best way to prove this is to give Nigerians a chance. In any case, the countries that have successfully operated open universities did not have aimed personnel to begin with. And the urgency of an open university for Nigeria can be justified by reference to the explosion that has occurred in the student demand for university places. By all means more money should be allocated to existing universities every year, but it should be realised that the conventional universities cannot increase student intake by any appreciable margin because many of them have already reached their optimum level. Experiences of countries that have adopted the approach of tacking distance education programmes onto existing conventional universities show that such a system creates more problems than they solve. The reason is that two diametrically opposed systems can hardly operate peacefully together. And Walter Perry (1974), the first Vice Chancellor of the Open University of the United Kingdom, using the example of the UKOU, has debunked the notion that standards necessarily fall when open universities cater to large numbers of students. Concerning the unemployment of university graduates, one can say that the blame should rather be put at the door of the conventional universities which have been too busy producing job-seekers instead of job-creaters. The main aim of the NOU, if it is allowed to function, is to provide higher education to adults who are already in employment. Acquiring higher education while they work will definitely make them more productive in their contribution to the national wealth.

The above analysis shows that the arguments leveled against the establishment of the NOU could seriously not be said to be strong enough to have caused the suspension of the institution, and that some other reasons must have played a greater part in bringing about the dissolution of the institution. It was clear that the removal of the civilian regime that promoted the idea of the open university provided an opportunity for the resurrection of the old ethic, regional and religious animosities that unfortunately characterise Nigeria social and political organisation.

There were evidences from many quarters that the Muslim northern communities were not particularly enthused about the open university because they feared that the programme would increase the edge the southern communities have over them in terms of education and economic power. It was felt that western-type of education which the northerners felt was going to be offered by the open university was irrelevant to their way of life. All the measures which the authorities of the newly-established open university promised to adopt to make it easier for the northerners to benefit from the programme could not prevent the northerners from believing that they would not have a fair deal. Their dislike for the system assumed greater proportions when they discovered that the staff recruitment of the university favoured the southerners. And it appeared that the northerners would have been happier with a Vice-Chancellor of northern extraction, that is going after the fashion of apointments in the existing universities in the north. The appointment of traditional leader from Suleja in Niger State as Chancellor of the University could not satisfy them in their desire for more representation in the administration of the university. It is interesting to note that the one Vice-Chancellor who was not vehement in his opposition against the establishment of the NOU

happened to be the incumbent Vice-Chancellor the premier situated at the famous northern cultural and political centre of Zaria.

There are no clear evidences to show that the parties in opposition to NPN used the occasion to frustrate the work of the NOU. One may be inclined to explain this in terms of the educational orientation of the leadership of the opposition parties and also in terms of the ethnic origins of both the leadership and the rank and file of the parties. By tradition the leadership of these parties, and it can be said, the great majority of their rank and file, believed strongly in the democratising influence of education and, therefore, could not have gone against the open university. The same thing can be said of the attitude of the chief executives of the southern universities.

It may be said that the difficulties experienced by the NOU are really not peculiar to Nigeria. Many open universities in the world have had this experience, notable examples being the UKOU (Perry, 1974 and Wedemeyer, 1981) and many of the Latin American open universities (Escotet, 1980). Opposition arises mainly because open learning systems are novel and revolutionary, and tend to expose the shortfalls in the conventional university system. It can thus be said that much of the resistance that emanates from the traditional universities is really attempts to defend themselves against this indictment.

One lesson we can draw from the Nigerian experience is that the establishment of open universities should as far as possible be devoid of artisan politics. As we can see, the introduction of the NOU was made far too politicised for the survival of the new institution. What is more, the idea was tied too closely to the person of the leader of the party which introduced it. In situations where governments are unstable, programmes

which are too politicalised and personalised are likely to fall with their initiators.

In conclusion, it can be stated that given the insatiable desire of Nigerians' education, and the obvious advantages of open learning systems, the idea on open university for Nigeria will continue to find favour with the people. It is gratifying to note that the military government decided to suspend the institution rather than abolish it. By that decision, they were recognising the intrinsic value of the system and in a way responding to the wishes of the people. It is hoped that the government will find its way clear in restoring the institution in the not too distant future. In doing that, it will be fulfilling one of the resolutions of the Lagos Plan of Action (OAU, 1981), namely, that as one of the strategies for social and economic development, African countries are enjoined to organise "adult learning through distant teaching, university of the air, workers' education, etc... Other African countries are looking to Nigeria for leadership in this respect.

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POLICIES, PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN TANZANIA

Dr. Egino M. Chale

Introduction

Since its founding three years ago, the Distance Education Association of Tanzania (DEATA) has joined other similar organisations such as Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA); Zambia Association of Distance Education (ZADE); Kenya Council of Distance Education (KECODE) and International Council for Distance Education (ICDE) which are committed to the development of distance education and associated communication technologies in the member countries.

This paper seeks to discuss policies, planning and management of distance education institutions in Tanzania. Since open and distance education is fairly well known one does not need to make a case for it. I will assume therefore that one of the areas of interest in this discipline are policy and management issues for efficient and effective performance of distance education institutions in Tanzania. Hence the title of the paper. It might be conceived as divided into two parts: policies vis-a-vis planning and management.

1. Policies in Distance Education

Policy proclamation, as might be recalled, has been one of the most challenging agenda in Tanzanian politics with the outset of multiparty democracy. In international forums, and for a number of years, policy for open and distance education has been an issue of protracted concern and debate among member countries. Policy articulation refers to not only a

proclamation of ideal direction but also to a plan of action and commitment to the realisation of the ideals.

Up until 1993, Tanzania might not be considered to have evolved any policy on open and distance education despite of its experience in the system and practice for over forty years.

In August, 1993 the Ministries of Education and Culture and that of Science, Technology and Higher Education jointly came out with the first ever draft document on *"Tanzania Integrated Education and Training Policy"*. With regard to distance education policy the draft document articulated it against the background of a situational analysis through the followin declaration (7.6.2).

"Distance education programmes shall continue to use curricula designed and developed by relevant institutions"

The above policy will be implemented through the following strategies:

- Publishing and publicizing distance education courses;
- Making available regulations regarding registrations for distance education courses, programmes and other related relevant information;
- Harmonising distance education programmes and courses with regulations of relevant examinations and certification authorities;
- Requiring institutions offering distance education to review their curriculum courses and programmes periodically in order to assess how these meet the needs and demands of the intended clientele.

In February and March, 1995, revised policy document was released in Tanzania. This time it was not a joint inter-ministerial document as it was the case was in 1993. It was published entirely by the Ministry of

Education and Culture. Since this has been signed by the then Minister for Education and Culture, Prof. Philemon M. Sarungi (MP), it represents the only formal policy document. It is titled as "*Tanzania Education and Training Policy*".

Going through the document as a distance education critic one lamentably observes a subdued policy articulation (February, 1995:84 and March, 1995:43 or c.f. 9.6.3/9.6.4 & 12) "continuing education is pursued ..... through evening classes, self-study, correspondence courses and *other various distance education programmes.* Therefore continuing (NOT open/distance) education shall be an integral part of the education system.

"9.6.7 The Government shall provide an enabling environment for the production and distribution and availability of instructional and learning materials, equipment and libraries of adult and continuing education."

The restrained distance education policy needs perhaps to be discussed in perspective context. In its preamble the Tanzania official education and training policy document concedes: "Tanzania has not had a comprehensive education and training policy. The programmes and practices of education and training in the past have been based on and guided by short and long term development plans (that) have emphasized the needs and demands of formal education and vocational training (regardless) to the needs of integrating (them with) those of non-formal education and training, hence the aspiration of the articulation of basic policies across the board."

Against the outset, we can correctly say that practically a number of institutions, public and private have/and are carrying out open and distance education programmes and courses without being guided by a policy

direction in the system/discipline; hence sustainability problems that are identifiable with a number of institutions, programmes and projects; reportedly, for example, with National Correspondence Institution (NCI) of the Institute of Adult Education (IAE), Dar es Salaam and Correspondence Education Centre (CEC), now known as Field Extension Department (FED) of the Co-operative College in Moshi. It might of course, be difficult to attribute the same explanation against South African Extension Unit (SAEU), Health, Sanitation and Water (HESAWA), Health Education by Extension/Centre for Education and Developments, Arusha (HEE/CEDHA), Rapid Results College, Wolsey Hall or the Open College. While the NCI and CEC have been appendages to the IAE and Co-operative College respectively, the constitutional status of the latter group are different. Both categories have, however, conducted themselves without an articulated policy. To practice the discipline/system without a defined policy - the constitutional/legal status notwithstanding - is tantamount to taking an insurance without the terms of the contract: fire, life, motor vehicle, burglary or theft. Without a proclaimed mission there cannot be any vision, idealism, plan of action or commitment of resources. DEATA could see this as one of its challenges in its mission.

2. Management and Administration of Distance Education Institutions

There are generally three categories of distance teaching institutions:

- bimodal/dual mode,
- affiliated college model/semi-autonomous, and
- the autonomous - the open university mode.

The first two are generally applied in ministerial or parastatal departments or in directorates of conventional universities. Level of efficient

management has been found to be varying according to the kind of the distance teaching institution and to the nature of the institution's organisational structure.

In bimodal or constituent set up, a distance education department functions like the other conventional departments in public or private enterprises in terms of administrative or financial powers. It might have of course more administrative and academic staff, and more sharply defined hierarchical levels. Being a department it is hardly conferred with legal status. Such is the case of CED of the IAE, and FED of the Co-operative College. The absence of legal status tends to keep the distance education department on a lower level compared to the other departments, and therefore the academic staff feel themselves downgraded. When the status is legally uncertain, the bureaucracy has a tendency to disregard its claims or treat it in an unsympathetic way. Industrial relations might not lend themselves to smooth institutional management.

The affiliated college model, on the other hand functions largely under the overall academic and administrative supervision of a university. But unlike the university departments it does not form an integral part of the university structure. An affiliated college is governed by different rules and remains largely outside the immediate control of the university authority. The nearer example though not exactly in our case would be the Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) vis-a-vis the University of Dar es Salaam if the MUCHS would offer distance education programmes. Since in an affiliated college model there prevails semi-autonomy, the administrative staff belong to the general pool and they are subject to internal transfers within the university. The frequent

transfer of administrative staff has often been pointed out as causing dislocation and delay in administrative processes calling for rectification.

Finally the autonomous or single-mode institution teaching at distance is meant to be exclusively for distance teaching. It does not form part of any conventional system of education. It is thus meant to be totally and constitutionally different, unconventional and innovative. As regards organisation it is legally independent and possesses its own management/administrative structures for course making and instruction. It is often decentralised in its structure consisting of the headquarters and out-reach study centres.

Since open and distance education is often conceived as an industrialised form of teaching and learning, let us focus on principal areas: planning and management, rather than administration in the discipline/system. For an organisation to exist, function and attain its objectives, its affairs have to be managed. It is the management which plans, organises, coordinates and controls the affairs of a distance teaching organisation. Management brings the human and material resources (i.e. materials, machines, and money) together and motivates the people in the organisation in use of material resources for the achievement of the objectives of the organisation. It is not difficult to realise the consequences of a situation in which an organisation has no management at all. Whatever the strengths and weaknesses of an adopted category of a distance teaching institution, it has to find ways of managing the combination of print, broadcasts and face-to-face sessions.

Principal management areas that could be discussed in detail, by way of illustration are: infrastructure, authority, consensus and resources. These re elaborately discussed by Havelock et al (71-116).

i. **Leadership**

Distance education institutions, by their nature, draw from a wide range of human resources for their operation. These include professional and support staff working on full-time, part-time or on piece-work basis, to provide instructional, advisory and other support services to learners at a distance. Although distance education requires both academic and administrative staff in the same way as conventional education, the job of staff members are different. The academic staff are called upon to design and write course materials rather than to lecture or to tutor groups of students. The distance learners are expected to learn from the printed materials and accompanying media individually for most of the time, and in groups for some of the time.

The full-time professional staff of a distance education institution are expected to combine a variety of expertise and to perform as educators as well as administrators. The part-time staff, on the other hand, are specialists in the subject matter or possess specialised skills as course writers, editors, script writers, media producers, tutors, makers or counsellors. A distance teaching institution will therefore need to develop a system for recruiting, training, supervising, monitoring and rewarding part-time stass. An efficient record keeping system is therefore essential, not only for the maintenance and retrieval of information and data about the part-time staff but also about each of the students enrolled in a course or programme. The organisation and coordination of the administrative, academic and learner support services is crucial for the efficiency of distance education institution. Regardless of how good the quality of the course materials may be, their effectiveness will be greatly

reduced if those three basic services are not well executed and coordinated.

ii. **Infrastructure**

Distance education makes extensive use of physical resources and facilities from other institutions in the educational system. Its capacity for sharing and therefore making more efficient use of scarce existing resources is attractive to governments and funding agencies. It may, for example, make use of existing secondary schools and colleges as study centres where distance learners could gather for face-to-face instruction, seminars, tutorials and practical workshop sessions. It may also require help from the government transport system to distribute course materials, and is likely to want access to broadcasting facilities for recording and broadcasting its programmes. All these require proper management and coordination between the various parties involved and support from the host institutions and organisations.

But it is important to bear in mind that, at the initial stages of its set-up, distance education is not cheap. It does require capital investment for its central facilities, equipment and machinery for production of course materials, warehousing and storage facilities, postage, transport and accompanying support services. Arrangements should also be made well in advance to ensure that the acquired machinery and equipment will be serviced and maintained locally.

iii. **Resources**

Adequate financial resources must be made available through careful planning, negotiations and justification. Distance education, by its nature, requires considerable investment well in advance of its ability to enroll students on its courses. The product of that investment and its economic efficiency can only be measured over several years when the programmes are reaching maximum numbers of students in several intakes. The initial establishment costs must therefore be discounted against the numbers of students predicted for enrollment, and compared with the costs of providing conventional education to similar numbers of students with comparable convenience and flexibility.

In order to be able to prepare a realistic budget for distance education, it is necessary to consider separately the items for capital investment, staffing costs for the central administration and facilities, the recurrent costs and the variable costs that will normally vary with the number of students and the number of courses. Many distance education institutions generally run into financial difficulties because of poor calculation and estimation of the initial budget.

In drawing up the budget for a distance education institution, it is important to separate the items that constitute the fixed costs from those under the variable costs. The fixed costs include capital items such as buildings, equipment, machinery, vehicles, administrative staff costs and all those other costs that have to be met regardless of the numbers of students or courses involved. The variable costs are those which will vary, particularly with the number of students and the number of courses. This distinction is convenient for practical

purposes of estimating the start-up costs and running costs for a distance education institution.

It is also important to bear in mind that, in the long run, no costs are firmly fixed. Far larger facilities will be required to administer 50,000 students than those normally required for 1,000 students. Other factors that determine variable costs include the life expectancy of the equipment and machinery, the life of a course to be offered before it is revised or rewritten, the frequency of tutorial sessions and the staff: student ratios to be adopted, and the fees to be paid to the part-time tutorial staff.

In computing the start-up budget, it is essential to distinguish between the recurrent costs that can be regarded as fixed and those which will vary with the number of students and courses. Provisions should also be made for the replacement of equipment and machinery when their expected life span has expired. If one is able to similarly compute respective costs for a conventional institution then comparisons are possible. Even then, there are numerous other factors that come into play and which are difficult to quantify. These would include the opportunity cost of students' time, the intangible social and economic benefits of providing part-time educational opportunities to the wider public, the utilisation of public facilities that would otherwise be dormant, and so on.

While there are all these difficulties in comparing the costs of distance education and conventional education, some distance teaching institutions have achieved satisfactory results expressed in average cost per graduate.

iv. **CommunicationTechnology**

Although most distance education still remains primarily print based, more and more institutions are moving towards the use of modern technology in both teaching and administration functions. The application of computers, for instance, is bringing dramatic changes in course design and production techniques as well as in the records keeping procedures. In course instruction and delivery systems, wide varieties of audio and video cassettes, audio teleconferencing, satellite and cable television and computer-assisted learning are increasingly becoming available to distance educators.

One of the most important steps in the management of technology is the need for a set of procedures or a check list of questions that need to be answered to enable appropriate decisions to be made about the choice and application of different technologies. It is for this reason that the Commonwealth of Learning and Open Learning Agency of British Columbia have jointly produced a multimedia package entitled "Technology in Open Learning and Distance Education: A guide for Decision-makers. This package consists of a 30-minute video tape and print material covering an introduction to open and distance learning, technology applications in distance education and selecting appropriate technologies.

v. **Time Management**

Time is not consciously thought of as a resource by many managers. People have lost their jobs for mismanaging finances, staff and materials of their organisations, but hardly anyone has ever been publicly reprimanded for mismanaging time. The importance of time as an irreplaceable commodity has been well expressed by Napoleon

Bonaparte, who once said, "You can recapture lost ground, but not lost time".

Distance education is not unlike an industry where a wide range of people with different abilities and responsibilities are involved, on a cooperative basis, in its operation. Indeed, distance education has been aptly described as "an industrialised form of education. It brings together, in a suitable mix, people, materials, machines, media and technologies to enable learners learn at a distance. If there is a flaw in one area of input, then it affects the quality of the total output. Various activities have to be planned, executed and coordinated in an efficient manner. After all, efficiency essentially means, the right things happening at the right time. It is therefore important, nay imperative, that in distance education the agreed schedules, time-lines and deadlines should be respected and adhered to. Of course there will be hazards and other unforeseen circumstances that will disrupt the planning schedules in the production line. But these should be controlled or, at best minimised.

It may also be possible to implement programmes in planned phases or on pilot basis so that the whole project grows to full stature by way of controlled development of smaller manageable programmes at the early stages. The longer-term programmes are consequently planned and tested through a combination of research, collaborative development and small experimental projects. The reality, of course, is that most projects do not have the luxury of passing through the pilot stage. They may be launched as a result of political directive or a social crisis that cannot wait for too long. Hence it is not always

possible to delay the start of a programme until all its elements are in place, tested and working. But, whatever the circumstances, it is prudent to start on a modest and manageable scale in a subject area that will quickly demonstrate the effectiveness of distance education delivery system and thus maximise the chances of success.

vi. **Coping with technology advances**

Distance education like any other form of education, is in a state of flux. Rapid changes are taking place as distance itself is evolving and developing, for instance in the range of media and technologies being applied to strengthen and extend it, and in the levels of education and training at which it is being applied. Distance education, through its relative flexibility, will be expected to respond quickly and effectively to the rapidly changing demands within the social, economic and political environment.

In some instances, distance education might even be called upon to be catalytic to other systems of education in the sense of accelerating change, for example, in admission criteria for certain courses, assessment methods, frequency with which examinations are administered, and the time span within which certain courses have to be completed. Distance education managers themselves should be able to respond quickly and decisively to the changing demands of their clientele, and should also be able to add professionalism and quality to the management of distance education programmes and the interaction between and among all pople involved. The real litmus test of a well-established distance education institution is how effectively it is able to take on new challenges as dictated by individual and societal demands while, at the same time, it sustains

the quality of the services already being provided. The expected in-built flexibility of distance education is its capacity to enable change to take place in the face of changing needs and circumstances. Hence the need for systematic and continuing monitoring and evaluation of distance education system, its operations and effectiveness in producing the desired results, and its capacity to rejuvenate itself where appropriate.

Conclusion

As discussed in this paper, there is policy deficiency in open and distance education in Tanzania. We have also observed that provision of sustained quality education and training is a function of effective management and administrative machinery.

This however has sometimes been beset with ill-defined constitutional status hence organisational structure that has tended to deprive them of statutory instruments for efficient performance. Currently the management of distance education is undertaken by several ministries, parastatal organisations and NGOs. The various legislations empowering ministries and institutions to shoulder the responsibilities of open and distance education have little relationship with even the Higher Education Accreditation Council (1995) which is yet to be launched. DEATA has an agenda to influence policies, planning and management of distance education in Tanzania.

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TRAINING TEACHERS FOR SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS: SOME EXAMPLES FROM AFRICA

Prof. Peter E. Kinyanjui

Introduction

The problems and constraints associated with the teaching and learning of science and mathematics in the developing countries are well known. They include the following:

- general poverty
- poor teaching and learning facilities
- lack of appropriate books and other learning materials
- lack of laboratory facilities, equipment and materials
- shortage of qualified and experienced teachers
- poor conditions and terms of service for teachers
- lack of efficient and effective teacher support services
- lack of incentives
- faulty curricular and examination systems
- lack of clear policies on science and technology
- unresolved gender-related issues in science and technology
- underdeveloped science culture.

These problems do not come singly; indeed, many of them are multilatera and self-perpetuating. They often manifest themselves in a number o vicious circles that are difficult to break.

In spite of (and sometimes because of) these problems and constraints, number of innovative African projects have been devised to provid possible solutions or alternative methods in the teaching of science an

mathematics. This paper describes selected examples of these projects, which illustrate possible growth areas in the training of teachers for science and mathematics.

KENYA SCIENCE TEACHERS' COLLEGE (KSTC)

The Kenya Science Teachers' College was created in 1965 through Swedish technical assistance. The College offers a two-year diploma course in science subjects and mathematics, and aims to produce teachers who are equipped with both the academic knowledge and pedagogic skills to teach in the Kenya secondary education system. The course ideally prepares teachers to teach at least two subjects up to Form 4 or 'O' level. The Diploma in Education Certificate is awarded to successful candidates by the Ministry of Education.

All candidates take two teaching subjects selected from a list of science and mathematics subjects. In addition, they take Education as a two-year course, while in the first year they take courses in Science and Society, Development and Social Studies, Library and Study Skills, and a Workshop Practical Course.

For the Workshop Practical Course, students use the facilities of the School Equipment Production Unit (SEPU), which was established in 1967. SEPU's main objective is to assist in the improvement of teaching both in content and method, and in adapting teaching aids to Kenya's needs in line with the available resources.

SEPU was created as an independent company under a board of directors, but with the Ministry of Education owning all the shares. The objectives of

SEPU are outlined in the Memorandum of Articles of Association, as summarised in Box 1.

Box 1: Kenya School Equipment Unit (SEPU)

Aims and objectives:

- to manufacture and produce assorted equipment and teaching aids, including science kits, glassware, furniture, etc.
- to import all types of equipment and chemicals
- to retail, wholesale and export the above
- to act as adviser to schools for selection and use of equipment
- to do anything for schools, colleges and other institutions of learning for the purpose of:

  o furthering educational goals
  o promoting science education and education in general.

adapted from Information Handbook, Ministry of Education: Kenya, 1987.

SERVICES OFFERED BY SEPU

SEPU's main objective is to assist all schools in the improvement of teaching science and education in general. Among the various services offered to schools by SEPU are:

1. Chemicals

SEPU directly imports a wide range of chemicals for use in schools. The chemicals are imported in suitable packs or in bulk for repacking.

2. Glassware and Other General Laboratory Equipment

Simple glassware equipment is produced by SEPU technicians and at times, with the help of hired experts. Specialised items such as microscopes, balances are imported directly for schools.

3. Repairs and Maintenance

Most of the repairs of laboratory equipment for schools are done by SEPU personnel. A part-time technician from KSTC is used for few major maintenance of:

- Power packs
- Electrical balances
- Microscopes
- Stop-watches
- Broken glassware

4. Auxiliary Services

For some time now, SEPU has been offering the following services to schools:

- Laboratory gas fittings
- Laboratory water fittings
- Laboratory furniture
- Fire-fighting equipment

5. Primary School Equipment

SEPU has continued to design and manufacture the following items:

- Blackboard rules
- Blackboard set squares, protractors and compasses
- Primary School Science Kit
- T-squares, drawing-boards, etc.

6. Practical /Examination Materials

SEPU has continued to design and manufacture some of the required materials for local practical examinations. It has also been engaged in importation of other items required for the same purpose.

Through the practical workshop courses conducted at SEPU, the teacher trainees at KSTC are able to familiarise themselves with the type of equipment and materias they are likely to find in their schools. They are also able to develop their own improvisation in cases where no equipment exists.

SEPU has also been instrumental in the design and development of distance education courses for the new B.Ed. (Science) External Degree programme of the University of Nairobi. This programme is a sequel to the B.Ed. (Arts) degree programme, which was launched in 1985. The subject of Mathematics is common to both programmes. A sample of the topics covered in Mathematics is provided below in Box 2.

Box 2: Course ECT 201: Methods of Teaching Mathematics

CONTENTS

Taken from College of Education and External Studies, *Kenya: University of Nairobi,* 1988.

The courses in these programmes are conducted through distance education methods with print as the main medium of instruction. In addition, there are organised student support services that include tutoring and counselling, regional study centres, audio and visual materials as well as library services - all of which comprise the "learning package." The science programme includes basic experiment kits as part of the learning package prepared with assistance from SEPU. For more sophisticated experiments requiring the use of laboratories, the existing facilities in teacher training colleges and senior secondary schools throughout the country are utilised by the external degree candidates.

It is worth noting here that the B.Ed. degree course materials from Nairobi have recently been transferred to Makerere University in Uganda, with the assistance of COL, for the launching of a similar external degree programme aimed at secondary school teachers in Uganda. At the same time, COL is assisting in the training of Ugandans in the skills of writing, editing and producing their own course materials to fill the gaps left by the Nairobi courses. This is the kind of South-South cooperation that COL wishes to facilitate and strengthen among Commonwealth institutions.

ZIMBABWE SCIENCE PROGRAMME (ZIMSCI)

The Zimbabwe Science Programme (ZIMSCI) provides one of the success stories in the use of practical experiment kits in the classroom to teach science. The ZIMSCI package includes self-study materials, guides, assignments and experiment kits for carrying out practical work in the classroom. Separate packages have been developed for lower and upper secondary classes where there are not enough qualified science teachers. In such cases, the class teachers act as guides and supervisors, not as teachers. The contents of a sample kit for the upper secondary class ('O' level) are shown in Box 3.

Box 3: Zimbabwe Science Programme (ZIMSCI

Specialised Items and Structures Kit	
Alloys kits	20
Elastic metre	1
Galvanised iron wire 500 g	1
Polariser/analyser kit	1
Soldering iron	1
Solder roll	1
Pulley blocks (2 wheel)	2
Tracing paper	1

Chemical Kit	
Albustix (packet)	1
Calcium 100g	2
Carbon rods (packet)	1
Iron Oxide 100 g	1
Potassium Nitrate 5 g	1
Yeast granules 200 g	1
Molasses 500 g	1
Charcoal blocks	1
Charcoal dust	1

Electrical Support Kit	
Battery box	1
Battery tube 6 cell	1
Solar cell kits	20
13-amp fuses	4
Twin-corewire roll 15 m	1
Torchbulbs	4

Bioset/Bioviewer Kit	
Science in Agriculture	20
Science in Community	20
Bioviewers	4

Light Kit	
D Block perspex	1
Light source kits	3
Magnifying glasses	20
Prisms	40
Mirror planes	20

Multi-PurposeApparatus Kit	
Plastic straws (packet)	
Blow pipe	
Gas burner	
Gas burner refills	4
Nails (500 g)	
Scalpel blades	2
Microscope slides	60

Adapted from ZIMSCI Kit, Harare: CurriculumDevelopment Unit, Ministry of Education and Culture, 1991.

t is important to point out that science kits are not cheap. They require considerable investment of physical and human resources, as well as time

in their design, development, production and distribution. There is meri therefore, in establishing systems for the review of existing materials an accordingly, for the exchange and transfer of appropriate material between institutions. In certain cases, there will be need for assistance i the adaptation of materials or for training in the design and production o local materials to fill identified gaps. These constitute some of the ke function that have been assigned priority in COL's strategic plan. Th transfer of the ZIMSCI sample experiment kit to the Bahamas is one cas in point.

CORRESPONDENCE AND OPEN STUDIES INSTITUTI (COSIT), NIGERIA

The Correspondence and Open Studies Institute (COSIT) was establishe at the University of Lagos, Nigeria, in 1975. Since then, it has conducte degree programmes in Science Education, Business Administration an Accounting as well as a diploma programme in Education and preparatory programme in Science Education. The main purpose o introducing the B.Sc. (Ed.) degree programme was to train secondar school science teachers.

At COSIT, the following courses are taught at a distance: Physics Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics. The University decided right fron its inception that the multimode approach consisting of printed cours texts, broadcasting and face-to-face tutoring would be used. Broadcastin was phased out within the first few years. Printed course texts thu became the main delivery mode supplemented by face-to-face tutoring. A a result of the introduction of a new unit course programme and failure o the part of the Institute to keep up with updating and rewriting the cours texts, face-to-face tutoring (which was to account for only 20% of the tota

teaching component) became the main component of the programme. Even though the unit course programme was finally adopted by COSIT in the 1986-87 session six years after it was introduced into the full-time mode, serious efforts to write appropriate course texts were not begun until June, 1989. Many of the courses have now been written or are being rewritten. There is every reason to believe that all of these course texts will be completed by the middle of 1993.

From the inception of the programme, efforts were made to create study centres in other universities and polytechnics. Science practicals were to be undertaken by science students in these various centres, and COSIT would pay for the use of the laboratories as well as the classrooms at these centres. Practicals are also undertaken during the compulsory residential programmes held at the University of Lagos every year.

Even though the situation is not perfect, sufficient progress has been made to guarantee successful continuation of the programme. Efforts would need to be redoubled to identify more centres for practicals, so that students would not have to go too far from their stations in order to undertake practicals. The Institute is also planning to build large laboratories that could handle up to 250 students at a time in order to be able to accommodate more students for longer periods during the residential programme. This expectation may become a reality in the second phase of COSIT's building programme. The first phase is expected to be completed by May, 1993.

Teaching Practice

Until 1989, students were sought out by teaching practice supervisors and observed while teaching in their own schools. This practice had become so

expensive that in many cases, the Institute paid out more to teach practice supervisors than it collected from students in fees for the sessi Since 1990, the practice sessions have been concentrated in a few scho within the students' study centre zones, and teaching practice supervis converge at three or four schools in the same area and have been able monitor their trainees more effectively at a lower cost to the Institute. It also become possible for surprise visits to be made from Lagos to evalu the closeness of interaction between the trainees and their supervisc since designated schools are now easier to reach by one person, wher in the past, it was not cost-effective to pay surprise visits to single scho in remote areas of the country.

In the larger centres, staff members from Lagos are able to spend up t week at a time and participate in the supervision exercise. Neverthele the rising cost of transportation has made it more difficult to conduct supervision exercise on a regular basis.

WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE

The examples quoted earlier have pointed to a number of possible grow opportunities in the training of teachers for science and mathematics. It in the area of teacher training that distance education has found its wid application in Africa. It should now be expanded to include the training teachers for science and mathematics in order to solve the pressi problems of quantitative expansion of education for all people, t qualitative improvement of education at all levels, and the continge issues of the rising costs of education.

The preparation and training of science teachers is not simply a question producing the numbers necessary to meet projected educational goals o

untry. Rather, it should be seen as an integral part of a continuous velopmental effort toward a comprehensive national policy on science d technology.

ıere are several ways in which distance education can contribute to the ıprovement in the quality of the science and mathematics teachers and, ɛrefore, of education generally. First, the use of centrally produced ience teaching materials that can be updated quickly and distributed idely ensures that all science teachers receive the same standard aterials. This is particularly important in improving the general academic ckground of the teachers by providing them with a broad scientific ıowledge base. Further, the strengthening of the general scientific ıckground and the improvement of subject matter competence of the achers ensures that they have the capacity to perform well during ining, in the classroom and in the laboratory.

ɛcond, the application of distance teaching techniques in teacher training ɛlps to equip the prospective teachers with a wide repertoire of learning ıd teaching processes, such as analysis, classification, deduction, ypothesis, experimentation, interpretation, formulation and synthesis, hich are important skills in science. Through the use of well-structured udy guides, experiment kits and written assignments, the teachers are put ıto a situation in which they have to practise these skills. It would seem, ıerefore, that one way of introducing process approaches to the teaching f science in schools would be to have the teachers themselves gain the xperience and the confidence in using similar approaches during training.

hird, if most of the academic theory and content could be taught through istance education, it would give the teachers more time to emphasise edagogic skill development and practice teaching. This is where face-to-

face teaching becomes an essential component of distance education. It provides the teachers with an opportunity to reason about the content of instruction, to organise and manage learning processes, and to evaluate and motivate learners in a manner that promotes self-reliance. Teachers who have themselves undertaken distance education courses are likely to be more familiar with these learning activities than those who have not and, therefore, more confident in recommending those learning skills in which they have had first-hand practical experience.

It must be emphasised, however, that the task of training teachers for science and mathematics is only a first step toward the improvement in quality of education as a whole. By themselves, the newly trained teachers will not be able to bring about the needed change in mathematics and science education, unless efforts are made to reform the related aspects of curriculum, examinations and supervision. Educational change implies change in the concepts, attitudes and behaviours of those inside as well as outside the educational system. The second emphasis, therefore, points to the need for incorporating curricular changes in science and supporting subjects such as mathematics within the teacher-training programme, so that the teachers can find direct classroom application of knowledge and skills gained during their training. For example, a teacher who finds that a new approach to science has direct application or relevance to the classroom situation is more likely to take keen interest in learning it and seeking more information than a teacher who learns it just for the sake of satisfying the examiner.

The third point to emphasise is the need to provide all mathematics and science teachers, particularly the newly qualified, with professional support and management on a continuing basis in order to improve their

ıality and morale. For this to happen, there has to be an efficient system
personnel management. This presupposes that there are, within the
stem, adequate and up-to-date records of information on all specialist
achers in the service for use in the planning of teacher demand and
ıpply, and for deployment and promotion of individual teachers. It also
esupposes that those expected to provide support and guidance are
emselves well equipped to perform these tasks.

is suggested, therefore, that distance education methods could be used to
ıpart the latest information about curricular changes, teaching methods,
ıd educational policies in mathematics and science to all inspectors and
ıpervisors, in addition to the practising teachers, so that both the
lministrators and the educators can be on an equal footing on the long
ad to educational reform.

learly, the use of conventional methods to meet the varying and growing
eds of education will be slow and expensive. It has been suggested in
is paper that distance education might be one of the most practical and
fective ways of generating the idea of continuing teacher education for
ience and mathematics, as rapidly and as widely as possible.

AN EVALUATION OF TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA*

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Introduction

It is evident from the literature that written assignments for submission are an important aspect of any distance education system (see for example Baath, 1980; Neil, 1981; Lewis, 1984; Holmberg, 1985; Cole et al, 1986). Tutor marked assignments in particular play a variety of functions. They do not only form a part of the total evaluation of the students' progress but also provide the students with some feedback on how well in general, they are progressing or succeeding throughout their course (Neil, 1981; Robinson, 1981 Holmberg, 1985).

According to Lewis (1984) assignments for submission give learners an opportunity to converse with the tutor and to receive advice on their problems and to confirm their understanding of the problem. Through the marked assignments the tutor is able to check the students' progress, to converse with the learners and to assess their strengths and weaknesses. Lewis further pointed out that assignments also enable the tutor to consolidate a relationship with the learners. Ultimately the teaching institution is able to obtain feedback on the course as a whole (Lewis, 1984). Assignments for submission can also compel students to read the materials and therefore promote active learning "beyond the passive

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ading of the course material . . . " (Beyth-Marom et al, 1988:104). eegan earlier observed that:

> *Fraught with danger is the idea that distance teaching is complete once the learning materials have been developed and mailed to students. Too often they remain unopened, or if opened, unread. (Keegan, 1986:202).*

he importance of assignments for submission as an integral part of the aching system at the University of Zambia is evidenced by the fact that ey constitute up to 50 per cent of the final grade in all courses (see niversity of Zambia 1986). Consequently, almost, all batches (sets of nits) of study materials usually contain at least one assignment for ubmission. Distance students are paced in their submission of ssignments and those who fail to submit assignments without acceptable asons (even after reminders) are deregistered from their course(s). Thus dmission into the sessional examinations is by fulfilment of specified ssignment requirements in every course.

ince the discontinuation (in the 1970s) of week-end schools and eminars which lecturers conducted in some parts of the country, ssignments are the main point of contact between lecturers and distance udents, apart from the Residential School. However, a number of issues ave been raised by some practitioners concerning the effective utilization f tutor marked assignments at the University of Zambia. For example ingsley (1979) and Siaciwena (1983, 1988a) contended that the over eavy load placed on distance teaching staff arising from staff shortages oes not only affect the preparation of study materials but the rate of arking assignments as well. Mulenga (1987:40) also contended that

"assignments are viewed purely in terms of grading, not as a possible medium of teaching."

The validity and generality of the above contentions are, however, limited by the fact that different lecturers have different teaching loads and different correspondence teaching experiences and are therefore likely to exhibit different levels of performance. Also the above observations are not based on any systematic or empirical study of this component of distance education, and so do not reflect the views of those directly involved —students and teachers.

This study which was part of the evaluation of distance education at the University of Zambia (Siaciwena, 1988b) aimed at:

a. establishing whether distance students had enough time to write their assignments
b. establishing whether distance students had any problems in writing their assignments
c. determining the adequacy of assignments given to distance students
d. assessing the usefulness of lecturers' written comments on students' assignments
e. assessing the length of turnround time of assignments

Methodology

The target population was the distance students enrolled in distance learning courses in 1986, when the study was conducted, and their lecturers. A closed-ended questionnaire was distributed to 150 students selected by stratified random sampling, out of a total enrolment of 586. All the twenty-six lecturers received a closed form questionnaire. In both

ases spaces for comments were provided. Response items in the uestionnaire took account of the fact that the students' experiences in the wo courses they were taking could vary.

Cost considerations, the geographical size of the country (752,614 square ilometres); and the scattered nature of distance students; made the use of questionnaire more convenient. The questionnaires were pilot tested and ommented on by various experts and necessary modifications were nade.

Results

A total of 122 students, 81.3 percent, returned the questionnaires while 18 ecturers, 69.23 percent, returned theirs. The main findings are discussed nder different subheadings as follows.

a) *Assignments Writing Time*

Distance students at the University of Zambia repaced in their submission f assignments. Roberts (1983) submitted that it may well be that a ignificant proportion of students find rigid pacing too demanding and would favour greater freedom regarding time for submitting assessable ork. Holmberg (1987) also pointed out that the system of pacing creates roblems for distance students who have intrusive family, social and ccupational commitments.

The questionnaire results did not overwhelmingly support the above iews. However there were far more students who never had enough time o write their assignments, 30.3 percent (N=37), than those who always ad enough time, 5.7 percent (N=7). It seems clear, however, that on the hole the time available for students to write assignments varied from

time to time. This is indicated by the fact that nearly two thirds of the students, 63.1 percent (N=77), sometimes had enough time to write assignments.

On the other hand the majority of the lecturers 61.1 percent (N=11), felt that on the whole, distance students were given ' just enough' time to write and submit assignments before the submission dates. Both the students' and lecturers' comments showed that the inadequate time available for some students to write and submit assignments at specified intervals was attributed to late receipt of study materials.

A greater proportion of the rural respondents, 40 percent (22 of the 55) than urban respondents, 22 per cent (15 of the 67) indicated that they never had enough time to write their assignments before the submission dates. This suggests the effect of the slow or lengthy postal system in rural areas and it is confirmed by the fact that in the majority of cases there was an allowance of a month or more between the date of despatch of study materials containing assignment questions and the submission dates.

Some students could not find enough time to write their assignments because of the demands of their jobs. This result is similar to Kaeley's (1980) study (at Papua New Guinea) in which the majority of the students, 60 percent indicated lack of time "due to office work and other business" as the main problem for failure to submit assignments.

(b) *Difficulties in Writing Assignments*

The writing of assignments was for many students, 53.3 percent (N=65), made difficult by the shortage of necessary and other required reading materials for the completion of assignments. One student wrote that

we are always advised to consult other books but I am very rarely able to because of the lack of books...

ıother wrote that

the course may demand that students should use specified books, unfortunately ... the student fails to find the books in bookshops, libraries and even the university bookshop, thus posing a problem to a student.

\ lecturer commented that

Availability of books is a major problemsfor students - especially in some courses such as literature. They sometimes try to write assignments without reading the set books - because unavailable.

early therefore, the shortage of books in the University of Zambia as a ıole (Serpell, 1979) appears to affect distance students more than ternal students.

:ran (1972) observed that the University of Zambia students always und it difficult to write assignments because of the problem of language. ıglish is a foreign language to almost all students. It was therefore ıportant to establish whether students found it difficult to understand the signment questions. It appears that the level of difficulty varied from ne to time (and perhaps from course to course) as most of the students,).3 percent (N=109), indicated that they sometimes found it difficult to ıderstand the assignment questions.

) *Amount of Written Assignments*

ffective correspondence teaching requires that more assignments must be t to make up for lack of regular tutorial contact (Kingsley, 1979). This

is particularly important for distance learners at the University of Zambia because they have to write the same examinations and are expected to reach the same standard of performance as full-time students.

It is therefore significant that one third of the lecturers indicated that they gave distance students more assignments for submission than they gave to internal students. Half of the lecturers gave the same amount written assignments to both internal and distance students. Half of the lecturers gave the same amount of written assignments to both internal and distance students. Most of the students, 87.7 percent (N=107) felt that on a average they were given the right number of assignments to enable them to learn from the course material. One student commented that

the number of assignments is very good although their timing defeats effective learning - you read to answer the question.

(d) *Lecturers' comments on Assignments*

The lecturers' questionnaire responses showed that all of them made comments on the students' written assignments. One lecturer, however, commented that

since staff have heavy (teaching) loads usually written comments are inadequately done.

Another lecturer wrote that

to the best of my knowledge many lecturers in the University find it difficult to make detailed comments because of pressure of work.

To a certain extent these comments support Kingsley's (1979) and Siaciwena's (1983) contention cited above.

e above comments notwithstanding, the majority of the students, 73.8 rcent (N=90), felt that their lecturers' comments on assignments were lpful and encouraging. The students' comments on this aspect of signments, however, revealed that there were many variations between urses. One student, for example, commented that

> *I find them helpful and encouraging (in one course) but discouraging in (another).*

few students complained that they did not understand the basis on which ades were given and that some comments on their assignments were gible. One of a number of students who complained about the gibility of the comments on their assignments wrote that "some turers' handwritings are rough and illegible." Another student wrote t "most comments are illegible (and) therefore worthless as they cannot understood." This finding is similar to one result of a study at the tish Open University where "students also commented on ... illegibility some tutors' handwriting ..." (Thorpe, 1988:70).

nother significant point that came out of both the lecturers' and students' nments is the need to provide opportunities and encouragement for dents to discuss comments on their assignments with their lecturers.

e lecturer proposed that

> *students should be encouraged to write in and ask about lecturers' comments on their assignments, which they haven't understood or disagree with. This happens only too rarely.*

nilarly a student commented that

> *Every normal human being has a personal ideology which usually clashes with his markers. We need a lot*

> *of time to talk with our lecturers so that we can discover each other's philosophies. No conservative can write a star paper for a liberal or radical.*

(e) *Assignment Return Time*

For the majority of the students who answered the question, 73.6 percent the minimum time it took them to receive marked assignments was three to four weeks. More than half, 55 percent, experienced a maximum assignment return time of more than a month to a term. More than a quarter, 27.7 percent, indicated that in some cases they had to wait up to the time of the sessional (end of year) examinations to get their marked assignments.

One student who did not receive seven of the eight assignments he submitted in one course complained that

> *... I will be writing the final paper in six days time without any feedback. Will there be any wonder if I flopped? I am going to enter the examination hall as blind as I started the course because I do not know whether what I have been sending to the University has been correct or wrong.*

In another course the student began receiving constructive criticisms when it was "too late because there is no more assignments to improve upon."

It is clear from the turnround time that some students did not get the full benefit of their lecturers' comments on the assignments despite the fact that the majority of respondents found them helpful and encouraging. It is also evident from the students' comments that there were variations in the length of turnround time between and within courses.

The problem of long turnround time of assignments appears to affect many distance education systems in the world. International studies have shown

that turnround time varies very much from 1 to 90 days (Holmberg, 1986). Mackenzie (1976) found that many students (in his study) at the British Open University generally complained about long turnround time although they appreciated their tutors' comments on assignments. Another study done in 1987 at the British Open University showed that, on average, it took a waiting time of 24 days for a student to get each marked assignment (Thorpe. 1988). It is further noted by Thorpe that

> *students also commented on ... the particular difficulty of getting assignments back towards the end of a course, when they were needed for revision. (Thorpe, 1988:70)*

One of the factors contributing to long turnround time of assignments at the University of Zambia is that lecturers keep assignments for a long time. Two thirds of the lecturers who responded to the questionnaire took two weeks to a whole term to mark and return one set of assignments. It is noteworthy against this finding that at the British Open University "tutors tended to keep the assignment 9-10 days for marking" (Thorpe, 1988:70).

At the University of Zambia, however, the problem is compounded by the lengthy or slow postal system especially in the remote rural areas of the country. According to Holmberg (1977, 1986) the obvious weakness in normal distance study is that feedback is delayed because of the slowness of the communication process characteristic of this type of education.

> *For a student assignment to be sent by the student, received by the supporting organisation, corrected, commented on and returned to the student so that he/she receives it with ina week is considered remarkably quick and represents a turnround time that many distance-education institutions (and post offices) seem unable to achieve. (Holmberg, 1986:56)*

Conclusion

It should be clear from the above that assignments for submission at th University of Zambia are a very important component of the teaching an assessment system. The important role of assignments in providing tuto student interaction is evidenced by the fact that all lecturers make writte comments on assignments which the majority of learners find helpful an encouraging. However, the effective utilization of assignments i providing the much needed two-ways communication is constrained by th long turnround time, and the inadequacy of time and materials for writin assignments in some cases.

It is proposed here that in order for both lecturers and students to deriv optimum value from tutor marked assignments there should be changes i lecturer/student ratio and in methods of producing and distributing stud materials. The lecturer/student ratio could be reduced by recruitin graduate teaching assistants. These assistants would assist in interna teaching so that lecturers would have more time to mark distance student assignments. Also monetary incentives would encourage lecturers to mar students' assignments promptly.

Serious consideration should be given to the production of more self contained study materials. Important sections of prescribed textbooks tha are in short supply could be reproduced and distributed to students a supplementary reading (within the provisions of the copyright laws). A present study materials are produced on an annual basis and productio begins after all the students have been enrolled. This, and the inadequac of printing facilities, affects the distribution of study materials. There i need to produce course materials that can be used over a specified perio of time. Such materials would be stock-piled and would enable th

Department of Correspondence Studies to send materials to students upon enrolment and whenever students need them during the year. This would minimize the problems associated with the postal system.

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THE MEANINGS OF DEMOCRACY

Moira Chimombo

In a recent "Talk About Africa" discussion on the performance of African countries since independence, one of the panelists commented: "When we got our independence, we got the word but not the concept" (BBC World Service, 1996). I believe much the same could be said of democracy. In most countries that have introduced democratic forms of government in the last few years, the people have got the word but not the concept. They have only the vaguest idea of the core meaning of democracy, equating the various freedoms with license to do anything they wish, not realizing that with freedom comes responsibility. This is, however, hardly surprising. If, in an old, long-standing democracy, people must be explicitly taught a "love for democratic principles, and an understanding of why they are so important" (Bennett 1986:2), how much greater, in a new democracy or democracy-in-the-making, is the need to instil in the people of Malawi this love and understanding of democratic principles. A basic first step is teaching the meanings of democracy, which are so different from the meanings of totalitarianism.

The rise of the independent press in Malawi, following moves towards democratization resulting from the Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter of 8 March 1992 (Episcopal Conference of Malawi 1992), provides a wonderful opportunity to examine the learning of democratic language by the media in Malawi and to analyze how this language reflects the people's understanding of democratic principles. It also serves to make us aware of the need to educate the people in how to read critically, as behoves them in a democratic society.

I examined many issues of Malawian newspapers from before the 1993 referendum to three months after, and again in 1995-96, in order to identify examples for discussion of the following two issues:

(a) the media's use of "democratic" and/or "undemocratic" terminology, usually arising from their reporting of politicians' discussions and debates, or at least arising from politically significant issues;

(b) the full range of meanings of democracy arising out of this terminology.

However, the two issues are so closely related that I will discuss them both in parallel. I will also make references to other nations, both in the developed and in the developing world, facing the same problem - defining democracy and~instilling in their peoples an understanding of the meanings of democratic principles.

The very first step in our study of the meanings of democracy is defining the term. The media have had a role to play in helping the population of Malawi understand the meaning of the word, particularly in the context of educating them to understand the purpose of the referendum and then later the general elections. I could approach the definition in one of two ways. Either I could give you a ready-made definition. Or I could encourage you yourselves to "tease out" of the newspapers and other reading and listening aspects of the multi-faceted meaning of democracy.

First let us look at ready-made definitions. Every educated person is familiar with the famous American definition of democracy as "Government of the people, for the people, by the people." Another definition is: "democracy is the form of government which combines for

its citizens as much freedom and as much equality as possible" (Lipson 1985:11). Dictionaries are the source of most definitions, for example,Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language (Guralnik 1963) gives for its first meaning of "democracy" the definition, "government by the people, directly or through representatives." A local definition at the time of the referendum was "boma lokhalira ubwino wa anthu onse" ("government established for the good of all people"). We could spend time discussing the meanings of the words "government," "freedom," and "equality," as well as the various prepositions, which are highly significant in this case, but the definition has been provided. This approach concentrates on the conceptual meaning of the term, i.e. the logical, cognitive, or denotative meaning of a word (Leech 1981).

Unfortunately, however, although concepts have a core which is absolutely true, words often have different meanings for different people. Going back to the origin of the word in the first democracies of Ancient Greece, we find that it signified:

... an oral democracy based upon practices of assembly, debate, disputation, and talk and not on the mere transmission of orders, instructions, and responses. Debate provided the model for decision making, but it also provided for the cultivation of the arts of rhetoric and disputation and the related feats of memory that were central to Greek ideals of character, education, and political life. (Carey 1988:4)

The word "democracy" may seem fairly well defined, following on from the ancient meaning, to the Americans and British, among others; they should be able to speak about it easily with one another without serious misunderstanding (including being able to criticize their own governments for their lack of democracy). But in Africa, both ex-President Banda of

Malawi and ex-President Kaunda of Zambia, for example, believed that it was possible to have a single-party democracy. Suppose one of the participants in a conversation is a govemment representative from such a state in the developing world. The govemment of that state may well describe itself as democratic, but would someone from the West agree? Look for example at the following utterance:

(1) We believe we are already within a democratic system. Some factors are still missing, like the expression of the people' s will.
(President Roberto Eduardo Viola of Argentina, from a Time magazine interview, September 1982).

This example should make it clear that we need to go beyond conceptual meaning to the associative meanings of the word, which include connotative, social, affective, reflected, and collocative meanings (Leech 1981). If you did this you would delve much more deeply into the meanings of the term than its conceptual meaning alone. By getting you to uncover these deeper meanings themselves, I would be enabling you to internalize the core concept of democracy, which hitherto had been alien in Malawi. After all, "democracy is, above all, an educational process" (Cohen n.d.: 23).

In this approach, I could encourage you to search, for example, for the different associative meanings of the word "democracy" that you have. The connotative meaning includes meanings imposed by ideology, cultural use, belief systems, and so on. Thus, the Anglo-American connotation of "democracy" would probably include the concept of a bicameral legislature in which more than one party is represented. The word "democracy" may not carry these connotations in other societies or ideologies. Two words with connotative meaning appearing regularly in Malawi since 1993 are the

llowing (with the equivalent Chichewa expressions in brackets, where entified):

2) multipartyism (*mutipate*)
opposition (*zipani zotsutsa boma* or *zipani zotsutsana ndi boma*)

owever, Malawi does not have a bicameral legislature. In other ountries, "democracy" may not even now carry the connotative meaning f "multipartyism." Uganda's President, Yoweri Museveni, for example, elieves that it is possible to have a "non-partisan democracy," where no ne belongs to a party.

he social meaning of a word is reflected in stylistic choices, as well as in uch matters as dialect differences and differences in usage due to istorical periods. For example, "democracy" surely had a very different eaning in the colonial period than it has in England today. And here at ome, Malawi in the old regime, as mentioned above, assumed that even ith a single party it was "democratic." Also as a result of social meanings f words, producers may choose to use euphemisms, or words that lack ome of the conceptual and associative meanings that might be deemed ffensive to an individual or group. The following words with social eaning appeared regularly in Malawi before and during 1993:

3) dissidents
pressure groups (*gulu loumiriza*)

nce a democratically elected government came to power in Malawi, the tter expression became redundant, being replaced by the connotative ord "opposition" noted in (2) above. But the word "rebel(s)" has eappeared in recent weeks, paralleling the first word in (3).

Closely related to social meaning is affective meaning, which reflects th producer's attitude toward the communication. The producer may indicate through gestures and intonation in speech, or the surrounding text in print that a particular concept is "good," or has not yet been adequately realized or is merely a term that is used to pull the wool over the eyes of the peopl who need to understand, etc. The following words were highly emotive prior to 1993:

(4) seditious
terrorist group
Party Cards

while these became emotive during the referendum-elections period:

(5) Black Cock (*Tambala Wokuda*)
Lantern (*Nyali*)
politics (*ndale*)

The last word in particular became highly emotive in both English and Chichewa in the run-up to the referendum, when the former president said in one of his best remembered speeches "That's politics," referring to the defection of a MCP member to the opposition. Whether the words in (5) will continue to be emotive in Malawi, or will become emotive again remains to be seen, although "politics" is likely to continue to be seen as "dirty." But the first word in (4) has recently becoming highly emotive again.

The meaning of a word may be reflected in other meanings carried by the same word. "Democracy," for instance, can refer either to a form of government or to a political unit having that form of government. Thus, if we hear the phrase "the African democracies," we may think of the countries themselves, their governments, and the government institutions

that serve the people. All of these meanings are present to some degree, even when one of them is singled out by the producer as the intended meaning in the utterance. Here is an example of reflected meanings which many Malawians still have:

(6) Malawi Congress Party (MCP)=single-party government

Finally, collocative meaning derives from the meanings of other words that are normally associated with the word in question. Thus, "democracy" may be found in the same immediate context with "parliament," "legislature," "election," "representative," "elected member," and so on. And deriving from the connotative, social, and affective meanings of some individuals or groups, additional collocations such as "justice," "liberty," "capitalism," and so on, on the one hand, or, on the other, "socialism," "workers' rights," "equitable division of wealth," etc. may arise. The full range of collocative meanings of "democracy" in Chichewa, formerly the national language of Malawi, is considered in Chimombo & Chimombo (1996, Chapter 3). For example, Malawians who had the opportunity to vote "democratically" collocate the following two phrases with the meaning of "democracy":

(7) referendum
general elections

Once you have identified the connotative, social, and affective meanings of words associated with the concept of democracy, you need to make more conscious note of how newspaper reporters, and the politicians whose speeches they are reporting on, may deliberately choose one of a set of words with similar meanings to indicate a bias (van Dijk 1988: 81-82). Most of you will already be aware of the bias of one newspaper or

another, and now that we have a choice of newspapers in Malawi you will faithfully buy the one whose bias you prefer. But you can go much further and experiment with using particular words or phrases to change the bias, as happened in newspapers' reporting of the run-up to the general elections, even in the Daily Times and Malawi News, for example:

(8)

dissidents	-	members of the opposition
pressure groups	-	opposition parties
terrorist group	-	paramilitary force

This leads us beyond word meanings to meaning relations between words. In order to relate the pairs of words/phrases in (8) above as synonymous we have to identify all the meanings of each pair to find out how they relate to each other on the basis of subsets of meanings. One type of meaning relation is lexical cohesion, in which words and phrases may be related to each other in one of two ways: reiteration or collocation.

Reiteration is achieved in one of three basic ways:

(a) repetition of the same word, as in "referendum/referendum," but including transformations, e.g. verb-noun, "harassing harassment";
(b) use of synonyms or near synonyms, as in "forecasted/predicted" and "Party hardliners/Party followers"; and
(c) use of a superordinate or subordinate term (hyponymy), as in "MCP system/one-party government," where the meaning of "MCP" was included in that of "one-party government."

Collocation is the use of words/phrases that are related in meaning and are habitually used in association with one another. It includes the following:

(a) binary antonyms, such as "one party/multiparty," or "autocracy/democracy," where anything that belongs to the set can only be one or the other, not both; and

(b) verbs with collocational subjects or objects, such as "commit atrocities," or nouns that are collocated with specific adjectives, such as "secret ballot."

You need to appreciate how strategies of reiteration and collocation can be used to build up coherent arguments, so that there is no incongruence in meaning relations resulting from collocating, say, a noun which has a positive connotation with a verb which has a negative one. This is a major problem for second language speakers, and is often noticeable in our newspapers.

The next step is to identify the nonliteral and indirect meanings used by others, whether news reporters, politicians, or others. There are many different types of nonliteral and indirect expressions, including figures of speech, metaphors, and sarcasm. The MCP government's reference to the opposition as "bongololo" (literally "millipede") is an example of such nonliteral expressions, being a metaphor. Several other nonliteral expressions are evident in the following extract:

(9) It is all sad, really, I like watching children playing in a pen, worrying that they will hurt themselves the moment we look the other way. Throughout these long two years, one has got to understand the UDF credo as one of defiance because they believe[2] winners take all and their mistakes could never be worse than those of their predecessors.

Their agenda? Ahh[3] unaccountability, bag stuffing and hang the opposition. Swell the numbers by buying anyone and use any source of funds for the purpose. (Daily Times, Friday May 31,1996, p. 8)

1 is a simile, 2 is an idiom, and 3 is an example of sarcasm. Furthermore, now that the press is free, we have the genre of political satire, which is also a good source of such nonliteral and indirect meanings. The following example is taken from Malawi News, November 4-10, 1995, p. 7:

(10) There are many reasons for my delight, here are some.

1. This award proves that it is not necessary to study at any university in order to have a degree.
2. The award improves my stature as a regional statesman. All the presidents of the countries that surround my home land do not have, any of them, any similar award, from any university, anywhere, at all.
3. In the eyes of my countrymen, I shall have the same nature as my predecessor in office. This award shall therefore silence all my critics, cynics and often dedicated detractors of my presidency.

That such satire is allowed now is an indication that freedom of speech and of the press are considered important for a democracy.

Nonliteral expressions can lead to conventional implicature, which is an inference made by an interpreter without reference to the context. A common type of conventional implicature is "hedging," i.e. "protecting onself against the full force of the interpretation of one's utterance"

(Chimombo & Roseberry in press:30). Examples of hedges in the news items we considered are:

(11) (a) "In other aspects of life this is **perhaps** irrelevant and **dangerous**."

(b) "May 22, 1993, could well go down in Malawi's history as the day when true politics saw a rebirth in this country."

(The Financial Observer, Volume 5, No. 8, June 1993, p. 2)

In these sentences, the highlighted words indicate how the author is softening the impact of his words and attempting not to impose his opinion on his readers. Learning how not to impose one's opinion is an important aspect of learning the language of democracy, part of learning how to criticize constructively, although it is also important to know when NOT to hedge !

Another important type of conventional implicature is presupposition, which is truth that can be inferred from what is stated in a text. Consider a sentence such as the following:

(12) "During the year 1992 the very talk of multipartyism earned people detention without trial." (The Financial Observer, Volume 5, No. 8, June 1993, p. 2)

From this sentence, we can infer that:

(a) some people talked about multipartyism in 1992;

(b) people who talked about multipartyism were detained without trial in 1992;

(c) the country formerly had a system of govemment opposed to multipartyism.

(d) the country formerly had a judicial system which condoned detention without trial, etc.

We also need to become sensitive to the possibility that producers may have deliberately, unscrupulously, embedded presuppositions in the text so as to encourage interpreters to understand it in the intended way. Clearly, this kind of manipulation of text depends also on careful choice of words with certain associative meanings.

We can become more aware of presuppositions underlying texts by learning to recognize the common words or expressions that can trigger presuppositions. These expressions include change-of-state verbs such as "stop," "start," and iteratives such as "again." The following sentences illustrate such presupposition triggers:

(13) "He also told the meeting that shortage of drugs in hospitals ... was not started by pressure groups."

(The Financial Observer, Volume 5, No. 8, June 1993, p. 8)

which contains the following presuppositions:

(a) there is now a shortage of drugs;

(b) at some point in the past there was not a shortage of drugs, etc.

(14) "[I]nitially they [Malawi Young Pioneers - MYP] taught people how to grow crops. But as of now the movement has been turned into a terrorist group."

(The Financial Observer, Volume 5, No. 8, June 1993, p. 8)

which contains the following presuppositions:

(a) in the past, the MYP used to teach agricultural methods;

(b) the MYP is not teaching agricultural methods now;

(c) in the past, the MYP was not terrorising people;
(d) the MYP is now terrorising people, etc.

Another kind of inference interpreters make is conversational implicature. Unlike conventional implicature, conversational implicature depends on the particular context in which a text appears. Although conversational implicature, as its name suggests, more usually refers to conversations, we can still consider the application of Grice's Cooperative Principle to newspaper items, since his four maxims of relation, quality, quantity, and manner are as relevant to the language of politics, whether spoken or written, as to ordinary conversations.

The analogy which is stated in the first three paragraphs of the Editorial Comment below, and returned to again in the last paragraph, is an extended example of language that is not to be taken purely at the literal level.

(15) **Editorial Comment: Further outlook?**

There are moments, sadly enough, when weather forecasters make mistakes.

Such mistakes can be costly. Planes can crash when fair weather is reported in a particular area and junior pilots are assigned flights into what turns out to be gale force winds.

One particular radio weather forecaster, realising a mistake, is said to have phased in the true picture after a number of broadcasts, from brilliant sunshine to partly cloudy, overcast and rainy - when it had been raining all along!

This can be a terrible gamble. In other aspects of life this analogy is perhaps irrelevant and dangerous. But it just shows you how concerned some people can be about their own mistakes and the impact on their personal credibility if they owned up to their errors.

As recently as January last year, nobody could have predicted that Malawi would be talking about abandoning the MCP system of one-party government.

During the year 1992 the very talk of multipartyism earned people detention without trial.

Even after the Ngwazi [the title given to the former president of Malawi] announced the idea of referendum on October 18, many people continued to be hauled into prison for alleged offences related to political change.

This stance by Party hardliners and the police can be blamed directly on the Ngwazi's first handling of the issue. He said at the time that the referendum would give the opportunity for people to reaffirm their support for the MCP, and spoke of how that party had "delivered the goods" promised at Independence.

His strategy at the time was to keep the morale high among Party followers, knowing that he would have to personally assess the mood in the country himself at some stage.

He has done this. Like a good weather forecaster he is now calling dissidents politicians. He is preparing his side for defeat by phasing opposition out of the seditious end of the constitutional spectrum to the political end.

May 22, 1993, could well go down in Malawi's history as the day when the true politics saw rebirth in this country. On that day the Ngwazi described the rebellious attitude of some well-known former MCP members as "That is politics" and said he accepted it.

Further outlook? More of the same, we hope. But then, why not scrap the costly referendum and go straight into general elections.
(The Financial Observer, Volume 5, No. 8, June 1993, p. 2)

You may need to be shown how the analogy works, and you will have to decide for yourself whether it is successful or not. If you cannot see the relevance of the analogy, then, for you, the maxim of relation has been flouted. If you understand the analogy only on the literal level, then, for you, the maxim of quality has been flouted.

Newspaper reporters are expected to observe not only the first two but all four maxims in their reports. In the news media immediately before and after the referendum, reporters frequently flouted some or all of the maxims, in a misunderstanding of the true meaning of democracy. With respect to quality, for example, Malawians are having to learn that gossip and rumours are not a sufficient basis for reporting, and that responsible journalism requires reporters to search for verifiable evidence. With respect to manner, learning the meaning of democracy entails learning how to use responsibly the newly found freedom of expression, without being obscure or ambiguous. Unfortunately, not all western journalists use their freedom of expression responsibly, for Malawians to have a good model. Again unfortunately, politicians often deliberately flout this maxim. But we need to learn to see through both the journalists' reports and the politicians' speeches. We must also learn to respect all the maxims in both

our spoken and written work, particularly in debating and written argumentation.

Once the members of the society have begun to internalize the range of words surrounding the concept of democracy a very important next step is for some consensus to be reached on the core meaning, on what is and is not acceptable in the society's understanding and implementation of the term. It is crucial that all levels of the society are given the opportunity to extend their civic awareness through mass education campaigns targetting the different groups. I have, in this paper, presented suggestions for looking at the language of democracy. I have not touched, except in the most superficial way, on these deeper issues related to civic awareness education, nor on those issues related to the discourse of democracy, issues connected with the culture, including situational and intertextual constraints, dynamic relationships between discourse participants' knowledge, or with the text, including coherence, information structure, and acceptability. That will have to be the subject of another paper, because the issues are simply too complex to cover in a short presentation. I hope, however, that I have shown how you can look more deeply at the language of journalism and politics and come to a greater understanding of the true meaning of democracy.

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ORGANIZING A DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSE:

A Case Study of Local Government Councillors' Course: by the Southern Africa Extension Unit

N.E. Ligate

Introduction

Since early 1995 the Southern Africa Extension Unit (SAEU), has among other activities, been involved in the process of organizing a distance education course for local government councillors in Tanzania (Mainland). This innovative project is being sponsored by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF). We are highlighting the process of organizing the project in order to share our experiences with other distance education institutions within and outsideTanzania, through the medium of the 'maiden issue' of the Open University of Tanzania's Huria Journal. Essentially, the paper attempts to merge the theory and practice of distance education in order to deliver an educational programme which may effectively tackle a prevailing educational need. The paper will address, albeit briefly, the pertinent aspects of the process of organizing the course namely need for the course; features of a quality distance education course; pilot schemes and their corresponding evaluation.

1. Need for the Course

The Tanzania Civil Service Reform Programme (CSRP), Local Government Component Action Plan, identifies training for councillors and local government staff as one of the eighteen essential elements of local government reform.

Elaborating on this element, it is noted:

> *Training is required not only for local government staff but also for the councillors. In the past (particularly ... from 1984) the Government through assistance from Donors, has been organizing seminars for councillors especially those who were members of the Finance Committees. This was in appreciation of the fact that valuable knowledge, experience and skills in local government affairs were lost during the Decentralization era (CSRT 1995).*

On the other hand, following the October 1994 civic elections, a total of 3198 new councillors were elected. Unlike their predecessors, these councillors are required to fulfill their duties under a new political order i.e. multipartism. As for the council staff, it is pointed out that there is serious understaffing (for technical staff) in all departments of local authorities. Moreover, around 75% of the present staff have barely primary education while about 78% of them have had no training relating to administration of local government. Given this background, it was concluded that it is important to mount a special training programme for all the councillors and all the existing key staff in the local authorities (Ibid).

Rationalising in more specific terms the need for councillors'training, Ngware (1995) points out that the rules of the game in a monoparty council are different from that of a multi-party council. Ngware notes that in the latter, council deliberations and decisions are usually arrived at through a process and culture guided by rules of the council, participatory democracy, transparency, respect for minority views, collective responsibility and the need to put the electorate's interest above individual councillors and political party interest. In order to do this, councillors are required to have skills, knowledge and experience as leaders, politicians, negotiators, managers, coalition and consensus builders. In conclusion,

Ngware underscores the obvious namely '*...these necessary skills are not acquired automatically but are learned and councillors must be trained in order to acquire them' (Ibid).*

2. Rationale for a Distance Education Course

Considering the size of the target group (more than 3,000 councillors) - the urgency for which training is needed (incumbent councillors with less than four years to remain in office); the geographical spread of the target groups (councillors are grassroot leaders/Wards Representatives in local government councils) and the need for equity in educational provision and training, distance education provides the most effective means for addressing councillors'training needs. This was the basis of our decision to recommend a distance education course as an effective means for addressing the needs. The rationale for this course whose main objective is to equip the councillors with the norms of fulfilling their functions in a pluralist political order, stems from the parameters outlined in the foregoing section. On the basis of those parameters, the course was assured of recruiting a sufficiently large target group. Initial estimates projected students'numbers to the tune of 3000. This was a sufficiently large target group to make the course efficient and cost-effective. However, other inputs which needed to be considered were course design and development; nature and needs of the target group and support services system (Brookfield, 1986). For lack of space, we will elaborate the first input only. We hope to elaborate the remaining inputs in our forthcoming paper.

Course Design and Development

The course was designed on the basis of a Needs Assessment Survey (NAS) which yielded essential information and data on the needs and means of organizing it. During the NAS, meetings and workshops involving relevant experts and field personnel were organized by the SAEU with a view to developing the training programme. Experts and field personnel who took part in these fora were drawn from the University of Dar es Salaam (Local Government Research Unit of the Institute of Development Studies and Department of Political Science and Public Administration), Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania (ALAT), Local Government Service Commission (LGSC), Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Hombolo Local Government Institute and the SAEU. The draft programme worked out by these experts was further enriched by views and proposals collected from a cross-section of councillors in the country.

The objectives of the course were inter-alia outlined as follows (SAEU, 1995 a):

(i) To expose the councillors to the history of the local government system in Tanzania, so that they may be able to understand more clearly contemporary local government system and its dynamics.

(ii) To assist the councillors enhance their knowledge and skills in fulfilling their duties.

(iii) To train local government councillors on their roles and duties in a multi- party democracy system.

(iv) To provide the councillors with basic knowledge and skills for accessing successfully further training in local government management within and outside the country.

In order to realise the foregoing objectives, it was proposed that the following three self-instructional modules written in the national language, Kiswahili, should be prepared (Ibid):

(i) A Brief History of Local Government in Tanzania.

(ii) The Roles of the Councillors in a Multi-Party Democracy System.

(iii) Finance, Planning and Management.

Each module was written by an expert selected by the Programme Design Workshop. The writer was required to abide by an outline drawn up by the workshop. The drafts were edited by editors selected by the Design Workshop. After effecting proposed editorial amendments in the first drafts, they were submitted to a review workshop. Besides the modules' writers and editors, other participants of the workshop were drawn from the Institute of Development Management (IDM), Hombolo Local Government Institute, Government Training Institute (GTI) Mombasa, Civil Service Reform Programme, Frederich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Tanzania Office, City Director (Dar es Salaam), District ExecutiveDirector (Korogwe) and three councillors from the City Council (Dar es Salaam). The workshop came up with a list of proposals on how to further improve the modules in line with the stated course objectives (SAEU, 1995 b). These were effected before limited copies of the modules were printed for piloting.

3. Pilot Schemes

The modules were piloted in four councils (1 City Council, 1 Town Council, 1 Municipal Council and 2 District Councils). The sample was selected purposely in order to assess the impact of the course in each tier of the local government system. As for the District Councils, the two councils in the sample vary markedly in terms of their performance and

socio-economic environments. Whereas one is a high performer with a mixed economy (agriculture and pastoralism), the other one is a low performer with a predominantly agricultural economy (SAEU, 1996).

The objectives of the pilot were to assess the following:

(i) Are the modules clear and interesting?
(ii) Are the modules sufficiently educational and self-instructional?
(iii) Do the modules meet the course objectives on the one hand and individual learners expectations on the other?
(iv) How do learners perform in the course in each Council?
(v) How can learners drive be enhanced and sustained?
(vi) Is the students support service system efficient and effective?
(vii) How can the students support service system be improved?

Feedback from the pilot was intended to be used in revising the modules for final print before mass release and in strengthening the programmes support services system.

The training of the pilot coordinators was carried out at the SAEU offices, from 17th to 24th January 1996. At the end of their short training, the coordinators returned to their respective stations to launch the pilot. This task had largely been accomplished in all the councils with the exception of Dar es Salaam City Council, by the end of April 1996. Although efforts were made to train a new coordinator for the City Council, the Council was dissolved by the Prime Minister, Hon. Frederick T. Sumaye (MP) on the 28th June 1996, when plans for launching the pilot had reached a very advanced stage. For this reason, we will highlight the conduct and performance of the pilot exercise in the other councils only, where its

official three month duration came to an end towards the end of July 1996 (Ibid).

3.1 Municipal and District Council 'A'

Arrangements for launching the pilot in the two councils started with a joint Coordinators and Tutors' Seminar held from 5 - 8th February 1996. A total of 24 councillors from Morogoro Municipal Council and 15 from District Council 'A' (Kilosa) were enrolled for the course. On the 2nd August 1996, exactly four months after the commencement of the pilot, the Regional Coordinator submitted a report showing the performance of the councillors in the course as follows:

(i) Morogoro Municipal Council
  (a) 20 councillors (84%)completed successfully all 3 modules,
  (b) 1 councillor (4%) completed successfully 2 modules.
  (c) 1 councillor (4%) completed successfully 1 module.
  (d) 2 councillors (8%) did not complete any module
(ii) District Council 'A' (Kilosa)
  (a) 10 councillors (67%) completed successfully all 3 modules
  (b) 3 councillors (20%) did not complete any module
  (c) 2 councillors (13%) did not attempt any module.

3.2 Town Council

Coordinators and Tutors' Orientation Seminar for the Council was held from 31st January 1996 to 03rd February 1996. The launching of the pilot for all the 17 councillors of the Town Council was done on 16th April 1996. Each councillor was assigned a module to read and complete during the pilot. On 19th July 1996, the Regional Coordinator submitted a report showing:

(a) 15 councillors (88%) had each completed successfully the module assigned to.

(b) 2 councillors (12%) each did not complete the module assigned to.

3.3 District Council 'B' (Kisarawe)

Coordinators' and Tutors' Orientation Seminar for the Council was held from 23rd - 26th February 1996. The pilot for a total of 24 councillors of the Council was launched on 27th February 1996. The tutors' report for July 1996, showed:

(a) A total of 14 councillors (58%) had each completed successfully the module assigned to.

(b) 3 councillors (13%) each had completed successfully all the 3 modules.

(c) 7 councillors (29%) each had not completed the module assigned.

4. Evaluation of Pilot Schemes

Three main methods were used in evaluating the conduct, impact and hence relevance of the pilot schemes. The methods used were:

(i) Questionnaires

(ii) Interviews

(iii) Evaluation Seminar

i. Questionnaires:

Structured questionnaires were prepared and administered to Coordinators (Regional and Councils), Tutors and Students (Councillors) at the end of the pilot. These were intended to provide feedback on questions designed to elucidate the objectives of the pilot.

ii. Interviews

During the course of the pilot and more importantly at the end of it, the SAEU officials and other members of the Project's Consultative Committee, were able to interview Coordinators, Tutors and Councillors on the conduct, impact and relevance of the course. Such interviews were carried out during monitoring and evaluation visits to the Councils. A session of such interviews may be viewed on a video record of the Evaluation Seminar organised for Municipal and District Council 'A' held on 15th August 1996.

iii. Evaluation Seminar

At the end of their pilot scheme, Municipal and District Council 'A' organised a seminar to evaluate the conduct, impact and relevance of the course, from 14th -15th August 1996. During the seminar, Coordinators, Tutors and Councillors shared their experiences and analysed the conduct, impact and relevance of the pilot within the context of its underlying objectives. Three independent but related reports were issued at the end of the seminar. The reports were:

(i) District Councillors'Report ('A')

(ii) Municipal Councillors' Report

(iii) Seminar's Report (prepared by the Coordinators and Tutors) (Ibid).

An analysis of findings from the foregoing data sources led us to draw the following inferences on the conduct, impact and relevance of the pilot schemes and hence the course itself. For the purpose of this paper, the inferences will also constitute our concluding remarks.

5. Inferences

(i) The pilot schemes showed significant success in terms of councillors enrolment, participation, performance and completion rates. A total of 33 councillors (41%) in the four councils managed to complete the whole course (3 modules) in about three months' time. Further, a total of 31 councillors (39%) each completed the modules assigned. Therefore, 80% of the councillors piloted enrolled and participated successfully in the course. The remaining 20% did not either enroll or complete modules assigned to them.

(ii) Given what has been noted in (i) above, the modules were fairly presented, clear, interesting, relevant and helpful to the majority of the councillors (80%). Further, they can be read and completed by keen councillors within a shorter duration than the proposed duration of 9 months.

(iii) Much as all the three modules were generally found to be fairly presented, interesting and clear, module III was found to be more difficult than the other two modules.

(iv) Evaluation instruments duly completed by councillors, tutors and coordinators indicate portions of study materials which require further elaboration/clarification in order to make them more comprehensible. These indicators have guided the SAEU in revising and up-dating the modules for final print and release nationwide.

(v) Councillors of the Town Council completed one module only as they were not allowed to do more than one module during the pilot. In the other councils, councillors were allowed and in fact assisted to do more than one module.

(vi) Given (v) above, the programme's support services structure appears to be sound and effective in influencing councillors'performance. Thus, the pilot showed remarkable successes in Councils where Coordinators and Tutors were keen in following-up and assisting the councillors. This was the case with Municipal and District Council 'A'. Moreover, the pilot was not organized in the City Council as the Coordinator failed to set-up the required support structure before its dissolution on 28th June 1996.

(vii) The low completion rate in District Council 'B' was largely due to inadequate tutors' support. This factor came about as a result of the Council lacking funds for supplementing the financing of this service, which required tutors to visit councillors in their wards in order to assist and motivate them.

(viii) The Coordinators and the Councillors alike acknowledged a significant change in their awareness and conduct as a result of the course. In one Council, it was noted that Councillors were now working more closely as a team, irrespective of their party differences. In another council, a veteran Councillor admitted '..it is only after studying this course that I have, for the first time, understood clearly my roles...'

(ix) For councillors to study the course successfully, tutors' support and systematic follow-up are essential. Councils need to supplement the funding of this service whose initial costs will be met by the SAEU. However, to retain the purity of the distance education methodology and hence its economies, this service should not substitute the methodology with the conventional one but reinforce the former. Deliberate efforts should, therefore, be made during orientation

seminars for both coordinators and tutors on the one hand and the councillors on the other, to ensure that the distance education methodology is well understood.

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