

DEVELOPING A MODEL OF COURSE MATERIALS  
FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING  
AT THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITAS TERBUKA

by

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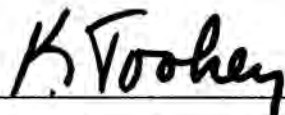
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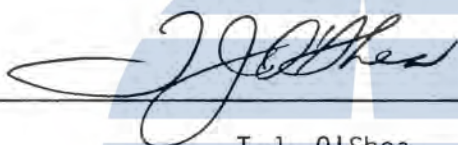
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to propose a curriculum plan based on a literature review of ways of developing English instructional materials. The plan is designed for implementation at the Faculty of Education in Universitas Terbuka (the Open University of Indonesia). This study is important because it will help educational planners to improve course materials so that distance teaching methods are suitable and effective for language teaching.

The review of the literature showed that little research has been done on the problem of teaching English at a distance. Nevertheless, in certain situations where there is no possibility for face-to-face contact, distance courses for learning English must be designed, and materials effective for learning English must be developed. The communicative approach based upon the assumption that language is taught for communicative purposes, is the current method favoured in language teaching. It is used mainly for teaching the skills of listening and

speaking, and it is very important that the English teacher teaches the students how to communicate having due regard for the purpose, situation, place, and person. The problem is how this approach can be put into practice not only in a classroom setting, but also in a distance learning setting.

The curriculum plan described in this study focuses on aims and objectives, subject content, subject sequencing, teaching methods and media, learner's assessment, and course evaluation. The communicative model for teaching English was considered for some aspects of the plan.

Some specific suggestions are given for English teaching at a distance at Universitas Terbuka. First, the print materials and audio-cassettes should be an integrated package. Second, the format of audio-cassette should be changed to reflect communicative ideas in language teaching. Third, UT should provide Language Resource Centres in every distance learning unit throughout Indonesia. And finally, UT should take advantage of radio broadcasting to support students' learning.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Special thanks are due all of the members of the Faculty of Education, Universitas Terbuka. In particular, Dr. Christina Mangindaan, the Dean of the Faculty of Education, who always reminded and supported me to finish this project. Thanks, too to Dr. Hamid Hassan who shared his thoughtful ideas and provided moral support.

I should also like to express my gratitude for all of those individuals seldom mentioned but always present for support and encouragement. These include

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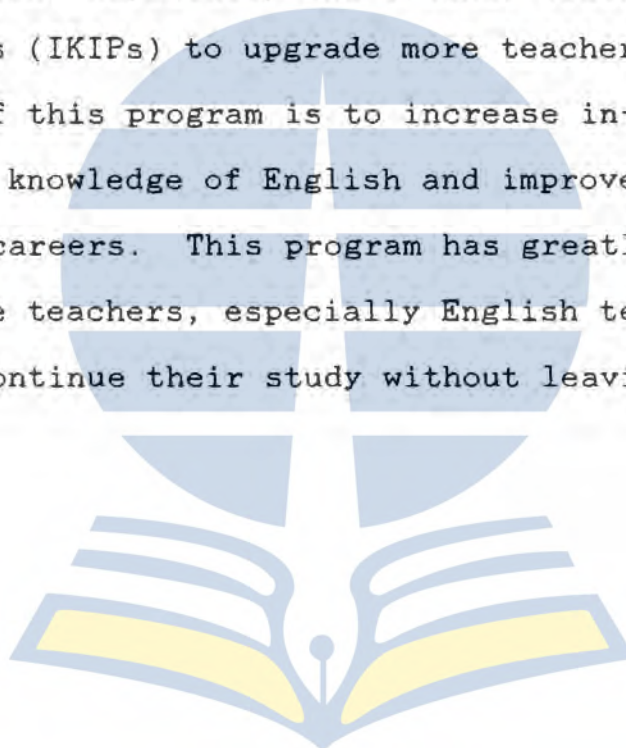
## CHAPTER I. THE PROBLEM

The demand for secondary teachers in Indonesia is growing rapidly. To solve this problem, the Indonesian Government set up a crash teacher education program during the 1970s; one and two year courses to obtain diplomas for teaching in the junior secondary schools, and three and four year courses for teaching in the senior secondary schools. This effort, however, did not fill the demand, and in 1981, the Government established the Distance Education Secondary Teachers In-Service Training Project. In 1984, the Government set up the Universitas Terbuka (the Indonesian Open University), and the special teacher training project became a part of Universitas Terbuka.

In 1984, the Faculty of Education at the Universitas Terbuka (UT) began offering English language courses. As of the time this paper was written the English program had been carried out for three semesters. As required by the Indonesian government, the program is designed as an in-service

program (both junior and senior schools) for those who wish to increase their competency in English language skills, enabling them to get either a diploma or a degree.

The rationale for offering English language courses by distance education is to assist the conventional universities, especially the Teacher Training Institutes (IKIPs) to upgrade more teachers. The main purpose of this program is to increase in-service teachers' knowledge of English and improve their teaching careers. This program has greatly affected in-service teachers, especially English teachers, who want to continue their study without leaving their jobs.



### Description of Universitas Terbuka

Initial planning of UT was began in 1983, but the Government hesitated to set up an unconventional university. The main reason was that the Government was afraid of the quality of the students after graduation. But, the great demand for student enrolment in university and the slow increase of the absorption of conventional universities made the postponement of Universitas Terbuka impossible. Then, the Government gave only nine months to the UT preparation committee to establish the Universitas. Consequently, the preparation committee built as simple a system of distance education as possible and, wherever feasible, attempted to use existing services and resources.

In fulfilling their tasks the committee made the following major decisions:

- a. to provide a uniform curriculum for everyone taking the same program;
- b. to use the post offices as delivery points for course materials, and as banks for accepting fees from students;
- c. to use existing Government higher education institutions as regional offices;

- d. to use wordprocessor letter quality outputs as camera ready text for printing;
- e. to use the University of Indonesia computers and computer programs to process registration and examinations;
- f. to request nationally known professors to write the course materials (Setijadi, Suparman and Mangindaan 1986, p. 3)

### Number of Students

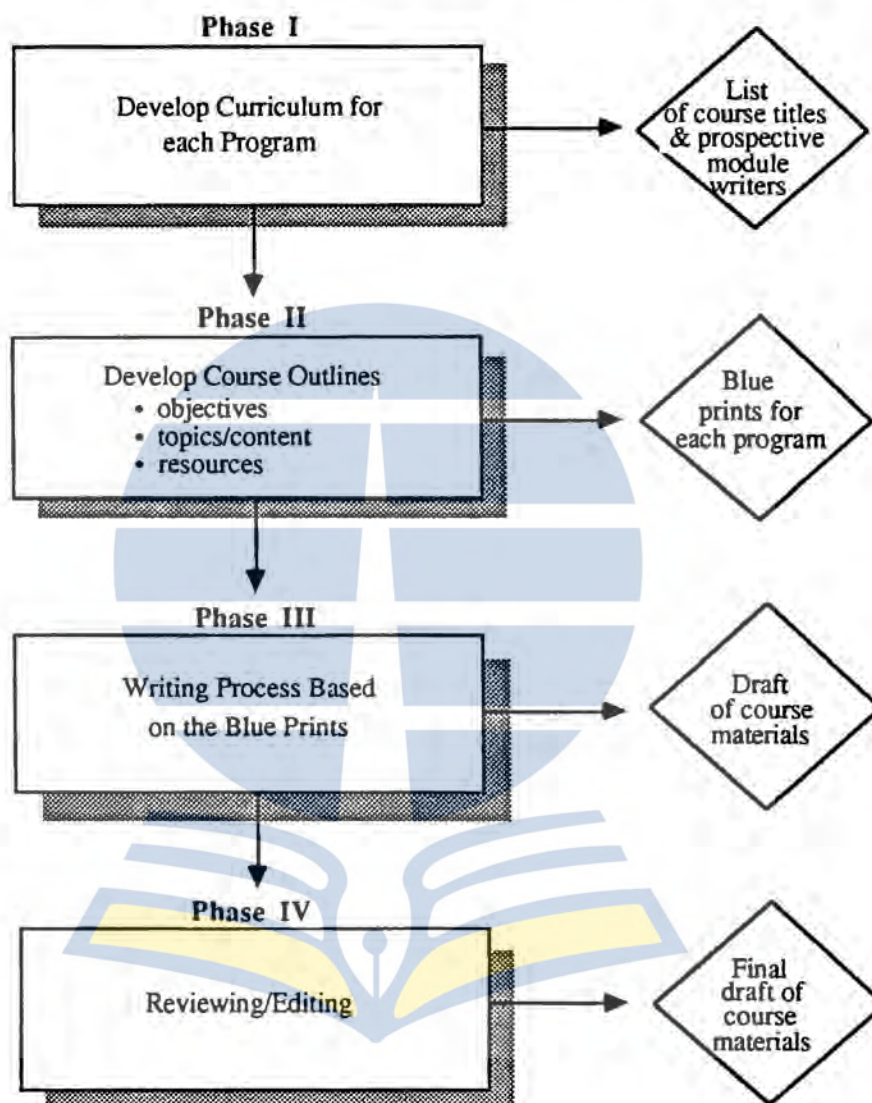
The establishment of UT was overwhelmingly welcomed by prospective students. It was planned that in the first year UT would accept 25,000 students. Due to the great demand, however, the government revised its plan and 65,000 students were enrolled.

It was expected that many of the registered students would be recent graduates from senior secondary schools. However, more than 75% of the registered students were already employed. So, UT's attempt to accomodate the demands of many recent high school graduates for university places was not fully successful.

### Course Development at UT

UT develops printed materials for its courses in four phases. The first phase is to develop curriculum for each program. This activity is conducted through a workshop where experts from conventional universities and IKIPs (Teacher Training Institutes) are the participants. The product is list of course titles, entry requirements for the program, and a list of prospective module writers. The second phase is to develop course outlines. The participants are prospective module writers. Their tasks are to develop the objectives, topics and content, self tests, and final tests of the course. As is the case for the first phase, the second phase is also run through a workshop. The third phase is the writing process of the materials done at the writers' own place (office, university, institute or home). The fourth phase consists of reviewing and editing process, and is done in a workshop. Those four activities are completed in twelve months. The following is the flow chart for developing course materials at UT.

### The Process of Course Development at UT



For the workshops, UT invites one or more prospective course writers from conventional universities/institutes for each course. Most of them are senior faculty members of their universities or institutes. They work together with instructional designers comprising the UT academic staff in formulating the course outlines. During the workshop, UT gives a short training course on the techniques of writing instructional modules for distance education in the form of printed media. The product of this workshop constitutes the course outlines of each course, and if the prospective module writers are able to produce the course outlines, they become UT's module writers.

Having finished the course outlines, the module writers then return to where they live to write their modules. After four months, they have to submit (personally or by mail) 50% of their modules. These materials are keyed in by using wordprocessors and are equipped with relevant pictures, graphs, or illustrations by the UT graphic artists. The remaining 50% should be completed in the next five months. Again, module writers have to send them to UT for



wordprocessing and graphics. In the tenth month, another workshop is held to review the final group of modules. The outcome of this workshop is a complete set of modules. The finishing touches on the materials, are done by course designers at UT.

The method of developing course materials as described above does not always run as smoothly as it sounds. There are quite a few difficulties such as disagreement between those theorists who consider everything from an academic point of view and those who consider everything from a practical point of view. Those people who are more theoretically oriented are often senior lecturers who teach at the conventional universities, such as the University of Indonesia, Bandung Institute of Technology, and Teachers Training Institutes. The more practically oriented group sometimes create new courses that are relevant to the subject matter, but which are not offered at the conventional/regular universities. Thus the newly developed course may replace courses offered in the other universities or institutes. The disadvantage of such a new course is that the module writers may have difficulties in finding reference books as resources to

write the new course(s). These new courses are usually offered as elective ones within UT's program.

### The Role of the Tutor

One of the characteristics of distance education is the separation of student and teacher. Although the students study at a distance, it does not mean that there is no communication between student and teacher. The students will have chances to interact with the tutor, because distance education serves distance learners with three components: tutor, media, and text (Bates, 1984), which can be seen as a system organized around the tutor-student relationship. The tutorial is crucial for distance learners because tutor-student relationship learning can be seen to emerge as part of an interactional process involving negotiation and mutual construction of understanding (Bates 1984, p. 186). A tutorial is a way to overcome the problem of student and teacher separation.

In UT's situation, tutorials are offered every month for four hours. The main function of tutorials at UT is as an additional services to the students. In

the tutorial the students can ask their tutors questions about academic matters.

### The Use of Media

Several forms of media are potentially applicable to the Indonesian context, both from the institutional and the students' points of view. First, print material can be used as the main medium of instruction at a distance because it is cheap, affordable, accessible, convenient, and flexible.

Second, audio-cassettes form another effective means for learning at a distance because they are durable, portable, reproducible, and also convenient. Audiotapes have similar features to print materials in the sense that tapes allow flexibility and freedom to access the materials and enable students' to pace themselves.

Third, radio is very common in Indonesia. One of the advantages of using radio for instruction is that it allows access to a large audience simultaneously, cutting across geographical boundaries.

Fourth, television can be an alternative media to

give variety and encouragement to student learning. The time allocation for UT to use the public-funded television broadcasting is far from adequate (20 minutes per month). However, for English language learning, the television station also offers English instruction for the public for half an hour once a week.

The purpose for developing various means of instruction is to support student learning activities. There are a number of reasons why a variety of media is necessary. First, UT students have not conditioned themselves yet to a self-study system, because they have just graduated from conventional schools using face-to-face mode. Thus, they need other means of study, such as, audio and television programs.

Second, most UT students also work. This means that the students have limited time to study the modules. To solve this problem, UT provides media in the form of audio and television programs so that the students can achieve the objectives defined in the modules.

Third, the ages of UT students range from 20 to 50 years. Due to such a range of ages there is, of

course, a variety of perceptions of the printed learning materials. Therefore, audio and television programs are needed to clarify the modules.

Fourth, from the psychological point of view, each student has a different method of studying. Some can study well by reading only. Others can only study if there are other facilities such as audio-cassettes and television programs. For example, in studying a concept, this group of students can understand it better if they read, hear, and see a demonstration of that concept. So this group of students obviously requires audio-visual supplements to the print material in order to support their learning activities.

#### Print Production

For keying in the final draft of the instructional material, UT utilizes Apple II Compatible computers due to their price and availability, and for software, UT uses Wordstar.

Suparman (1986) has stated that by August 1986, UT had produced printed materials for 242 courses. For each course the printed materials consist of 250 to 500

pages, and 3,000 to 40,000 copies are printed annually. The printing of these materials is done by more than 30 private printing companies.

### English Programs at Universitas Terbuka

#### Type

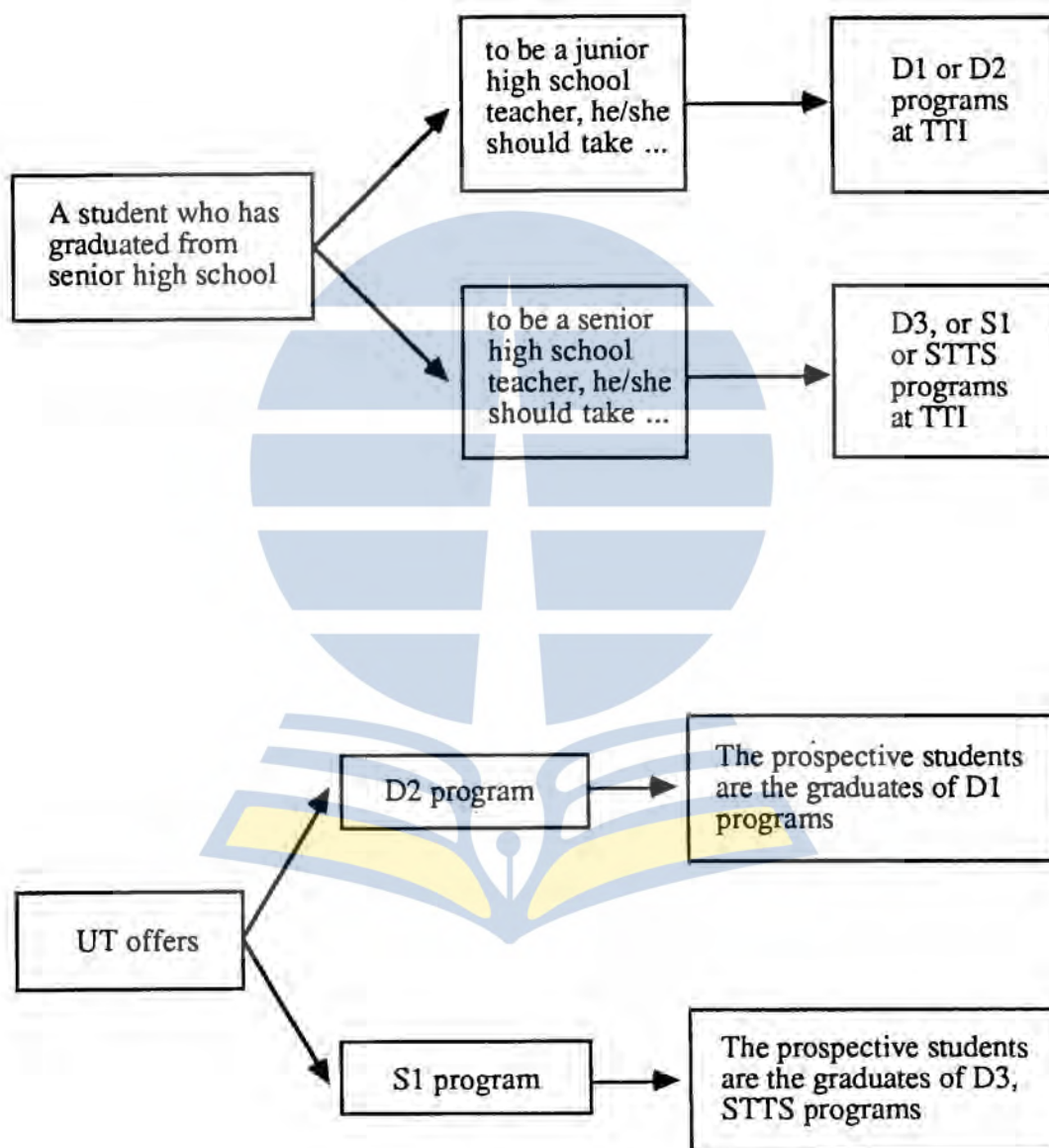
The Faculty of Education offers two types of English programs: the Diploma II (D2) program, and the Sarjana Degree (S1). The S1 program is higher than the D2 program. The graduates of S1 program can teach both in the senior high or junior high schools, whereas those from D2 program can only teach at junior high schools. These programs are intended mainly for in-service teachers who teach at both junior high and senior high schools.

#### The Students

The Faculty of Education offers English courses for Diploma 2 students (DII) and for degree students (SI). The requirement for student teachers who wish to

enroll for a DII is that they should have a DI certificate. Diploma 1 is a one year course for students who want to teach in the junior secondary schools (SMP). Student teachers wishing to enroll in SI must have either a DIII or a Secondary Teacher Training School certificate (PGSLA). Diploma 3 courses have to be taken at the Teacher Training Institutes (TTI) by prospective English teachers who are going to teach in the junior secondary schools. These teachers also teach in senior secondary schools. PGSLA is a Secondary Teacher Training School (STTS) which prepares student for teaching in senior secondary schools. Note that all the prospective English student teachers, to be accepted in the Faculty of Education a UT, must have a teaching experience of at least 2 years and have the recommendation from regional office. The following is the diagram of the alternative routes of a student to be an English teacher.

### The Alternative Routes of a Student to be an English Teacher





## Problems

The major problem that UT's Faculty of Education has encountered is finding effective ways of presenting language learning materials to learners at a distance. As any language has four skills, speaking, listening, writing, and reading, then the question emerges: how will the skills of speaking and listening be taught at a distance? What the Faculty has done in its English course is to supplement the speaking and listening modules with audio-cassettes. However, we the English language teachers cannot control or monitor reception or oral productions.

Another problem faculty members encounter is that most English course writers are reluctant to spend time analyzing the objectives of the content that should be matched both with curriculum needs, and the students' needs. The curriculum needs means what topics the teacher/writer should be teaching whereas the students' needs concerns what the teacher/writer expects the students should be able to do. Needs analysis, along lines suggested by Munby (1978) for example, is rarely done. So what is provided is less effective than it

might be. Therefore, it is the opinion of the writer that the students who work with these materials might not learn very much from them.

### Statement of the Problem

Some educators are of the opinion that UT English courses are far from reaching the objectives of language learning at a distance. They believe that even in conventional universities, using the face-to-face mode, it is still difficult to attain the goals of a foreign language course. The regular universities generally emphasize the four skills related to language learning: speaking, listening, writing, and reading. How are these skills to be taught effectively at a distance?

Holmberg (1985) states that "the greatest difficulty encountered in language teaching at a distance concerns the skill of talking." Furthermore, Stringer, et al. (1982) indicate that language learning cannot operate effectively at a distance without some supporting provisions; such a system must be sensitive and flexible to meet audience needs. For

example, print materials combined with various media such as audio-cassettes, radio, and television could support the language learning process in order to facilitate acquisition of the four language skills.

UT utilizes print materials as the primary medium for student learning. Some courses are complemented by audio-cassettes; for example, listening comprehension for English courses. I make the assumption that the existing English courses have not been developed maximally. For example, the print material, audio-cassettes, radio, and television have not optimally been developed to meet the students' needs. This situation is considered to be natural for a university such as UT which was established only two years ago. Consequently, UT has not yet had the course developers for developing effective course materials for English teaching. But developing course materials in order to meet the students' needs is imperative. The professors who have written the present courses are for example, Dr. Sri Utari Subyakto, Dr. Ratna Sayekti, Dr. Fuad Abdul Hamid, and Dr. Nababan. They are all senior professors at Teachers Training Institutes. The priority is to ensure that the course content is

adequate and correct, and to utilize the easiest available media forms. And finally, course development relates to the use of the facilities in supporting teaching and learning activities: for example, learning resource centres.

### Methodology

This project is conducted by the use of a descriptive study approach. I collect and analyze the research on distance language teaching that has been done by different researchers from different institutions. From this research, I present information which should be useful to course developers for developing effective course materials for English teaching which is applicable to UT. Prospective English course writers should be well prepared, after reading this project, to develop appropriate and effective courses.

### Limitations of the Study

This study does not attempt to outline conditions

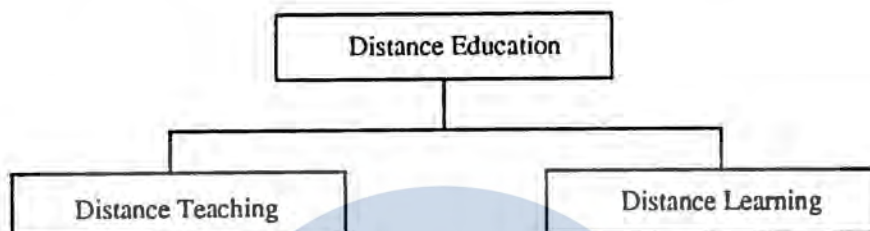
for developing effective course material for English teaching by distance learning. In this project, I focus on the teaching of listening and speaking at a distance. I realize that little research has been done in this area. Another limitation is that I do not have the time or resources to interview students to determine their needs. Nevertheless, I make an attempt to make a plan for developing course materials for English teaching at UT.

### Definition of the Terms

A crucial need for the development of distance education in the field of higher education arose in the 1970s. In many countries, these distance education institutions such as UT have become a very significant part of the national higher education network.

The terminology relating to learning at a distance still causes some confusion, because there are at least six major terms: correspondence study, home study, independent study, external studies, distance teaching, and distance education. Among those terminologies, 'distance education' is the most suitable term (Keegan,

p. 27). The reason is that the term distance education covers distance teaching and distance learning processes (see the diagram below).



Furthermore Wedmeyer (1977) concludes that:

...the term distance education has a usage somewhat comparable to that of independent study in the United States. It is increasingly used in Europe as an omnibus term to include correspondence study, open learning, instruction by radio and television - in short, all learning-teaching arrangements that are not face-face (p. 2121).

To avoid confusion about 'distance education', it will be useful to present a definition at this point.

Moore (1973) offers the following:

Distance teaching may be defined as the family of instructional methods in which the teaching

behaviors are executed apart from the learning behaviors, including those that in a contiguous situation would be performed in the learner's presence, so that communication between the teacher and the learner must be facilitated by print, electronic, mechanical or other devices (p. 664).

Another expert, Holmberg (1983) provides six major distinguishing features of distance education:

1. The separation of teacher and learner which distinguishes it from face-to-face lecturing
2. the influence of an educational organization which distinguishes it from private study
3. the use of technical media, usually print, to unite teacher and learner and carry the educational content
4. the provision of two-way communication so that the student may benefit from or even initiate dialogue
5. the possibility of occasional meetings for both didactic and socialisation purposes
6. the participation in an industrialized form of education which, if accepted, contains the genus of radical separation of distance education from other forms (p. 30).

These definitions indicate that distance education caters to individual study. In many education systems, there should be individual study, even in face-to-face learning and teaching activities. This means that real

learning is primarily an individual activity and is attained only through an internalizing process.

### Organization of the Study

This study comprises four chapters. Chapter I discusses the background of the study concerning description of UT, statement of the problem, limitation of the study, definition of the terms, and organization of the study. Chapter II presents a review of the literature concerning English language teaching, teaching English at a distance, and curriculum design. Chapter III is a curriculum plan. Chapter IV gives summary and discussion.





## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### English Language Teaching

##### Review of Approaches, Method, and Techniques

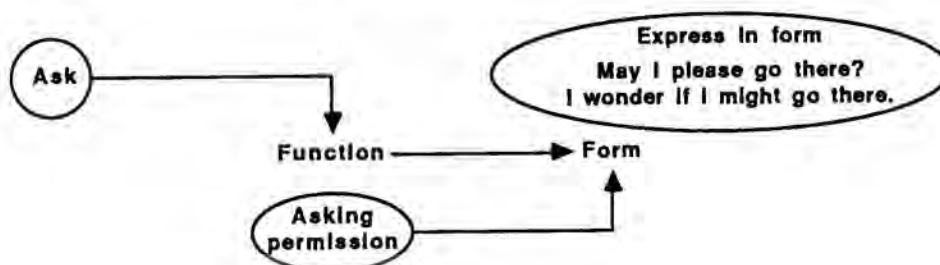
Anthony (1979) has stated that the terms approach, method, and technique form a hierarchical arrangement. The term approach refers to the set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching under which we operate, so approach is the theoretical foundation upon which any systematic method is used. An approach is axiomatic. It states a point of view, a philosophy, an article of faith - something which one believes but cannot necessarily prove (Anthony, p. 5).

One of the currently most popular approaches in language teaching is the functional-notional/communicative approach. This approach concentrates on the functions of the language, on how the students use the language in a certain contexts of communication. This approach has replaced

in some places an older method of language teaching, the structural/grammatical approach. Formerly, language teaching methods focused mainly on structure or grammar, rather on communicative purposes. In this method the syllabus is structural/grammatical and is a compilation of a list of language forms. At present, functional/communicative syllabuses focus on functions, what users use language to do. Dobson (1979) has stated that such a syllabus is the backbone of a language course based on language functions or speech acts rather on units of grammar or situations with a grammar form. Another methodologist, Finocchiaro (1979) mentioned that the aim of the functional syllabus is to develop communicative competence in the learners.

Communicative language teaching focuses on an imperfectly defined unit - the language function. One example of a function might be "requesting permission". The following shows the relation between the function and forms which might be used to accomplish the function.

### The Functional Syllabus

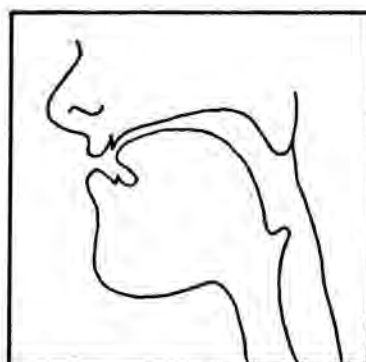


Approach, therefore establishes a language course's orientation to the learner and to what must be taught. With the communicative approach, what must be taught are functions of language -- they provide the organizing principle of the syllabus

Anthony (1979, p. 6) defines method as an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon the selected approach. In other words the term method refers to the various procedures of language teaching used to achieve language control. The method includes the lesson plan, the curriculum, time schedule, text book and so on. Thus, while an approach is axiomatic, a method is procedural. There are some factors which can influence the orderly presentation of

language to students, which differ methodologically. For example, the nature of the student's language, the age, the cultural background, and the previous experience with English modify the method employed.

The term 'technique' is implementational which actually happens in the class-room to implement an approach and a method. The use of technique in language teaching depends on the teacher, his individual artistry, and the composition of the class. For example, a teacher may be teaching the difference between the pronunciation of two English fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ to Indonesian students. In this case the teacher should try different techniques until the students can pronounce the words correctly. If the technique of imitation fails, the teacher should apply other techniques, for example, by drawing the human vocal apparatus and show the students the right position of the tongue for pronouncing those sounds (see the diagram below).



Some foreign language teaching specialists do not always make subtle differences between approach, method, and techniques and instead they use the acronym MAT, which stands for Method, Approach, and Technique, which refers to the general way or strategy of teaching a language (Mullins 1980, p. 2). I also prefer the term 'method' in its broadest sense, that is the general way of teaching, in this case teaching a foreign language. The reason is that in language teaching the teacher has to make a plan for his/her teaching examples, preparing the lesson plan, setting time schedule, choosing the textbooks etc. All of these activities are procedural which refers to method. Thus in my opinion method is a general way of referring to teaching a language.

### Status of English in Indonesia

English as a foreign language occurs in countries where English is neither the national language nor the official language: examples include Indonesia, Japan, Brazil, Republic of China, Italy and others. In these countries, English can be a medium of instruction in

the school system or at least part of the course of the study. In other countries, English is given a special status because of historical factors such as ex-colony or mandate states, or because of social and economic reasons: Kenya, Ethiopia, Malaysia and others (Dubin, p. 8) are the examples of countries in that position.

In Indonesia, English is taught beginning from junior high school to university levels. At the senior high school level, foreign languages other than English, namely French and German are taught as optional subjects. However, the realization of the teaching of these two foreign languages is very much dependent upon the availability of the teachers.

English is the first foreign language to be taught in schools at all levels, except at the elementary school level. It is a required subject like Mathematics, Indonesian, Economics, or Chemistry. However, the teaching of English is meant to provide the students with an adequate ability to comprehend English literature, scientific textbooks and references written in English. It is not taught in order to develop the students' practical communicative skill for daily conversation or as a medium of instruction in

schools.

The use of English in Indonesia is quite limited. The first language used by the native Indonesian is usually the ethnic language. For instance, the first language of the Javanese ethnic group is Javanese, while the first language of the Balinese is Balinese, which is used in their daily communication. Bahasa Indonesia is a second language for many Indonesian people although it is used as the official means of communication and the medium of instruction in schools. To most Indonesian people, English is therefore at best a third language to be learned and is quite rarely used for daily communication. This will be expanded in the next section.

### Need Analysis

To identify the students' needs in language learning is important before designing a language syllabus. As Munby (1978) points out, need analysis is a tool for the course designer rather than the learner. He suggests that the course designer has to achieve two

things:

1. produce a detail profile of what the learner needs to be able to do in English in the occupation or studies for which he is being trained.
2. produce a specification profile of the language skills, functions and forms required to carry out the communication described in the needs profile. (p. 81)

The course designer should answer questions like: who are the learners; which study or occupation will they need English for; where and when will they need to use English; and with whom? In this case, the students who take English courses at UT are in-service teachers. They need to take English courses to increase their knowledge as well as to enhance their careers. As they are teachers, English is needed in their classrooms. Of course, they use English with their students in their classrooms. In this matter, I do not have the time and resources to do an in depth analysis of learners needs, but on the basis of personal experience, I can generally describe a typical Indonesian junior or senior high English school situation. In classroom activities, English is used



passively. In other words, the English teachers do not use English for daily conversation or as a medium of instruction in English classes. They just use English for teaching structural/grammatical and teaching pronunciation in their classrooms.

Having identified the students' need in language learning, then the next step is designing the syllabus. The following is the example of the present UT English course syllabus:

The Course: Listening Comprehension  
Code #: ING. 4203 P/2

Description:

This course involves: Word meaning, phrase, clause, intonation, etc.; Reading comprehension ; Understanding the messages from the dialogues; Comprehending the mass media (radio/TV). The purpose of this course is to improve the students' competence in comprehending the messages which are delivered to them orally.

General Instructional Objectives:

At the end of this unit, the students are expected to be able to understand the news which are broadcast through radio and TV.

Specific Instructional Objectives:

At the end of this unit, students should be able to comprehend the content of the actual news which have been broadcasted through radio, TV, and comprehend the comments which are broadcasted by radio and TV.

Topic:

Radio news broadcast; TV news broadcast; and the  
Radio and TV comments broadcast

Sub Topic:

Radio news should contain:

- the actual news
- social and culture news
- the variety of news

TV news should contain the actual news and variety  
of news

The content of news comments which is broadcasted by  
by radio

The content of news comments which is broadcasted by  
TV

Module #: 4

Time Estimation: about 18 hours

References:

Radio news, TV news, Newspaper, Magazines, etc.  
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The Functional-Notional/Communicative Approach with  
regard to Listening and Speaking

The functional-notional/communicative approach has  
been described in general in the previous part. In  
this section, this approach will be discussed in detail  
with regard to listening and speaking.

First of all, what is the functional-notional  
approach? The functional-notional approach puts

communicative purpose as central in language teaching (see for example: Wilkins, 1978; Widdowson, 1978; Dobson, 1979; Finocchiaro, 1979; Salimbene, 1983; and Hubbard et al, 1985). Why have methodologists shifted their ideas about language teaching from structural based to communicative based since the early 1970s? In my opinion, this is because it became widely recognized that one important purpose of language is to communicate. Interaction between speakers is one type of communication. This interaction is made possible by communicative functions of language: for example, requesting and giving information, expressing thought processes, expressing opinions, expressing personal feelings, and interacting socially. The form of language varies for different interactions; that is, the function of the language changes.

The communicative approach to language teaching nowadays has sparked a debate among the English teachers. Some teachers oppose the new approach because they believe the communicative approach ignores basic structural sequencing. Actually, the communicative approach does consider the mastering of basic structural knowledge as important. Furthermore,

Dobson (1979) stated that a new fashion in language teaching never entirely replaces the methods that precede it. Rather, it coexists with those earlier modes and may modify them in such a way as to improve them. So, nowadays grammatical forms are taught not as an end itself, but as a means of carrying out communicative intent (Salimbene, 1983).

The functional or communicative syllabus is based on sound sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic principles (Finocchiaro, 1979). Sociolinguistics reminds us that the syllabus should cover the social roles and psychological attitudes which can be performed by students in a conversation having due regard for the purpose, situation, place, and person. Hubbard (1985) notes that the functional courses often contain units which are strictly speaking, situational, entitled 'Using the telephone', 'Asking the way', and 'Making transport enquiries'.

With regard to psycholinguistic principles the functional or communicative syllabus is guided in three ways. First, the functional syllabus pays attention to the human needs from the basic to self actualization in teaching the language. Second, the syllabus is self

motivating. It is planned to meet student needs; for example, vocational needs, the actual social, and cultural. Third, the syllabus should be written based on the students' learning pace acquiring the knowledge.

Salimbene (1983) states that in designing the functional syllabus, the writer should try to:

- (a). determine the communicative needs of the students who will be using the material(s),
- (b). present the language functions required in order of need, (c). offer the students a 'choice' in expressing or performing the functions (this is a choice of language patterns based not on grammatical similarity but on similarity of meaning), and (d). balance his knowledge of language structure with the functional needs of the students in deciding on the order of presentation of material (p. 3).

So, the communicative approach is used for especially teaching listening and speaking in a natural atmosphere. Consequently, the teachers who wish to use this kind of approach in language teaching, have to teach the students how to communicate in the right situation, purpose, place, and person in a daily life. For example, teachers will point out that a student may

not say something like "Hi you guy, how are you doing?" to his/her professor. He/she must say "Hi Tom, how are you doing?"



## CHAPTER III

### CURRICULUM PLAN

#### Curriculum Design

This section will discuss how to design a curriculum, especially to design a curriculum for English teaching at a distance. First of all what is meant by a curriculum design? Warwick (1975) states that a curriculum design is the overall blueprint from which a workable structure is derived. The blue print contains the general instructional objectives, specific instructional objectives, topics, sub-topics, reference, and the description of the course.

In designing the curriculum, those aspects above (general instructional objectives, specific instructional objectives, and so on) are very important to consider carefully by any educational planners or course writers before they put them into practice. The reason is that, if the blueprint is not well planned, it might produce unstructured materials, or lesson materials which are not integrated well with the rest of the curriculum. If this happens, the

students might not achieve the objectives of the course. Davies (1976) has stated that objectives lie at the very heart of the planning process, whether one is planning a curriculum or a single classroom lesson. This will be discussed in detail below.

What is the purpose of designing a curriculum? The purpose is to guide the educational planners, and course writers in teaching or writing the lesson materials. The design of a curriculum lays down general principles of guidelines to be followed in its planning and implementation.

### Aims and Objectives

Thinking of the aims and objectives is the most important stage in planning any course by distance. There is a difference between aims and objectives. The difference is as follows:

Aims ---> "a general statement of what you hope the course (or lesson) will achieve, perhaps express what you, the teacher, will be presenting to the learner"



Objectives ---> "a statement of what learners should be able to do (or do better) as a result of having worked through the course (or lesson)" (Rowntree, 1986 p. 44).

In other words, objectives are more detailed statements than aims. The specific objectives show the precise behaviour which students would have to demonstrate.

UT uses other terms for aims and objectives: 'general instructional objective(s)' instead of 'aims', and 'specific instructional objectives' instead of 'objectives'. For example:

- \* general instructional objective/aim (listening comprehension course) include:  
-At the end of this unit, students are expected to be able to understand the news that is broadcasted through radio and television.
- \* specific instructional objectives/objectives (listening comprehension course) include:  
-At the end of this unit, students should be able to comprehend the content of the actual news that has been broadcasted through radio and television.  
(Subyakto, 1986, p. 1)

In writing objectives teachers are trying to

indicate what successful learners should be able to do (or say) to demonstrate that they have learned. In addition, Gilham (1980) has the opinion that most writers on the subject seem to agree that the specific objectives we hope to achieve in a lesson should define some observable and measurable behaviour. Therefore, the teachers/course writers must use action words in writing objectives. The following is the example of some of action words that should be used: state, describe, and explain.

Rowntree (1986) classified objectives into three aspects: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Knowledge deals with what subject matter the writer(s) expect the students to be able to demonstrate; the following example is taken from the Listening Comprehension course, "Students are expected to be able to identify general statements in English which are usually used in the English community (at a party, on the street), such as 'Can you show me the way to the post office?', or 'He looks more gentle with his red tie'" (Subyakto 1986). Skills deal with the application of knowledge of subject matter that students have learned from. For example, "Students should be able to apply the common

English statements in their conversation" (Subyakto, 1986). Attitudes deal with how the students feel toward the content of the course. For example, an attitudinal objective is "Students should show the desire to appreciate the basic principle of cross-cultural understanding in the context of language teaching" (Subyakto, 1986). These aspects are very crucial as the basis of the kind of benefit that students are expected to get from a course or lesson.

It is necessary to state the general objectives and specific objectives of UT's Listening and Speaking courses. There are several general and specific objectives of the listening comprehension course, in this work I will select those which are feasible for learning at a distance. These general instructional objectives are taken from those courses:

Having studied this module students are expected to be able to distinguish the meaning of different English spoken words, and to be able to carry out oral commands that are asked orally.

(Subyakto, 1986)

The specific instructional objectives are as follows:

At the end of this unit, students should be able

to:

- a. distinguish word meanings, phrases and clauses or different sentences
- b. distinguish the meaning of words of different intonation, rhythm, and stress.
- c. carry out the commands that are given orally by drawing simple pictures, structures, maps, or by making sentences. These objectives will be presented by audio-cassettes, so the students will get the real description of the pronunciation spoken by the native speaker.  
(Subyakto, 1986)

There are several ways to formulate specific objectives. Mager (1962) proposed a method of formulating specific objectives. He suggested that a specific objective should indicate behaviour, specify a condition, and lay down standards. What he meant by behaviour was the specific objective must be observable, measurable and unambiguous. Now look at the example of a specific objective which used Mager's method: "At the end of the course, the student will be able to carry out 8 of 10 commands that are given orally by drawing simple pictures, structures, maps, or by making sentences". This objective can be divided into three components:

Behaviour: carry out

Conditions: the commands that are given orally

Standard: 8 of 10 commands

It seems to me that Marger's point of view of formulating specific objectives was reasonable and should be taken into account by the course writers in designing the specific objectives.

The most important thing to remember about objectives is that they emphasize what the student - not the instructor, will have to do. And objectives should also emphasize a skill or competency rather than course content.

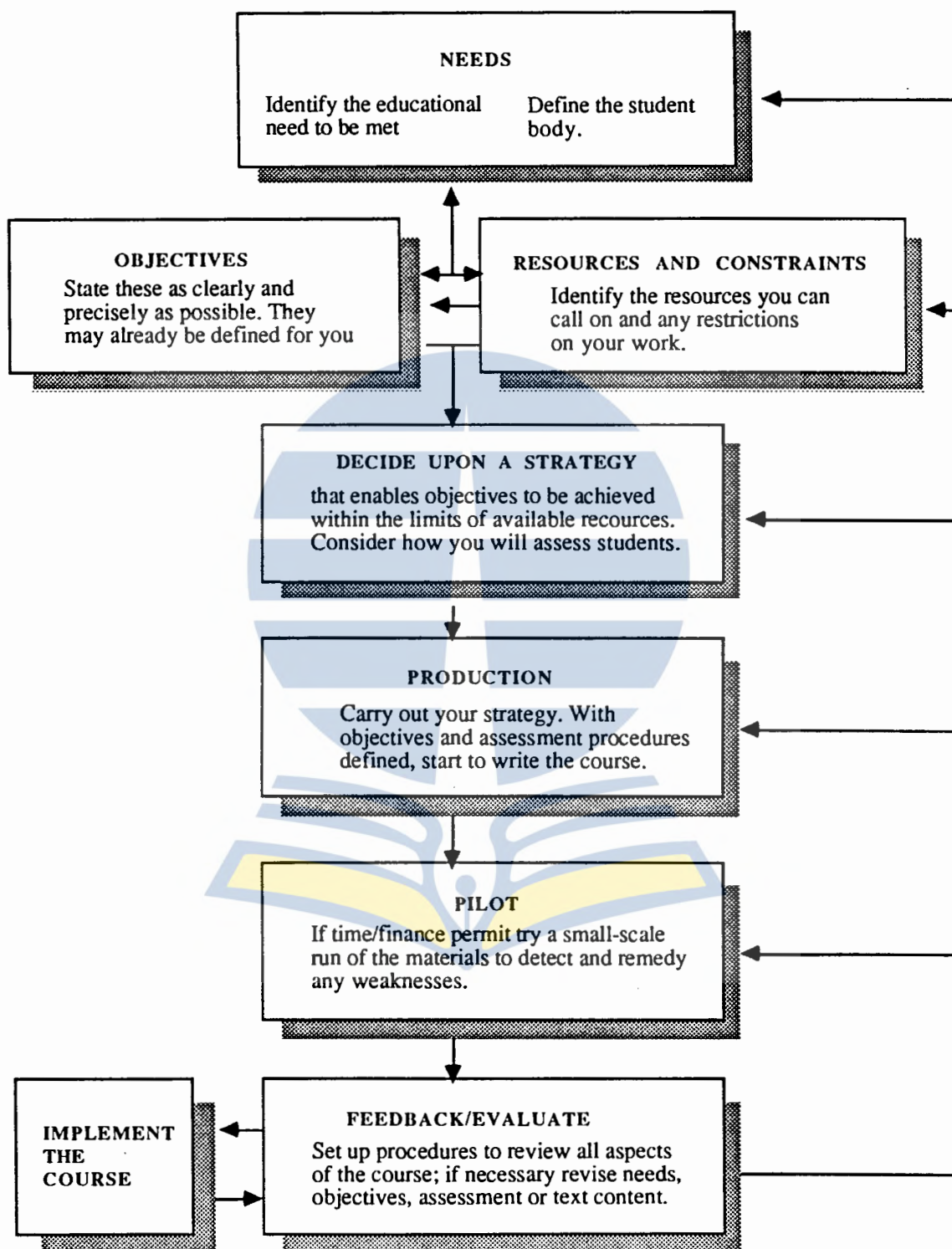
### Subject content

In deciding upon the content of the course there are some approaches to be considered. One of those is a 'Systematic Approach'. This approach is very important to help the writer(s) to plan a whole course from the very beginning and to give them who are carrying out a course that has already been planned a chance to consider the context into which their work will fit. To clarify what is a systematic approach in

designing distance learning course, I will include the diagram taken from Littlewood (1980).



### A Systematic Approach to Designing a Distance Learning Course.



(Littlewood, 1980, P.6)

This approach will lead the writer(s), especially English course writers, in preparing the material for students. For example, discovering needs for the target students is the first very important stage in planning. It is helpful for the writers to define the target students as accurately as possible so that the course design can take into account, for example, 'what the students are likely to know', 'what the students are likely to be able to do', and so on. Thus, this model should be taken into account in writing distance learning material.

Having decided the target audience, it is necessary to consider what this target audience needs to learn. In this connection, the prospective students of English program at the Faculty of Education, UT, are in-service English teachers. Thus the course writers have to set objectives that are suitable for students working at a distance.

Having planned the course in outline and now ready to start planning one lesson or unit in detail, the writers will select a number of specific instructional objectives for each unit and will also devise suitable assessment devices which enable students to check the



extent to which they have reached these objectives. So, the writers make something like a framework of objectives for each unit. They may find that the objectives that have been written are not in a suitable order with objectives that are listed in the blueprint. If so, the writer(s) will need to reorder them in a way that will make sense to the students.

The next activity is selecting the subject matter. The subject matter should be chosen to fit with student interests and needs, objectives and assessment activities. The selection of the subject matter must meet the needs and context of the students as well. The course writers should always pay attention to the following guideline questions in order to produce good subject matter:

- is it relevant to the target students?
- is it appropriate to the level of the course?
- is it easy or difficult to present at a distance?
- does it provide an opportunity for the development of required skills?

The next stage is resource and constraints. The course writers are unlikely to be involved with questions of resources. This is more the job of an

administrator; for example, vice principal. For example, an English course writer is unlikely to think about whether UT can provide audio-cassettes to the students as a supplement to their modules. Or how will his/her raw lesson materials be processed or how will UT edit his/her materials, or how will his/her materials be presented (graphics, photograph, printing)? All these things are the administrators' responsibility. But, course writers have to know that resources will be made available to them and what constraints are likely to affect their work.

The next stage is strategy. The word strategy implies an integrated use of resources (Littlewood, p. 21). For example, UT uses printed materials as the main media, and audio-cassettes as supplement to certain courses (English courses). These two media are used for presentation of materials, whereas tutorials are used for tutor-student contact.

Having determined the strategy, the course can be written. Then the question arises "How can the course materials be processed before sending them to the students?". UT uses Apple II compatible computers to key in the raw materials. And the editors have the

responsibility of editing the course print materials until there are no more graphical errors (see the flow chart of course materials processing below).



UT sends the final course materials to private print shops because UT does not have its own print shops. Then the packaging of course materials is the distribution unit responsibility.

It is an ideal to pilot the UT course materials to the group of students before sending them to the students through out Indonesia. Unfortunately, UT does not have enough funds and time to pilot its course materials.

Having used the course materials for one semester, course evaluation is needed. This part will be discussed further in the next section in "Evaluation".

From my point of view, it is important that members of the Faculty of Education know the procedures for course development in attempting to develop English courses at UT.

### Subject Sequencing

Having identified the target students, thought about general and specific instructional objectives and content, we still have some questions to think about. One of them is 'how will the content be sequenced'? There is a variety of sequences that may be used by writers to set up the content. In this connection, I will use some of subject sequences that are suggested by Rowntree (1986). The sequences are as follows:

- topic by topic
- chronological sequence
- place-to-place
- causal sequence
- structural logic

Topic by topic can also be called 'parallel themes' approach. This approach involves the study of a number of related themes or topics which (after an introduction to the overall purpose of the course) could have been studied in any order. The topics are independent and parallel, rather than forming a necessary series. In this approach, in sequencing the

lesson(s) in each topic, the writer may need other types of sequences to make it more logical.

The next approach is chronological sequence. This approach is used mainly in historical subject matter. For example, it may be used when the subject matter deals with happenings, events or discoveries over period of time. This approach can also be used for social and economic theories, where understanding on one event depends on understanding a previous event.

Place to place approach is equivalent to chronological order. One starts presenting about one place or situation and work from from place to adjacent place. For example, in explaining about ailments of the human body, the writer might start with the head and work down to the toes.

Causal sequence is an approach which is also closely related to the chronological. This approach will follow a chain of cause and effect for an event or phenomenon. So when the learners reach the end of the chain, they can explain the final effect, the event or phenomenon itself. This approach can be applied in teaching cause and effect relationships, especially if the objective of the course is that the learners should

be able to work out and explain such a relationship.

The final approach is structural logic. This approach discusses a sequence dictated by the logical structure of the subject. It is clear that the students can not learn a certain topic without previous understanding of some other topic. For example, in learning a new language, it may be clear that the students have to learn to distinguish between sounds in that language before they can hope to imitate them in their own speech. In my opinion, this approach is suitable for beginning learners studying a new language, because they cannot learn advanced materials before mastering the intermediate and elementary levels.

The above discussions are the examples of the approaches of sequencing the subject matter. Writers should take them into consideration before they start writing their materials. What approach of sequencing is needed depends on the area of the study and the target students.

In UT's case, the prospective students are in-service teachers, so they have acquired a basic proficiency in English either from Teachers Training

Institutes or Student Teachers Training Schools. So, the structural logic approach is not absolutely necessary for writing UT's English course materials. Instead, UT can use a functional/communicative approach in writing its materials. Hubbard (1985) stated that a functional syllabus is more suitable for the intermediate student, who has already covered the basic grammatical syllabus. However, UT's English course writers should select the material on the basis of functions the learners need, on the basis of the linguistic knowledge they have already mastered, the complexity of the grammatical structure, and the length of the stretch of speech necessary for a particular message.

In conventional classes, this approach can be put into practice easily because the teacher faces the students directly. Then how can this approach be implemented in the language teaching at a distance? In my opinion, this approach can be used in language teaching, especially in teaching listening and speaking at a distance. This can be done by providing the students with a lot of conversations or dialogues in the modules. In this case the English course writers

must show the students that it is important to consider who one is communicating with, and what the situation and purpose of communication is. For that purpose, audio-cassettes can be used in supporting that activity. For example, to make the students involved in conversations, the course writers can write a tape script in such a way that the students can take part in the conversation. This can be carried out as follows: if there are two or more speakers in the conversation, the tape script writer should leave one of the speakers for the students to practice. Let's say the narrator asks the students to be the first speaker, and the second and the third speakers are spoken by native speakers. Then, the narrator asks the students again to be the second and the third speakers with the same procedure. So, the students communicate as if they face the real native speakers. By doing so, the students' listening and speaking are trained by using this technique because they can compare their pronunciation with the native speakers. In other words, the students' skills of listening and speaking can be improved.

The English departments at Teachers Training



Institutes (IKIP) generally emphasize the four skills related to language learning: speaking, listening, writing, and reading. At UT the question arises: "How can these skills be taught at a distance?" In English departments which aim at instructing students at a distance, courses combined with radio, television, telephone, computer, audio-cassettes or other media, may make acquiring the four skills possible. Of course, the choice of those media are dependent on resources of the particular university and its students. For example, UT can only implement radio, television, and audio-cassette as supporting media to their language program. The most important thing, of course, regarding media, is that the students must be able to access the media offered.

The skills that we are most concerned with are speaking and listening, because even in the face-to-face mode those skills are difficult for students to acquire. Holmberg (1985) has stated that the greatest difficulty encountered in language teaching at a distance concerns the skill of talking. In my opinion the difficulty lies in the monitoring/controlling of the students practicing those

skills. So, we are not sure whether the students imitate the correct pronunciation, intonation, rhythm of what they have heard the native speakers' speaking from the cassettes.

### Teaching Methods and Media

Choosing a particular method for presentation of instruction is not so easy, especially in presenting the lesson materials at a distance. However, the course writers must adopt a method of instruction in presenting their materials.

As this project is mainly for teaching the skills of listening and speaking, methods consistent with the functional/communicative approach might be most appropriate, because this approach aims at developing communicative competence in the learners to follow the units they need--guided, of course, by a tutor or their friends in the study group.

It is crucial to choose media before we start planning a course. Then the question emerges: Which media do we and our learners actually have access to? Most of the self instructional courses whether in the

conventional settings or in distance settings, are "print". This instructional material may be supported by audio visual material; for example, audio-cassettes, television and radio. The choice of these media, first depends on the media available to the institution (UT) and to the learners. For example, we should know whether most of the UT students have the tape recorders before using audio-cassettes as supporting material. We can get this data by giving the students questionnaires.

"Is achievement of any particular aim or objective dependent on the use of any sense (sight, hearing, smell, taste or touch) more than any writer" (Melton 1982). Distance course writers need to ask the question above with regard to specific objectives which they have identified, and to ask what implications the answer has on the choice of media. For example, if in a course on listening comprehension, a particular unit objective is that students should be able to distinguish the meaning of words of different intonation, rhythm, and stress, it is clear that the achievement of the objective depends on the use of the sense of hearing. So, related instruction should make

full use of an audio-cassettes.

In distance education the teachers/tutors do not meet the students face to face except in tutorial session (not often held). In conventional education the teachers meet their students in class, and they would be performing a number of teaching functions. How can we perform teaching functions at a distance? They can sometimes be performed by the chosen media. Then what are the functions of the chosen media? The functions are as follows:

- catching the learners' interest
- reminding them of earlier learning
- stimulating new learning
- explaining, and provoking thought
- getting learners to respond actively
- giving them speedy feedback to their responses
- encouraging them to practise and review
- helping learners assess their own progress

(Rowntree, 1986, p. 74)

### Student Assessment

First of all, what does assessment mean? Rowntree (1977) defines assessment as follows: "Assessment is a way of obtaining and interpreting information about the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of another person".

Assessment should be thought out by the teachers/course writers before they start planning their instructional materials. Thus, it is crucial to use the kind of assessment appropriate to the kind of learning they want to encourage.

It is a fact that most of the UT course writers have been teaching and assessing for years. They might say "What's new?". The vital difference is that distance learners may be anxious about what the assessment task requires of them but they may be unable to question their course writers about it. They may not even know other learners with whom they might discuss it. Therefore in distance learning assessment needs to be planned more carefully and spelled out more explicitly than it is in conventional courses.

The purposes of assessment are first to aid the learners in their subsequent learning and subsequently to report on what they have already learned. The first assessment is sometimes called a 'formative test' which is used by teachers to decide what instructional activities are required next. The function of formative tests especially for distance learners is to know how closely their work matches the standard

expected. For instance, in the UT's module, the formative test is provided after one topic is discussed. The formative test is also completed with the key at the end of the module. The students can count how many correct answers they have, and if their are high enough they can proceed to the next module. But, if their scores are below 80%, they should repeat learning activity 1, and focus on the part(s) they feel were not mastered. The final assessment is called summative assessment. It is to report or put on record what is known of the learner's learning. Did they pass or fail? What grades did they get? The clearest example of summative assessment is the final examination at the end of the course. Mid course tests, assignments or self tests can also be used summatively, however, if they contribute to the learners' final grades.

In assessing the students, the course writers should be aware of the congruence between the tests/assignments and course objectives. So, in presenting the tests and assignments, the course writers have to remind the students of which objective each item relates to (see the example below).

Test Formative 1 (taken from UT course code #  
PING 4437) unit 1

The specific Instructional Objectives:

After studying this unit, the students are expected to be able to:

- (a) use the English expressions which are commonly used for certain occasions, for example, on the street, at the party, etc.
- (b) get used to the English expressions which are commonly used for acquaintanceship

Test Formative 1

Circle the correct answer of the following questions

1. One of the alternative answers for the question "How are you getting on in Jakarta?" is:
  - A. No, thank you
  - B. I'm having a lovely time
  - C. Nice to see you again
  - D. I'm sorry
2. The expression which is commonly used when you pass by someone is:
  - A. 'Excuse me'
  - B. 'I'm sorry'
  - C. 'I beg your pardon'
  - D. 'I'm just leaving'
3. The response to the question "How are you getting on at University?" is
  - A. I see
  - B. It's a bit strange at first but I'm getting used to things
  - C. Not at all
  - D. That's all right
4. If your friend is going to have an exam, you would say:
  - A. Congratulations
  - B. Hard luck
  - C. Good luck
  - D. Never mind

5. To reply the answer no.4 is  
A. Good  
B. Well done  
C. I will  
D. Thanks
6. 'Good night' is expressed only when you want to  
A. meet somebody at night  
B. get up  
C. say good bye at night or go to bed  
D. have dinner

It would be better for most course writers to start thinking seriously how to assess and think of aims and objectives before presenting the items to the learners. So, course writers must use methods that relate to their aims and objectives when assessing what learners have got from a lesson. Lewis (1980) states that in order to learn a student needs to know that not only his/her strengths and weaknesses but also she/he needs to know what to do next to master the skills that are important to him. This applies whatever the subject and whether or not the student is studying at a distance.

There are two ways of assessing the students: (a) paper and pencil test: for instance, multiple choice tests, essay, and project reports where there is a physical product to assess, (b) situational test: for



example, interview, performances of learner's practical skills, and discussions where what is assessed is an activity or process that may or may not result in any physical product.

The paper and pencil test is the one that can be used either in conventional or distance settings. It may also be called an objective test consisting of various types of multiple-choice question. Or it may require the learners to construct their 'own answers': for example, a report of several thousands words, or in the form of a paragraph, and an essay. In this case the objective test is more feasible device which can be implemented at a distance. The reason is that one of the problems with 'own answer' test, is that teachers/course writers cannot always agree as to the quality of the learner's answers. For example, the same mathematical tests might get a different grades from different teachers because they happen to value different aspects of the learner's performance. Another problem is an administration constraint: for example how can UT examine the 'own answer' test for thousands of students? It is impractical for UT. So, UT uses objective tests, which can be scored by a

computer.

Objective tests are composed of multiple choice questions; for instance, "one from several", "true-false", or "matching". The most commonly used at a distance is "one from several". In this matter, the item is constructed of a question or an incomplete statement, followed by several alternative answers, and one of the answers should be correct. The learner may be asked to cross, to circle, or to underline the correct answer. The following are the examples of two versions of asking the same question:

The first President of Indonesia is:

- A. Soeharto
- B. Soekarno
- C. Bung Hatta
- D. Adam Malik
- E. Nasution

Who is the first President of Indonesia?

- A. Soeharto
- B. Soekarno
- C. Bung Hatta
- D. Adam Malik

### E. Nasution

The true-false questions are best avoided in objective testing because the learner has 50-50 chance of guessing the correct answer.

Another type of question is 'matching'. Here the learner is given two lists of things and is asked to indicate which thing in one list belongs with each thing in the other list; for example:

wonderful, tie, very tired, custom, go quickly,  
remarkable, imagine, very much, very interested

Which of them are the synonyms of the following words:

Excellent .....  
Exhausted .....  
Extraordinary .....  
Fancy .....  
Fasten .....

In this type of assessment, it is important to have more words in the first list than in the second. The reason is, if a student can answer all but one of

the matches would get that one right automatically. But, if the first list contains three or four extra answers, then that student will still have to choose one of them.

In this matter, I am going to concentrate on the "one from several" type of questions, because this type of question is suitable for UT's case. How does one write "one from several" questions (multiple choice questions)? The basic underlying of writing such question is to assure that the students who have the essential understanding are able to answer them, while those without it are not. The most important thing is that the course writers should avoid "give aways", because if the question contains that type of item, the students are able to respond with the correct answer without knowing the subject. The following is the example of items that contain give-aways taken from Rowntree (1986).

For each of the eight items, underline the one answer you believe to be correct. Maximum time: 15 minutes

1. The main function of dingle-grabblers is to  
ruthe  
A. dingles

- B. growks
  - C. sniters
  - D. beegums
2. Regrallification becomes necessary when
- A. the gudges noogle
  - B. the rakob flanes trelsate, and the vosts fail to flonce
  - C. the breg fribbles
  - D. the hooluphs elgage
3. Nuriles are tiassed by yukhorrhoea because
- A. all their obblers are sushed
  - B. their fleepers are always tolloidable
  - C. the ning-daphle is usually runged
  - D. their snarms are never grovid

Answers (and comments) overleaf...

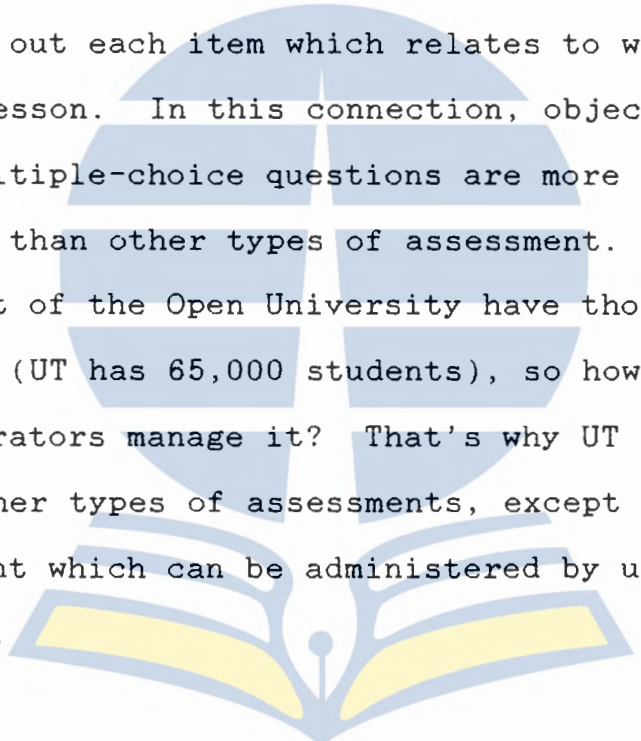
- 1. A Don't allow the "correct answer" to contain an unintended clue -- e.g. a word (like "dingles") that is naturally associated with a word in the "stem" (the introductory statement or question.
- 2. B Don't let the correct answer be much longer or more detailed than the "distractors".
- 3. C Don't write distractors with qualifying terms that are too embracing (e.g. "never", "always") making the learner so suspicious as to reject them in favour of the more moderate correct answer.

(pp. 319-320).

Finally, in this part, I am going to discuss briefly another type of assessment, that is "Situational Assessment". Situational assessment is used for assessing on-going processes: for instance, when assessing a student's ability to administer an interview. In practice, the teachers have to be

present in the situation in which the learner is displaying the ability.

From the discussion above, I can conclude that the teachers/course writers need to know several assessment strategies, before they pick out of them in writing the items. Moreover, due to the fact that target learners are far away from their campus, the course writers have to spell out each item which relates to which objective in one lesson. In this connection, objective tests/multiple-choice questions are more suitable and feasible than other types of assessment. The reason is that most of the Open University have thousands of students (UT has 65,000 students), so how can the administrators manage it? That's why UT does not apply other types of assessments, except objective assessment which can be administered by using a computer.



### Program Evaluation

The course writer should not expect his or her work to be perfect. It will need improvement either in its content or its method of presenting the materials.

Therefore, program evaluation is needed.

Evaluation is the process of getting various people's reactions to your course or lesson with a view to improving it (Rowntree, 1986, p. 333). Thus, evaluation is very important to improve the course writers' work. Hence, the course writers have to prove to other people including teachers, employers, students and administrators that their work can be as good as, if not better than, those obtained by a conventional approach.

Before conducting the evaluation, evaluators should consider first the purpose of evaluation. Most evaluations serve more than one purpose; for example, to know what the students' aims in taking the course, and what they liked about the course. Second, evaluators should determine the target audience which is going to be evaluated. For example, the evaluators wish to seek the validity of the course, the target group will be the subject experts, educational technologists, and so on. And the third is what methods to use in evaluating the course materials. Rowntree (1986) suggested three approaches to the course materials Evaluation. They are "Critical

Comment"; "Developmental Testing"; and "Continuous Monitoring". The choice of which approach in doing the evaluation depends on the course writers themselves and the financial factors.

In the critical commenting, the institution gets the people who are the experts of the subject matter content, the tutors, the learners, and the course team members to read carefully the course materials that have been written and to give critical but constructive comments. The aspects of critical commenting are 'subject matter content' and 'teaching effectiveness'. In this matter the course writers may ask the commenters to evaluate both of those two aspects. or they may ask some to focus on one aspect and some on another. For example, the course writers send their works to the content experts (inside or outside institutions) to critic the content; while the tutors and learners to speculate the teaching effectiveness of the materials. How can this activity be carried out? The course writers may provide checklist for both aspects. The following are the examples of checklists: one for subject matter content, and one for teaching effectiveness.



### Subject Matter Content Evaluation -- Checklist

1. Are the general and the specific instructional objectives clearly defined?
2. Do the general instructional objectives seem relevant to what learners perceive as their needs?
3. Do the specific instructional objectives support the general instructional objectives?
4. Are there any additional general and specific objectives that should be included?
5. Is the content congruence with the specific instructional objectives
6. Are there any important omissions?
7. Is there any redundant material?
8. Does it avoid oversimplification and over generalization
9. Does it use evidence responsibility?
10. Does it contain any unsatisfactory examples, analysis, or case studies?

### Teaching Effectiveness Evaluation -- Checklist

1. Is there enough study guidance?
2. Do you think learners will have difficulty achieving any of the listed objectives?
3. Does the material seem pitched at the right level of difficulty and interest for the intended learners?
4. Are the examples, analogies, and learning activities sufficiently illuminating?
5. Can you suggest any additional examples, analogies, and learning activities?
6. Can you identify any sections that are likely to cause problems for learners? why?
7. Are all new terms adequately explained?
8. Are all the activities worthwhile and practicable?
9. Does the assignment or suggested follow-up activity (if any) seem appropriate?
10. Can you suggest any further ideas for activities, test or assignments?

I can conclude from the discussion above that a course writer who is going to use critical comment to

evaluate his writing should decide who might offer useful comments, finish the first draft, send it to the critical colleagues, revise the lesson in the light of comments, and proceed to the next stage of evaluation -- developmental testing

The developmental testing is used by the course writers by trying out their course materials on the sample learners. The sample learners should be suitable with the subject matter which is going to be evaluated. For example, in evaluating English course materials, the sample learners must be the learners who have majored in the English courses.

The developmental testing takes two forms of testing: (1) face to face tryouts, and (2) field trials. Face to face tryouts involves two or three students to look through the second draft of the course materials. How to do this type of evaluation? The course writers or staff members of the Faculty sit down together with those students in a quiet place for an hour or two. They have to make sure that the students have acquired the expected abilities (if necessary give the students a test), and the the students also have to understand the purpose of the evaluation -- that the

lesson is on trial, not the students. They may also tell the students, that there might be weaknesses in the teaching, and with your help the teaching process can be improved.

During the evaluation, the course writers observe the student's work through the lesson. The observation includes 'What sequences does the student follow - and from what starting point?'; 'How does the student respond to the evaluator's activities?'; and 'Are there passages that seem to be bore or annoy or cause the student undue difficulty?' If the course writer explains anything orally to the student, he has to make a note what he has said to the student, because it is very important to write it into the next version of the lesson. The course writer may also make a note of any comments of the student.

When the student has finished, it is necessary to give him/her a test again to find out what he/she has learned. The result of this test will lead to the course writer into a critical discussion of his work. How such this activity might go, and the kinds of improvement that might be suggested, will vary according to the course writer's rapport with the

student to get as much as possible the feedback from the student.

After correcting any glaring errors on weaknesses discovered by the first student, the course writer can try the lesson out with one or two more students with the same procedures.

Having finished this evaluation to all students, the course writer might get the comments from the students; for example, trivial comments, and richly insightful comments. However, the course writer should realize that the students are unlikely to have found all the weaknesses in the lesson. But at least the responses should help the course writer seek out further weaknesses himself.

When the students' comments have been analyzed, there seems necessary to improve the lesson:

- \* Cut out irrelevant material
- \* Expand any explanation that are too terse
- \* Insert more exercises where called for
- \* Allow for additional summaries or reviews
- \* Shorten the elephantine sentences
- \* Sharpen the analogies
- \* Tie the pictures more closely to the text

\* Make better use of additional media

In short, improve the lesson.

The other form of testing is 'Field Trials'. For this type, the course writer will need to have a large group of sample students, say 20 or 30. The course writer should create a normal learning circumstances; for example, this may mean their reading in their own homes at whatever time best suits them. Or all coming together to read it in one room, with or without tutor. The aim is to create whatever would be the normal working conditions.

To some extent, the evaluator can find out how the students use the lesson and what they have got out of it. For example, to require the students to tackle a test on the lesson, before and after working through it, and to hand in their results, to interview some of the students afterwards to discover their general impressions of the lesson and how they think it might be improved, and to ask them to fill in a questionnaire in which they might comment (see the examples of the questionnaires below). The examples no. 1 and 2 are taken from Rowntree (1986), and number 3 is from UT.

Example 1.

## END OF UNIT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name: ..... 2. Unit title/No. ....
3. What did you particularly like about this unit?  
.....
4. What did you particularly dislike?  
.....
5. Were there any sections, concepts or words that you  
found particularly difficult, or not well  
explained? If there were please give details.  
.....
6. Can you suggest what might have helped you in these  
cases?  
.....
7. Do you have any other comments about this unit?  
.....

Example 2.

## END OF UNIT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name: ..... 2. Course Unit: .....

Put a tick in the appropriate box for each of the questions below

3. How much of the subject matter of the unit was  
already familiar to you  
All of it  
Most of it  
About half  
A small amount  
None at all
4. To what extent did you enjoy working through the  
unit  
I liked it very much

- I quite liked it  
I felt indifferent to it  
I rather dislike it  
I disliked it very much
5. How difficult did you find the course unit?  
Very difficult  
Fairly difficult  
Neither too difficult not too easy  
Fairly easy  
Very easy
6. How difficult did you find the assignment exercise which followed the unit  
Very difficult  
Fairly difficult  
Neither too difficult not too easy  
Fairly easy  
Very easy
7. Do you think the unit gave you enough practice in using the ideas it contained?  
Too much practice  
Neither too much nor too little practice  
Too little practice
8. In view of the amount of time the unit required of you, do you feel you learned as much as you might have expected from it?  
I learned a great deal  
I learned a reasonable amount  
I learned too little
9. If the course unit were considered typical material from the course for which you have applied, how would your experience of it affect your desire to take this course?  
My desire to take the course would be:  
Very much increased  
Somewhat increased  
Unaffected  
Somewhat decreased  
Very much decreased
10. Are you willing to test further units?  
Yes  
No
11. Please give overleaf any other general comments that you would like the author (illustrator) to take into account when revising the course unit for publication



Example 3.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UT STUDENTS

Direction

1. The questionnaire is made to get your opinion about the "quality of the modules" which you have just learned. The result is to improve our modules in the future (next publication). In other words your response will have no connecton with your study effort. Take your time to fill in this questionnaire.
2. You may not need to write your name.
3. After you have filled in this questionnaire, hand in it to your tutor



### Questions

Put a circle in a, b, or c that you think is the appropriate answer, or complete the questions based on your experience!

1. The Topic of the Module: .....  
The Code Number: .....  
The Subject Matter .....
2. The content of the learning activity 1 is:
  - a. easy
  - b. fairly easy
  - c. difficult
3. The explanation of learning activity 1 is
  - a. interesting
  - b. fairly interesting
  - c. boring
4. The content of learning activity 2 is
  - a. easy
  - b. fairly easy
  - c. difficult
5. The explanation of learning activity 2. is
  - a. interesting
  - b. fairly interesting
  - c. boring
6. The content of learning activity 3 is
  - a. easy
  - b. fairly easy
  - c. difficult
7. The explanation of learning activity 3 is
  - a. interesting
  - b. fairly interesting
  - c. boring
8. The content of learning activity 4 is
  - a. easy
  - b. fairly easy
  - c. difficult
9. The explanation of learning activity 4 is
  - a. interesting
  - b. fairly interesting
  - c. boring
10. The examples of each explanation are
  - a. many
  - b. adequate
  - c. inadequate

11. The examples of each explanation are
  - a. relevant
  - b. fairly relevant
  - c. irrelevant
12. The illustration, graphs, and pictures (if any) are
  - a. not clear
  - b. fairly clear
  - c. clear
13. The illustration, graphs, and pictures (if any) are
  - a. very helpful
  - b. fairly helpful
  - c. useless
14. The language used in the module is
  - a. clear and easy to understand
  - b. fairly clear
  - c. confusing
15. If the answer above is c, this is because
  - a. too many strange terminology
  - b. too many new Indonesian terminology
  - c. the sentences are too long
  - d. others .....(write down)
16. The exercises are
  - a. a few
  - b. quite a few
  - c. many
17. The formative tests are
  - a. a few
  - b. quite a few
  - c. many
18. The exercises are
  - a. easy
  - b. fairly easy
  - c. difficult
19. The formative tests are
  - a. easy
  - b. fairly easy
  - c. difficult
20. The key of the formative tests are
  - a. usefeul
  - b. fairly useful
  - c. useless
21. The key of the formative tests which are not suitable with the items is

- a. the key of formative test 1 no. ...
  - b. the key of formative test 2 no. ...
  - c. the key of formative test 3 no. ...
  - d. the key of formative test 4 no. ...
22. The letters used in this module are
- a. small
  - b. fairly big
  - c. big
23. The printed letters are
- a. clear
  - b. fairly clear
  - c. unclear
24. The tutorial that you have taken is
- a. satisfying
  - b. fairly satisfying
  - c. unsatisfying
25. The need of tutorial in the future is
- a. necessary
  - b. fairly necessary
  - c. unnecessary
26. How many hours do you need in learning this module? ..... hours
27. If you have other comments, please stated in the spaces given.
- .....
- .....
- .....

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

When the learners have completed one of the types of evaluation above, the course writer needs to analyze their responses to the lesson. He/she may also meet with a group of students to discuss common reactions and suggestions for improvements. There are key questions that should be asked in such a discussion with the students, they are as follows:

- \* What did the students like most about the lessons?
- \* What did the students dislike most?
- \* What changes would the students recommend?

Having finished all these things, the course writer may put the finishing touch to his drafts, send them to print shop to be printed out, and send them to the intended students. There is one thing that the course writer should keep in mind that the evaluation will be at an end, this is because those students may still respond differently from the developmental testers.

The next approach of evaluation is 'Continuous Monitoring'. This type of evaluation is intended for any course writer to keep continuing to monitor the lessons and be prepared to amend them where problems or opportunities dictate. Continuous monitoring takes two forms: casual evaluation and deliberate evaluation.

Casual evaluation arises from things we "just happened to notice" during the life of the course. The following are the examples of things that might be noticed:

- \* One of the books has gone out of print.

- \* Some of the lesson materials are unpopular.
- \* Assessment results indicate ineffective teaching in certain sections of the course.
- \* Some of the tutors feel constrained by the assessment system.
- \* The students are getting increasingly late with their assignments.

Those are the examples of items that may be appeared when doing observation. The observation may be reported by students, tutors, or faculty members with whom our learners and tutors have contact. We may or may not be able to do anything about the problem indicated, but as the educational planners, they have to aim to be aware of it.

The next type of continuous monitoring is deliberate evaluation. This type differs from the casual evaluation in that we actively are seeking answers to specific questions about our lesson materials and the course. For example: Can the written guide to the course be improved in any way? Do tutors feel that the on-site sessions are serving their purpose?

In the Open University, the teachers (course

writers) are not teaching the students face to face, that is why it is essential to obtain regular reports from for example, the tutors who have contact with the students. The following figure is the example of tutor's comments taken from Rowntree (1986).



### Tutors' Comments on One Block of a Course

#### Comments

- 86 Unit 10 reading, Deutsch in particular, seemed to cause students some difficulty, in spite of the summary in Unit 10. The article is good, however, and I found that a tutorial session cleared most of the problems. New tutors might be alerted in advance next year.
- 58 My own criticism is directed at Unit 10 which I consider to be far too vague and pitched at far too high a level of generalization. It appears to be out of keeping with the course so far. Perhaps a more interesting exercise would be to look at some situation in more detail. This would enable the incorporation of section 4, the controls politics on communication to be brought out in an integrated way rather than as a postscript.
- 26 Some of my students are critical of what they describe as the 'jumping about' nature of the course, i.e., a tendency to spend too little time on one topic area before switching to a distantly related theme. I think they would prefer more discrete blocks of emphasis on a particular social science.
- (Rowntree, 1986, p. 353)

The following is the final checklist for lesson materials evaluation to be considered by the course writers/educational planners in improving their lesson materials. However, this checklist below should remind the course writers/educational planners of what might



be done in evaluating distance lesson materials. The checklist are as follow:

1. Criticize the first draft by using a checklist like that shown on pages 81-83.
2. Offer the second draft for critical comments to colleagues and other experts, using similar checklists.
3. Repeat your own critical reading in the light of their comments and suggestion.
4. Carry out any improvements indicated by critical commenting.
5. Carry out any improvements suggested by the tutorial observations.
6. Write in "field trial questions" after major activities and at end of sections, and compile any necessary questionnaire ready for field trial.
7. Run field trial with twenty or thirty learners.
8. Discuss possible improvements to lesson with field trial learners after analysing their responses.
9. Carry out final revisions to the lesson
10. Print it -- but be prepared to revise it yet

again, and eventually perhaps replace it, in the light of continuous monitoring of the course as a whole.

Finally Rowntree (1986) has stated that 'Don't judge a self-instructional course by the eloquence of its developers or the glossiness of its packaging--the proof of the pudding is in the eating (and in how well it stays down).'



## CHAPTER IV.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

As I have stated in the previous chapter, the main purpose of the study was to provide a description of how to develop course materials for English language teaching at the Faculty of Education, Universitas Terbuka. This, of course, would have an impact on the quality of instruction as well the quality of teachers of English. This research will help educational planners to improve the course materials so that the distance teaching method is suitable and effective for language teaching.

In this paper, I have discussed the functional/communicative approach which influences the curriculum planning for UT's English courses. Using the work of Dobson (1979), Finocchiaro (1979) and Widdowson (1985), I have considered how this approach might be applied to a distance education course. There are six issues which have to be taken into consideration in developing any distance courses.

Issue # 1 was "Aims and Objectives". This stage was very fundamental to be thought out before starting

writing the distance course materials. So, course writers must clearly state the learning objectives which are based on the nature of the content, and the nature of the target group in order to get the intended results. By doing so, they help distance learners to study. First, objectives make teaching intentions explicit. Second, they encourage a thoughtful response to the total learning context. Third, they involve the single minded pursuit of identifiable and achievable targets. Fourth, they enable learning to be assessed objectively and courses to be evaluated objectively. And finally, the objectives help the students when they are confused and also help them to evaluate their own progress.

Issue # 2 was "Subject Content". The most important thing in this stage was that the subject content should support the written objectives and assessment activities. In addition, the subject content should be based on the funtional/communicative courses which have a strong situational element. In addition, the functions should be presented in the language materials contextualized in situations. In the long run, good subject matter can be produced by

always paying attention to the following questions:

- Is the subject content relevant to target students?
- is it appropriate to the level of the course?
- is it easy or difficult to present at a distance?
- does it provide an opportunity for the development of required skills?

Issue # 3 was "Sequencing the Subject". This is also essential in preparing good distance materials. Unstructured subject materials might confuse the students. For example, a student taking an English program should not be asked to perform in English at levels too high or too low for him or her. The Functional/communicative approach is an appropriate approach in writing UT's English materials, because the target students are teachers who have mastered the basic grammatical items of that language.

Issue # 4 was "Teaching Methods and Media". Because distance education does not use the face-to-face mode, other teaching methods and media should be chosen as a replacement of a teacher in face-to-face mode. Thus, the course writers must

create interactive course materials so that when a student reads the module, he/she can interact with the course writers.

In addition, the role of media in distance learning is very important. In some courses, the media (for example, audio-cassettes) are needed to support the materials. In conventional education, there are hardly any constraints in presenting the materials. Thus, in distance education, the chosen media can be performed as the replacement of the teachers' functions in class.

Issue # 5 was "Student Assessment". This also has a significant role in completing the preparation of distance course materials. Any course writer must think seriously how to assess and think of aims and objectives before presenting the items to the learners. The key point of assessing the students was that the course writers should be aware of the congruence between the tests/assignments and course objectives. In other words, they have to remind the students of which objective each item relates to in presenting the tests and assignments.

Finally, "Evaluation" was the sixth issue that has

to be taken into account. This issue was very important to carry out to improve the course writers' work. The improvement might include either the content or the method of presenting the materials. In other words, a course writer must not expect his/her writing to be perfect the first time. Furthermore, distance education institutions, for example UT, must convince the public, for example, employers, students, and administrators, that its course materials are worthwhile and are as good as if not better than those obtained by conventional approach. Thus evaluation was needed by any distance education to improve the quality of its course writers.

#### SUGGESTIONS

Having discussed how to develop a model of English course materials at UT, I have some specific suggestions for teaching English at a distance.

Suggestion # 1 is to create an integrated package for English courses. An integrated package means that audio-cassettes integrate with listening and speaking printed learning materials. To clarify this

concept, I will provide two diagrams: diagram 1 shows the present format and diagram 2 presents the proposed format.

Diagram 1

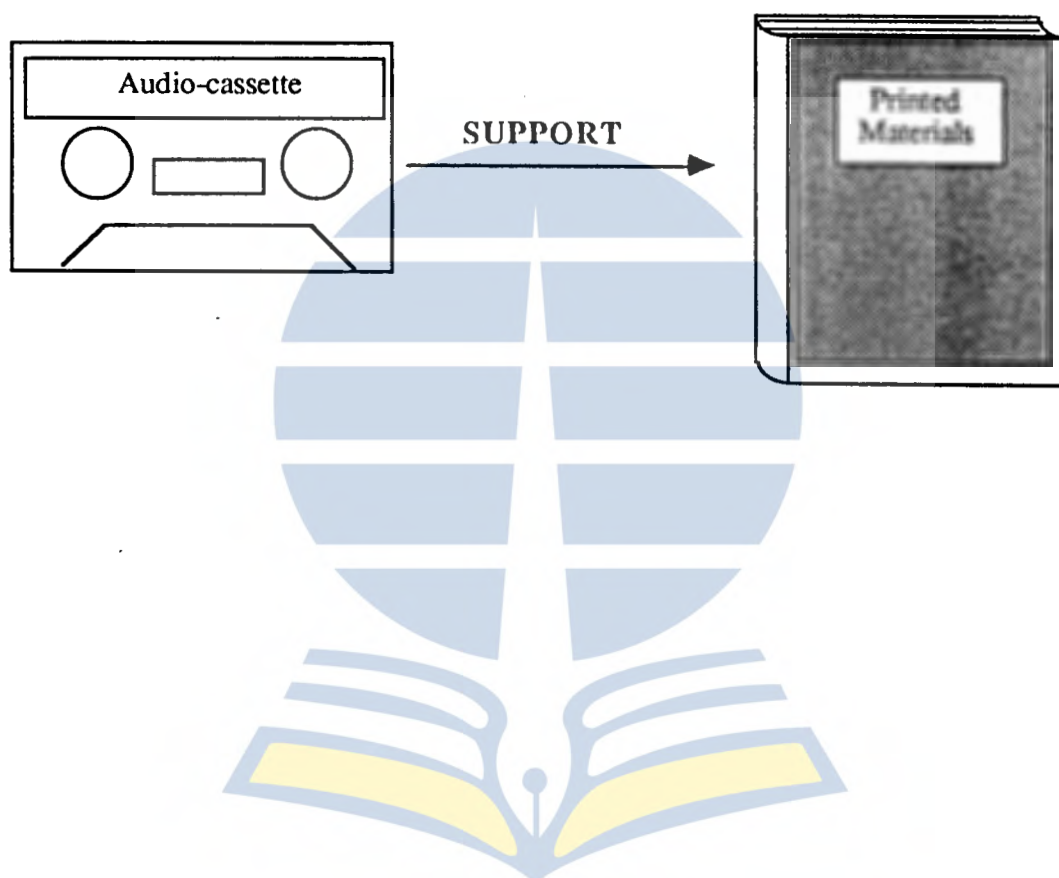
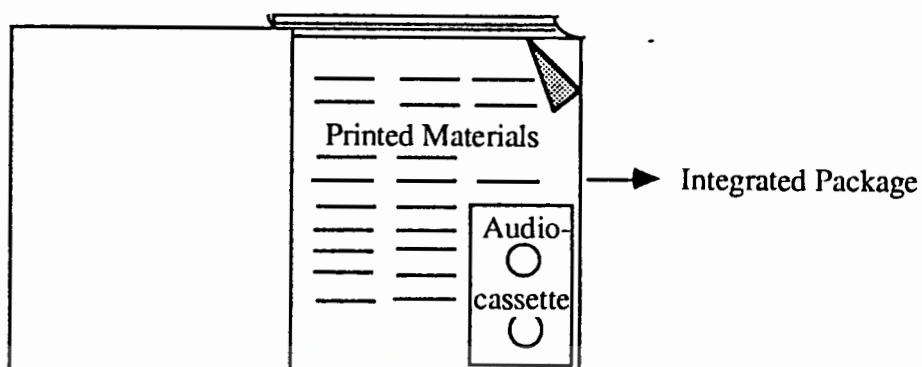
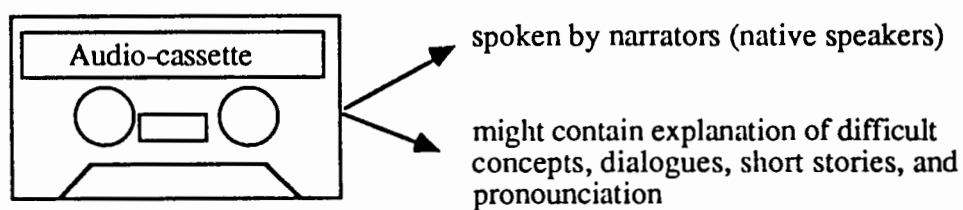




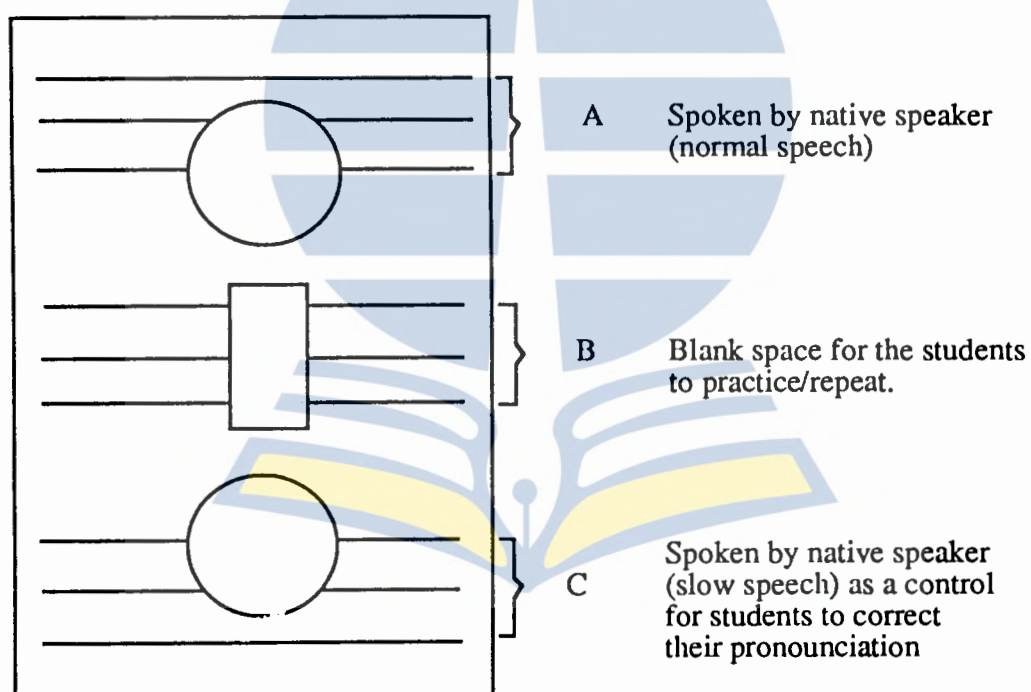
Diagram 2

Suggestion # 2 is to ask the students to control the skills of listening and speaking practicing by themselves. It can also be called "Self Control". For that purpose, the format of audio-cassettes should be changed to reflect the communicative ideas to language teaching (see the diagram below).

### The Present Format



### The Proposed Format



The cassettes used in the present format are different from the proposed format. In the proposed format the students can record their voices because the blank spaces are given to them to practice/repeat to what the native speakers have said, whereas the present format does not.

Suggestion # 3 is providing Learning Resource Centres (LRC) for the students to practice their listening and speaking. As a consequent each LRC should provide not only audio equipment, but also English learning materials packages for the students.

Suggestion # 4 is to take the advantage of radio broadcasting to increase the students' listening. In this case, UT should collaborate either with the private or the government radio broadcasting to broadcast UT's English materials that would have a good impact on the students' listening.

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