
UNIT 3 PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS-2

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit aims at introducing four eminent thinkers in the field of distance education so as to continue our discussion of some of the major philosophies on which the concept of distance education is based.

By the end of this unit, you will have obtained adequate background knowledge of the significant philosophies of distance education. You will be able to:

- discuss how the distance teaching processes can be compared to the industrial ones;
- argue the need for building conversational elements in distance teaching materials; and
- explain the importance of human support to distance learners.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit, as was mentioned earlier, is a continuation of the previous one in which we discussed the philosophies that underlie the concept of distance education with particular reference to Wedemeyer and Moore. In this unit, we will be looking at the significant lines of thought propounded by Peters, Holmberg, Baath and Sewart. We shall look at

Peters views on the industrial nature of distance education in detail and consider Holmberg's particular emphasis on the two-way didactic communication. We shall then give a brief account of the views of Baath and Sewart who essentially extend the argument of Holmberg for the human element in the otherwise industrialised nature of distance education. At the end of the unit you will see (where you would witness Tyler's contribution to Distance Education in terms of generation of media in distance learning, also you would see D. Randy Garrison's two way educational transactions/interactions for critical thinking) how each thinker adds a new element to theorisation in distance education.

3.2 DISTANCE EDUCATION: AN INDUSTRIALISED FORM OF TEACHING AND LEARNING – OTTO PETERS

Peters was appointed the first Vice-Chancellor of the Fern Universitat (the open university of the former West Germany) in 1975. Earlier he had worked at the German Institute of Distance Education in the former Federal Republic of Germany, where he developed significant insights into the process of distance education. His belief was that highly developed industrial societies had generated a vast variety of needs for education. This fact coupled with the phenomenon of population explosion, according to him, had rendered the conventional system of education inadequate to fulfil the educational needs of the ever growing number of learners. He therefore contended that new approaches have to be explored, and new techniques developed and made available for application – all these have to be 'industrial' in character as the very need for them has arisen as a result of industrialisation.

3.2.1 Rationale Behind the Views of Otto Peters

Peters developed his ideas partly from his extensive survey of distance education during the 1960s. In 1973, from his surveys he concluded that **distance teaching/learning was an industrialised form of teaching and learning**. He made his major contribution to the theory of distance education through a book titled *The Didactical Structure of Distance Teaching: Investigations towards an industrialised form of teaching and learning*. It was written originally in German.

It should be mentioned here that Peters did not ignore the earlier theoretical inputs to arrive at such conclusions. Far from that, he in fact used these inputs to strengthen his view that distance education is an 'industrialised' form of education. For example, the categories developed by German educational theorists like Heinmann and Schultz for traditional education namely 'intention', 'content', 'methodology', 'choice of medium', 'personal characteristics' and 'socio-cultural situation', when applied to the process of distance education, show that distance education is a phenomenon that is very different from conventional education. We shall elaborate on this point here:

- i) The didactical intention of distance teacher is bound to be of a higher degree in the cognitive domain, but of lower degrees in psycho-motor and affective domains.
- ii) The choice of content cannot be as vast and varied in distance education as it may be in the conventional system. (Face-to-face components have to be introduced, if practicals of various types constitute parts of the content).

- iii) Teaching methodology and the selection of media also undergo major changes.
- iv) Differences in personal characteristics and socio-cultural backgrounds of the learners are also non-conventional – first generation learners compete with traditionally elite groups, middle aged learners find themselves grouped with younger learners, etc.

The above analysis made Peters conclude that the categories proposed for the analysis of conventional didactical structure are not adequate for analysing the structure and/or process of distance education, and proposed to analyse distance education with the help of categories taken from 'industrial' theory and Practice. Peters' views, however, must be seen in the operational aspects of distance education and should not be over simplified as a complete educational theory that negates other theories of education.

3.2.2 Industrial Characteristics of Distance Education

Here, we shall discuss some of the characteristics of distance education which have parallels in the industrial sector.

Division of labour

The production of teaching materials for purposes of distance education is industrialised process. A whole range of experts from subject specialists, course writers and editors to instructional designers, printers, etc., work on industrial lines to produce materials which are to be used in ways different from those that are used to learn from conventional books. The basic industrial principle that is involved here is 'division of labour'. This principle is not only applicable to the production of materials, but also to the rest of the pedagogical processes – those who prepare the information and academic tasks are not the ones who supply or transmit them, those who supply/transmit them are not directly concerned with tuition and counselling, those engaged in tutoring and counselling can be different from those who evaluate the learners' progress or assess their performance. In essence, each activity is taken care of by a specialist. It is a system, which, in industrial parlance, is called Taylorism and Fordism, indicating the two distinct phases of modern industrial mode of production.

Mass Production of teaching materials

'Mass production' is obviously a phenomenon of industries. When looked at from an historical point of view, clear parallels are identifiable between industry and distance education. For example, the growth of industry is seen from individual labour to group effort, and manufacture to mass production to meet higher demands. So has been the case with the emergence of distance education (See unit 1, block 3). We can also see parallels in the progress from the initial use of tools, through simple mechanisation, to automation and computerisation and the parallel is quite striking.

Systematisation of work procedures

There are identifiable parallels between the consequence of industrialisation and those of distance education. For example, it has been realised that as in industrialisation, in distance education too, success depends, to a great extent, on:

- 'planning' which has to be scientific in nature,
- formalisation of procedures,

- standardisation of products,
- systematisation of the overall process,
- mechanisation which has implications for social and attitudinal changes in the manpower used for the purpose, and
- heavy dependence on centralisation.

Peters rated these parallelisms high in his theory of distance education.

Layout

It may appear trivial to find a parallel even in the design of buildings, yet it is vital. What we are driving at is that the ‘campus’ of an open university is markedly different from that of a typical traditional university. In the former, the structures are more or less similar to those of an industry in the sense that it has separate sections for ‘production’, ‘design’, etc. And the role of teachers, more often than not, is similar to that of managers

It is possible that one can add a few more parallels here. The intention, however, is not to present an exhaustive list. Those which are presented here are illustrative of the point that Peters tried to impress on. Having seen the parallels between distance education and industry, we should also know how, this industrialised form of education differs from the face-to-face system of education.

3.2.3 Distance Education – Most Industrialised Form of Education

Peters’ conclusion is that, of all forms of education, distance education is the most industrialised, and that along with the theory of industrialisation, the heuristic categories used therein are the best means to explain this new educational phenomenon. As an illustration of this point of view, we present below, how Peters differentiates educational communication as it obtains in conventional education, which is supposed to be based on interpersonal communication, and in distance education wherein communication is indirect, i.e., communication which is mostly effected through various media.

Table 1: Distance and Conventional teaching contrasted

Face-to-face Teaching	Distance Teaching
Institution where communicative action takes place	System of educational action determined by rational means-ends thinking
Students’ and teachers’ actions are predominantly determined by social norms	Teachers’ and students’ actions are predominantly determined by technical rules
The medium of interaction between students and teachers is ‘the inter-subjectively shared everyday languages’	The medium of interaction between students and teachers is ‘context-free language’
Teaching is determined by ‘reciprocal behaviour expectations’	Teaching follows ‘conditional prognoses’ and ‘conditional imperatives’
The focus is on the ‘internalisation of rules’	The focus is on ‘learning skills and qualifications’
Teaching aims at preserving the institution	Teaching aims at ‘problem-solving, attainment of objectives by applying means-to-an-end principles’
Students are punished on the basis of conventional sanctions. They fail because of decisions made by the authority, i.e., of teacher, headmaster, director of education	Students fail because of their inability to cope with the reality of learning at a distance. They drop out of their courses, due to various problems

3.2.4 Pedagogic Aspects of Peters' Theory

Some of the significant pedagogic aspects of Peters' theory are given below:

- i) In distance education, educational communication is artificial as the overall communication is broken up into components – print, audio, video, etc., which are effected mechanically. Such a sea-change in educational communication has assigned new roles for both the teachers and the learners. The teaching acts and the learning acts too, along with the responsibilities of the teacher and those of the learner have changed.
- ii) The teacher is more a 'manager' than a repository and the sole interpreter or commentator of information, as in conventional systems of education.

The first task of the teacher, then, is to accept this new role and adapt himself/herself to the system of distance education. He/She is faced with a situation in, which the entire teaching process and the teaching materials split into many components, each of which is performed and managed by different persons and tools, which constitute the system. To adapt to this new system is to break off from a professional pattern that has centuries behind it. Obviously, it is not an easy task, but an understanding of the present socio-educational scene. The world over, and the characteristics of the different sub-systems of the system of distance education should go a long way in helping the willing teacher to adapt himself/herself to the new role – that of a distance teacher.

- iii) Most of the learners who come to the fold of distance education have had their grounding in the conventional system of education. They find distance education attractive, for it allows them to have their own way—the instruction is not time-bound, place-bound, nor person-bound. They can choose from a vast variety of options open to them, take their own time to complete courses and chose their own places to work through the courses. These advantages notwithstanding, the responsibilities of a distance learner have not only increased but also changed in character. Very often he/she finds it difficult to cope with this industrialised system and drops out.

The consequences of the industrialisation of education should, by implication, give rise to a new class of educationists who take on the responsibility of making this industrialised system of education more humane, and help the teacher adapt himself/herself and the learner to benefit most from this new educational situation. This process, one can see, has already started. The concern for student support and the rapid developments of interactive media have already started responding to the 'human needs' of distance learners. More about these developments shall be discussed in unit 4 of this block.

It is useful to compare the above propositions of Peters with what he has said at a later stage. Peters (1993) still maintains that distance education is a typical product of the industrial society but takes into account the changes of the post industrial society which is in need of 'new models of distance education'. Such models are being developed by combining various facilities offered by technology particularly telecommunications having the potential to make distance learners autonomous and at the

same time free to participate in group learning. This otherwise can be simplified a shift in thought process from industrial forms of teaching learning to digital forms of teaching learning. Peters expects the shift from industrial to post industrial distance education to be a 'Copernican one'.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

Identify and write down four features which are common to an open university and an industry.

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3.3 GUIDED DIDACTIC CONVERSATION – BORJE HOLMBERG

The fourth significant contribution to the theory of distance education is the concept of 'guided didactic conversation' propounded by Borje Holmberg.

Holmberg started as a lecturer in English and turned to distance education in 1956 on joining Hermods, the leading Swedish correspondence institution at Malmo, of which he became the director in 1965. He was a professor of distance education at Fern Universitat, Hagen, before he retired.

3.3.1 Guided Didactic Conversation – An Explanation

A prolific writer and a sound theoretician, Holmberg takes the view that the core of education is learning by individual learners. Having taken this stand, he believes that distance education should be accepted as an appropriate mode of education particularly suitable for individual learning, as it makes it possible for the learner to depend on his/her personal work which is essentially independent of face-to-face direct teaching. The distance learner is free to choose from the various support facilities made available to him/her – radio and TV programmes, audio and video cassettes, telephone and computer, even face-to-face teaching in contact programme, etc. – but the onus of learning or achieving the academic objectives is on his/her own shoulders. He/She is engaged in what is being called 'self-study' or 'independent study'. The significant point to be kept in mind is that a learner engaged in 'self-study' is not a loner. He/She does not go about his/her studies all alone. He/She has a whole team of administrators, writers, media producers, teachers, evaluators, tutors, educationists, counsellors, etc. working with him/her

but all of them have supportive roles, they support individual, learning or self-study.

A word of caution is necessary here. In the Indian situation, one can come across candidates who appear at university examinations privately. At some places they are called 'external candidates'. Such private/ external candidates are not to be confused with the kind of learner we have tried to define above. For Holmberg, a private external candidate is entirely on his/her own, he/she is a loner, did not get any support from the institution hence, this private study is not considered as a distance education, but a distance learner, on the other hand, has all the necessary support available for his/her 'self-study'. The support that is talked about is made available by the open university/correspondence institution or whatever name we may choose to give it. The essence of this academic support is to build *an academically fruitful relationship between the individual learner and the supporting institution*, and this relationship, according to Holmberg, is characterised by what he calls 'guided didactic conversation'.

Check Your Progress 2

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

What is guided didactic conversation?

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Types of didactic conversation

Outlining the notion of 'conversation' in his book 'Status and Trends of Distance Education' , Holmberg (1981), says:

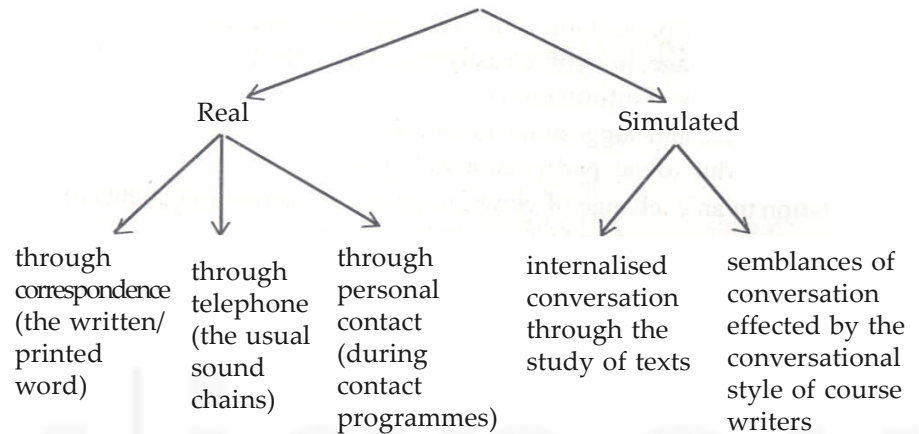
A kind of conversation in the form of two-way traffic occurs through the written and telephone interaction between the students and the tutor and others belonging to the supporting organisation. Indirectly, conversation is brought about by the presentation of study matter, as this one-way traffic causes students to discuss the contents with themselves. The conversation is thus both real and simulated. The simulated conversation is not only what Lewis calls internalised conversation caused by a study of a text, but is a relationship between the course developers and the students, created by an easily readable and reasonably colloquial style of presentation and the personal atmosphere of the course superficially characterised by, for instance, the author(s) referring to himself/herself/themselves as "I" or "we" respectively and the students being spoken to as 'you' ('I recommend that you'). Questions and replies, suggestions and references to problems known to the students belong here. This style of presentation stimulates activity

and implies reasoning, discussion for and against referring to the student' previous experience and thus avoiding omissions in chains of thought. Revision tasks and self-checking exercises also belong to the simulated conversation.

In the above exercise, among other points, Holmberg identifies two types of didactic conversation:

- i) real, and ii) simulated

They can be represented diagrammatically as follows:



Scheme 1: Guided didactic conversation

Elaborating further his concept of 'guided didactic conversation' he says:

My theory of distance education as a method of guided didactic conversation implies that the character of good distance education resembles that of a guided conversation aiming at learning and that presence of the typical traits of such conversation facilitates learning.

This view of the style of guided didactic conversation in distance education is based on the following postulates:

- i) that feelings of personal relation between the teaching and learning parties promote pleasure in study, and motivate the students;
- ii) that such feelings can be fostered by well-developed self-instructional/learning material and suitable two-way communication at a distance;
- iii) that intellectual pleasure and motivation to study are favourable to the attainment of study goals and the use of proper study processes and methods;
- iv) that the atmosphere, language and conventions of friendly conversation favour feelings of personal relation according to postulate (i) above;
- v) that messages given and received in conversational forms are comparatively easily understood and remembered;
- vi) that the conversation concept can be successfully translated for use by the media available to distance education; and
- vii) that planning and guiding the work, whether carried out by the teaching organisation or the student, are necessary for organised study, which is characterised by explicit or implicit goal perceptions.

3.3.2 Features of Didactic Conversation

The seven items listed above, in effect, suggest various procedures which may prove crucial in facilitating learning at a distance, i.e., improve the quality and effectiveness of 'guided didactic conversation', which, according to Holmberg (1981), has the following characteristics:

- i) Easily accessible presentations of study matters; clear, somewhat colloquial language, in writing easily readable, if the text is printed; moderate density of information.
- ii) Explicit advice and suggestions to the student as to what to do, what to avoid, and what to pay particular attention to.
- iii) Invitation to an exchange of views, to questions, and to judgments of what is to be accepted and what is to be rejected.
- iv) Attempts to involve the student emotionally so that he or she takes a personal interest in the subject and its problems.
- v) Personal style including the use of the personal and possessive pronouns.
- vi) Demarcation of changes of themes through explicit statements, typographical means or, in recorded, spoken communication, through a change of speakers, e.g. male followed by female, or through pauses. (This is a characteristic of the guidance being provided rather than of the conversation.)

The above features of 'guided didactic conversation' suggest explicitly what the course designers and course writers should do in order to affect distance learning successfully.

Having thus presented the various postulates and the assumptions on which the concept of 'guided didactic conversation' is based and also the implications thereof for planning and developing the course materials. Holmberg (1981) summarises his hypothesis as follows:

The stronger the characteristics of guided didactic conversation, the stronger the students' feelings of personal relationship between them and the supporting organisation. The stronger the students feelings that the supporting organisation is interested in making the study matter personally relevant to them, the greater their personal involvement. The stronger the students' feelings of personal relations to the supporting organisation and of being personally involved with the study matter, the stronger the motivation and the more effective the learning.

These hypotheses have implications for the methodology of distance education (which we shall discuss in detail in Courses MDE-412, 413, 414, and 418).

Thus, with the help of the concept of 'guided didactic conversation', Holmberg suggests what he thinks distance education is, what the nature of distance teaching materials should be, and finally what kind of distance teaching methodology will prove successful. (It is not out of place to mention here that some aspects of Holmberg's hypotheses have already been established empirically and certain others are being currently investigated.)

Holmberg has written extensively on the theory and practice of distance education over the years. But he has steadily maintained his central thesis that distance education is an organised, systematic way of effecting an educational dialogue between the learner and the teacher or institution. The recent developments in the interactive educational media have only strengthened Holmberg's theoretical position.

3.4 TWO-WAY POSTAL COMMUNICATION – JOHN BAATH

The fifth view that we would like to talk about here is that of John A. Baath of Sweden who worked at Hermods in Malmo. His name is mainly associated with the concept of 'two-way communication in correspondence/distance education'. However, we shall also briefly touch upon his insights into the models of distance education.

You can easily see that Baath's views do not differ from those of Holmberg in essence; the difference, if any, lies in specific emphasis which Baath places on "two-way communication" vis-à-vis the models of distance education materials. There is, thus, room for the argument that having discussed Holmberg at some length above, a discussion on Baath is superfluous. But we have special reasons for introducing Baath's views. What are those reasons?

Baath accepts that correspondence/distance education has become a means of mass education by 'industrialising education' and also that distance study is essentially 'individual study'. However, his experiences as a course writer, editor, tutor and course designer impressed upon him that a correspondence tutor could stimulate his students to most remarkable improvements, by means of constructive criticism, encouragement, and personal involvement in the individual student's learning problems "(Baath, 1980). He also notices that "there was a clear tendency to reduce the amount of postal two-way communication in the teaching system". We shall elaborate on all these in sub-sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2.

3.4.1 Pedagogic Significance of Tutor Comments

It is obvious that in correspondence/distance education, the tutor's comments pertain to assignments meant to be worked on by the distance learners. The suggestion is that for bringing about "most remarkable improvements" in learner performance, tutor-comments (stimulated by assignment based tasks) play a very significant role in distance education. Thus, tutor-comments constitute a highly desirable pedagogic component of distance education.

But, tutor-comments do not find a place in the overall plan of the "industrialised" kind of academic support provided to the distance learner. Tutor-comments may come in only as a link in a chain of two-way communication, which is started by the correspondence/distance institution through the course materials. If there is a provision for compulsory assignments to be worked through, the learner is obliged to provide the second link in the chain of two-way communication by working through the assignments and submitting them for assessment by the correspondence/distance tutor(s). The assessment made by the tutor(s) is the third link in the chain of two-way communication. The fourth link could be the questions and doubts raised by the learner(s) in

response to the assessment made by the tutor(s). But, let us take a second look at the third link mentioned above.

Experience has shown (and this applies, for example, to most cases in the context of developing countries) that the only overt indicator of tutors having gone through the learner-response, is a grade (on point-scale) or mark (per cent) put on top of the response sheets. Such a grade or mark may stimulate some communication or reaction on the part of the learner, but it cannot go far pedagogically, as, in such a case, the tutor has functioned more as an 'examiner' than as a correspondence/distance tutor. His tutorial input; the actual third link in the chain of two-way communication, should consist of 'constructive criticism, encouragement, etc.', for it is comments and not mere grades/marks that improve learner performance.

Our interest in Baath's work lies essentially in his emphasis on the pedagogic significance of tutor comments which form the crucial link in the chain of two-way communication in correspondence/distance education. Secondly but equally importantly, we are interested in his realisation that, in spite of the pedagogic significance of assignments, etc., there is a tendency "to reduce the amount of postal two-way communication". We are inclined to believe that this is a dangerous tendency. It might be that alternatives will be found, as Baath did by way of building in "some kind of two-way communication within the material: in terms of self-check exercises, detailed model/specimen answers, etc., but the significant point that emerges from this discussion is that two-way communication is needed for improving learner performance. (We shall return to this issue in Course MDE-413.)

3.4.2 Pre-enrolment Counselling

In his significant work on the analysis of distance education on the bases of some of the well-known teaching models (such as the ones presented by Skinner, Rothkopf, Ausubel, Bruner, Rogers, etc.), Baath suggests, among other things, that we could very broadly talk of two distance teaching models:

- i) the model which displays stricter control of learning towards fixed (academic) goals, and
- ii) the model which displays less control of learning towards fixed (academic) goals.

Having identified these two broad models, he finds that the former tends to focus on teaching/learning materials - making them self-sufficient in as many ways as they possibly can be—and relegate two-way communication between the learner and the tutor/institution to an insignificant position in the overall teaching-learning process, while the latter assigns a significant role to two-way academic communication in its teaching/learning schemes. Without passing any value judgment on either of these models, Baath is pragmatic in suggesting that the design of teaching/learning materials is, of course, important (as two-way communication can be built into them) but no less important is two-way communication, on its own merit, be it by mail, telephone or in a face-to-face situation. To these two prime factors responsible for the success of distance education, he adds one more, namely, 'pre-enrolment counselling'. He adds this factor as his analyses of learning strategies show that learners, especially adult learners, need help in i) defining and identifying their learning goals, ii) selecting suitable materials to achieve

those identified goals, and iii) resolving their academic difficulties and promoting or sustaining their motivation.

Though distance learners are adults and to a large extent 'self-directed' in their learning, they still need the support of a teaching agency. Bath's views on tutor comments and pre-enrolment counselling together fulfil the educational needs of learners in all the above mentioned three areas of distance learning. A slightly adapted and updated version of Bath's views operates in the current practice of computer mediated conferencing (CMC), collaborative learning and on-line courses.

Before you proceed further, answer the question given below:

Check Your Progress 3

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

How does the distance tutor operate to effect 'two-way communication'?

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3.5 HUMAN ELEMENT IN AN 'INDUSTRIALISED' FORM OF EDUCATION – DAVID SEWART

In this section, we shall touch upon the view of David Sewart, (1978; 1980) who entered the field of distance education in 1973 at the British Open University. His experience in tutorial services, made available at the regional and study centres of the Open University, has convinced him of the immense significance of these services to such an extent that he believes that the crux of distance teaching is a 'continuity of concern for students learning at a distance'. The expression 'continuity of concern' proposes a human element in an otherwise "industrialised" form of education. In a sense, Sewart reinforces the view of Bath, but with greater emphasis. The strength of his conviction lies in the pragmatic approach he suggests. We shall discuss it in sub-sections 3.5.1 and 3.5.2.

3.5.1 Vital Need for Human Support

Sewart argues that distance education institutions/universities are essentially institutions of mass education, and a particular package of materials is served to hundreds of students, and in many cases to thousands of them. Can such a single package perform all the functions

of a teacher (who in the worst situations has to adjust his/her reach to about a hundred or more students) on the one hand, and cater to the vast variety of the needs and the idiosyncrasies of distance learners on the other? Sewart's answer to both the questions seems to be a clear 'no'.

If a package of materials with such qualities is to be produced, it will be formidably expensive, as it will have to display all the interactive processes which obtain between the teacher and each individual learner. The implication is that, however sophisticated the design and vast the reach of such materials may be, the learner body will always need additional human support which alone can match the infinite variety of problems that noncontiguous teaching/learning give rise to. The distance teaching institutions will have to provide this advisory and tutor support which alone can match the infinite variety of problems that non-contiguous teaching/learning give rise to. The distance teaching institutions will have to provide this advisory and tutor support through a human agency which alone can guarantee the 'continuity of concern for students learning at a distance'. The pre-planned package of materials is a constant. It needs human versatility to help the distance learners exploit this constant to satisfy the variety of their needs and difficulties.

3.5.2 Major Issues and Compromises

The major issues that Sewart addresses himself to are:

- i) the lack of immediate feedback, and
- ii) near total absence of peer group interaction.

It is not as though other thinkers have not considered these issues, but they have not chosen to be so emphatic about their pedagogic significance as Sewart has. It is primarily on the basis of the attitudes towards the issues which Sewart has been emphatic about, that the educationists are divided into two camps:

- i) those who are not ready to recognise a system of education that is bereft of the all important human element, crucial in any process of learning, lack of esteem for distance education is mainly a consequence of this attitude of suspicion; and
- ii) those who are all out for distance education, and would like to reduce the human element in distance education to the minimum.

Sewart rejects both the views. He is, however, closer to the former as he justifies distance education with three very strong arguments:

- i) Education should benefit not new communication technologies and exhibit their potential maximally. Distance education depends on and provides for the utilisation of such technologies.
- ii) Education has to be democratised, the leftouts have to be taken care of, and steps have to be taken that no society allows leftouts of any kind. Only distance education can meet this challenge.
- iii) Given the limited nature of human, economic and spatial resources, the only viable mode of education is distance education.

Nor is he with the latter group, for he emphasises the role of the human element in distance education. As he characterises distance teaching/learning packages essentially by their constancy, he would like to provide for:

- i) the infinite variety of learner problems,

- ii) immediate feedback, and
- iii) peer group interaction.

To resolve all the three issues effectively, Sewart emphasises the introduction of the human element in distance education, whereby a continuity of concern for students learning at a distance can be maintained.

It may be noticed that Sewart is presenting a compromise between the two extreme views mentioned above. And compromises bring in their wake additional problems, both theoretical and practical.

The theoretical problems raised by Sewart’s views pertain to a very basic notion of distance education. A heavy component of face-to-face teaching in distance education programmes might sound to be a contradiction in terms. And secondly, the provision for such extensive human support will falsify some of the economic theories about distance education. On the practical front, to establish and maintain a vast network of such human support brings in immense operational complexities in the overall management of distance education. Sewart provides answers to these problems. He contends that face-to-face elements in distance education should be regarded as its legitimate constituent like all other media constituents, and any legitimate obligatory expenditure to effect such inclusion of human support, its operational complexities notwithstanding, should not be grudged against, as the overall cost, i.e., that of the package of materials and human support put together, will still be less than what the conventional system will incur for a given equally large number of learners.

Check Your Progress 4

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

List the main issues raised by Sewart. What are his suggestions for resolving the issues?

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3.6 LET US SUM UP

The views discussed in this unit are presented briefly in the following table (for comparison see Table 1, unit 2, block 2).

**Overview of Theoretical Contributions to Distance Education:
(discussed and non-discussed contributions)**

Author/Thinker	Contribution	Explanation
Charles Wedemeyer (1977,1981)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Autonomy of learner ● Distance between teacher and learner ● Structural system ; ● Open learning DE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communication (is it essence for learning?) ● Independent study (on campus off & on campus) ● Self-directed learning ● Better Communication ● Faster mobility
John. A. Baath (1980)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Two way communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Significance to two way postal communication – Interactivity
Sewart David (1973, 1978-1980)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Human element in an industrialised form of teaching learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rationalized by the application of division and ● organized principle of technical method ● industrialized form of teaching learning ● Service ● Continuity of concern
Tyler (2001) (This you would be studying in Unit-4 of this block)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Generation of Distance Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1st The Correspondence Model (only print) ● 2nd The Multi-media Model: Print, audio, video, ● CAC/CMC, Interactive Radio and video ● 3rd The Tele-learning Model: Audio Teleconferencing, Video Conferencing (one-way Video/two-way Audio), Audio-graphics, Broadcast, TV/Radio ● 4th generation (broadly) the flexible learning Mode ● Interaction Multi-media, Internet (WWW), and Computer Mediated Communication. ● 5th generation. Interaction Multi-media, Online ● Internet WWW resources, Computer Mediated ● Communication using automated response system. ● Campus portal access to institutional processes and ● Resources
Dolmen (1977)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-study ● Use of media for educational media and communication and A Students Support Services A Guided Didactic Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is the Germany essence of communication system

Author/Thinker	Contribution	Explanation
Borje Holmberg (1981,1985,1986)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● autonomy of the learner, ● distance between the teacher and the learner, and ● Structural system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multi media ● Team support ● Relationship between institution & learner ● Interaction/conversation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Simulated (through pre-produced courses) – Real (through writing and F2F tutoring) – Personal tone Interactive relationship: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sense of belonging – Learning pleasure – Motivation – Learning ● Readable text: engaging, argumentative questioning, interaction through self-check exercises and assignments.
Otto Peters (1973)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Industrial form of teaching and learning ● Digital learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rationalized method of providing knowledge mechanization ● Division of labour ● Labour modernism ● Functional specialization ● Assembly uses planning and preparatory standardization ● by applying principles of industrial organization ● following efficient, mechanized, mass production process ● extensive use of technology & market approach to DE
Michael Moore (1970,1973,2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● i) dialogue, and ● ii) individualisation ● Face-to-face contact programme ● Communication is base essence ● Transactional distance ● Learner’s autonomy ● Teaching and learning behaviors are separated ● Use of electronic and other media for teaching and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TD: Autonomy, interaction, structure ● Instructional method (performance of teaching & learning behaviour) ● Independent learning (revisited) ● Didactic dialogue (dialogue and individualization) ● Distance (not geographic, but pedagogic): teacher-learner relationship ● Structure: instructional design ● Interaction: teacher, interaction with learner (use of technical media and mass education) ● Autonomy: self-directedness of learner (learner autonomy to choose course design)
D. Randy Garrison (1989)	Two-way educational transaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Non-contiguity of teacher and student ● Two-way communication (dialogue and debate) ● Technology mediation (beyond print) ● Dialogue (discussion and negotiation of meaning) ● Structure (link between teacher and content)

Author/Thinker	Contribution	Explanation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learner control (instead of learner autonomy, independence, proficiency, support) ● Interaction for critical learning
Diana Laurillard (1993)	Conversational framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning: relationship between the learner and the world (mediated by the teacher) ● Interactive dialogue; discursive, adaptive, interactive, reflective (ongoing adaptation through interaction and reflection) ● Adaptation: teacher student dialogue for constant considering, reflecting, reiterating and changing actions ● Internal (adaptation and reflection) ● External (discussion and action) ● Beyond control (interactive process of ongoing negotiation)
Vrasidas and Glass (2002)	Interaction (surrounded by instructional design and content) (embedded by technology, institutional politics, teacher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interaction (surrounded by instructional design and content) (embedded by technology, institutional politics, teacher) ● Interaction: dialogue, learner control, feedback, social presence ● Dialogue: between learners, and with teacher content, machine interface
Garrison, Anderson, Archer (2000)	Community of enquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community of enquiry (critical thinking) through: cognitive presence, social presence, teaching presence ● Computer conferencing: Higher social and teaching presence leads to higher cognitive presence/fruitful critical enquiry
Terry Anderson (2003)	Equivalency interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge, content, interaction (as interface between learner and teacher) ● Learner-content-teacher linkage (learner-learner): (synchronous and asynchronous conferencing; paced and collaborative learning in community of enquiry) ● Learner-content-teacher linkage (learner-content): (independent study, structured learning resources, support group of friends and family)
Keegan (1980, 1983, 1986)	An information function in conventional education the teacher teaches, whereas in distance education the institution teaches. Organised educational programme Institutional support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Theories of independent and autonomy ● Theories of industrialization of teaching and ● Theories of interaction and communication ● The fourth category seeks to explain DE in a synthesis of existing theories of communication and diffusion, as well as philosophies of education.

3.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- a) division of labour
- b) mass production
- c) systematisation
- d) layout

Check Your Progress 2

The conversation is '*guided*' and '*didactic*' because the course developers guide the distance learners—primarily on *academic* and *pedagogic* issues—through an easily readable conversational style of presentation.

Check Your Progress 3

A distance tutor helps effect two-way communication by using his/ her comments as a tool. That is to say, instead of following the customary way of putting a mark or a grade on the top of the response sheets — as an indicator of his/her having gone through them — a distance tutor writes down constructive criticism and encouraging comments to help bring about 'most remarkable improvements' in learner performance.

Check Your Progress 4

- a) the infinite variety of learner problems,
- b) absence of immediate feedback, and
- c) absence of peer group interaction.

Sewart suggests that the problems can be resolved if 'human-support' constitutes a significant part in the system of distance education.

Putting Units 2 and 3 Together

To conclude this protracted discussion on the theories of distance education, we must admit that we have not been exhaustive - we never meant to be.

The purpose of presenting the views of these six thinkers to you is to acquaint you with the major lines of thought that gave a direction to distance education during the seventies and the eighties. As our purpose is limited, we haven't tried to evaluate these theories by arguing for or against them, nor have we tried to compare and/or contrast them with each other. Currently, a lot of thinking is going on and the literature on distance education is multiplying at a very fast rate.

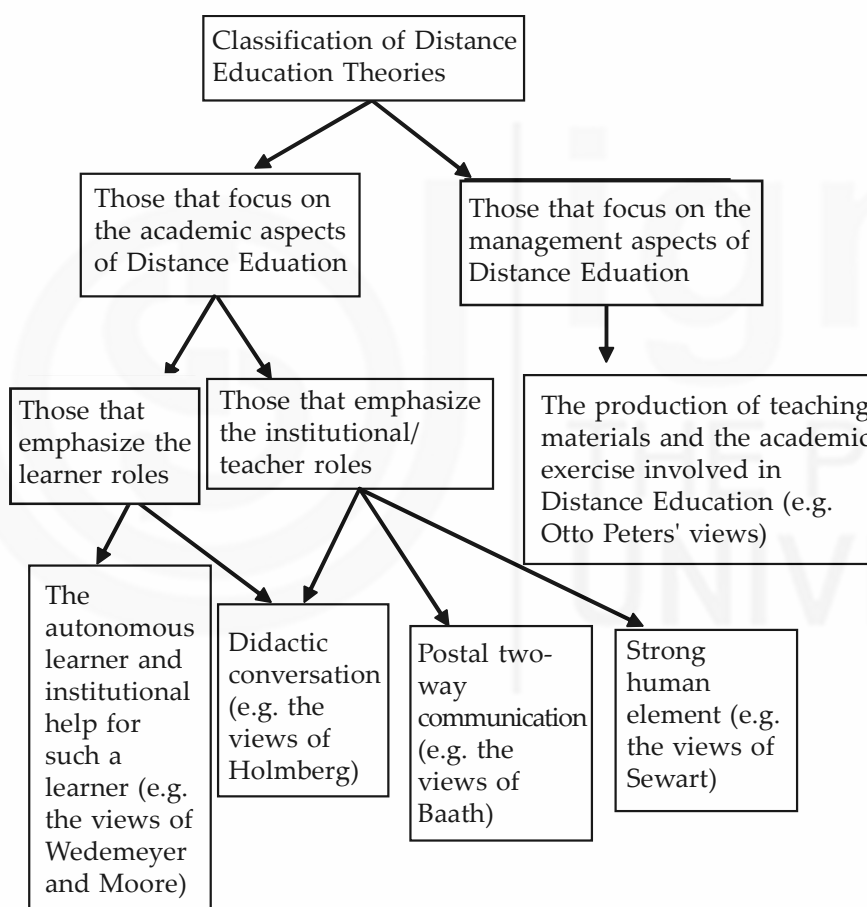
The six theories which we have acquainted you with can very, broadly be put into two classes.

Class 1: The focus of the thinkers is on the production of teaching/ learning materials. Peters appears to be the major thinker whose works belong to this class.

Class 2: The focus of the thinkers is on learner concerns. On the basis of differing orientations theories based on learner concerns may be further divided into two sub-classes. The first sub-class

focuses on learner motivation and the objectives of learning as seen and decided on by the learner. The second deals with the pedagogic aspects of a teaching/learning programme, i.e., how a particular educational programme be made successful in terms of learner achievements. To the first sub-class belong the views of Wedemeyer and Moore who emphasise learner autonomy and independent study. And to the second, Holmberg, Baath and Sewart.

It may not be a mere accident that the European thinkers discussed here feel more concerned about the pedagogies of distance education, whereas the Americans feel concerned about the motivational aspects in distance education. Socio-cultural differences may have a lot to contribute to such differing orientations. We will find occasions to see in what ways these theories are either already discernible, or may find use in the context of developing countries. The schemata presented below captures the discussion in units 2 and 3.



Scheme 2: Academic and management aspects of distance education classified

Before we see how these theories get operationalised in the practice of distance education, we would like you to take a second look at unit 4 of block 1, the NEW LEARNER, who is the focus of all the activities and processes that make distance education a new educational phenomenon. Unless we properly understand this NEW LEARNER, we may fail to appreciate some of the significant aspects of the practice of distance education. We shall turn to these aspects in courses MDE-412, 413, 414, and 418.