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CHAPTER SIX

INTERACTION AND COMMUNICATION

Whatever a dead teacher may accomplish in the classroom, he can do nothing by correspondence. William Rainey Harper, 1880

Introduction

This chapter presents writers who have emphasized interaction and communication as central to any concept of distance education. In very general terms Moore, Wedemeyer and Delling tended to concentrate on the autonomy and isolation of the student as the basis for their views, while Peters' focus is the functions of the institution developing learning Materials The authors in this chapter take as their starting point the role of the institution in providing a satisfactory learning experience for students, once the Materials have been developed and dispatched.

Five authors have been selected: Bääth, Holmberg, Daniel, Sewart and K.C. Smith. Bääth is particularly associated with an emphasis on two-way communication and Holmberg with a theory of guided didactic conversation Daniel, Sewart and Smith are, or have been, managers of distance systems. They would probably blush to be called theorists. Their writings are developed from the day-to-day pressure of managing distance systems. Their inclusion is justified by the wide-ranging and influential character of their contributions.

Two-way communication

John A. Bääth (pronounced 'boat') is Swedish and worked for many years for Hermods at Malmö. His work benefits from a knowledge of the literature of distance education in the Scandinavian languages, English, German and French During the 1970s he was associated with the concept two-way communication in correspondence education. He would not claim to be the originator of the concept but made an important theoretical and empirical contribution to establishing this idea as a major defining feature of distance systems today.

One part of his research aimed to relate modern education research to distance education. He examined the applicability of the teaching models of Skinner, Rothkopf, Ausubel, Egan, Bruner, Rogers and Gagné to correspondence education which he regards as a subset of distance education (1980:12). He was able to show the functions of two-way communication in correspondence education in the light of each of the teaching models:

MODEL	TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION
B.K.Skinner's behaviour control model	Checking students' achievements; individualizing functions: assess students' starting-level, consider special abilities, previous reinforcement patterns.
E.Z.Rothkopf's model for written instruction	Helping students get started.
D.P. Ausubel's advance organizers model	Determine each students' previous knowledge and cognitive structure. Promote positive transfer to subsequent parts of course.
K. Egan's model for structural communication	Individually devised discussion comments and "reverse" assignments.
J. Bruner's discovery learning model	Provide individually adapted help. Stimulate students' discovery of knowledge.
C. Rogers' model for facilitation of learning	Check 'open' assignments for submission; dialogue with each individual student.
R.M. Gagné's general teaching model	Activating motivation Stimulating recall Providing learner guidance Providing feedback

Figure 6.1. Analysis of teaching models (Bääth)

His conclusions are:

- Models with stricter control of learning towards fixed goals tend to imply, in distance education, a greater emphasis on the teaching material than on the two-way communication between student and tutor/institution.
- Models with less control of learning towards fixed goals tend to make simultaneous communication between student and tutor/institution more desirable; this communication taking the form of either face-to-face or Telephone contacts. (1979:21).

Holmberg (1981:27) summarises Bääth's analysis:

- All the models investigated 'are applicable to distance study.
- Some of them (Skinner, Gagné, Rothkopf, Ausubel, Structural communication) seem particularly adaptable to distance study in its fairly strictly structured form.
- Bruner's more open model and even Rogers' model can be applied to distance study, though not without special measures, e.g. concerning simultaneous non-contiguous communication
- (telephone, etc.).
- Demands on distance study systems which would inspire new developments can be inferred from the models studied.

In Postal two-way communication in correspondence Bääth adds empirical analysis of two-way communication to the theoretical analysis of his previous book. In particular he studied:

(i) the relationship of submission density (frequency of assignment submission during a course) to two-way communication.
(ii) the replacement of tutor marked assignments by self assessment questions and
(iii) the introduction of computer marked assignments as a form of two-way communication.

Bääth's theoretical and conceptual contributions stem from his experience in Sweden. He tells us how his own situation led to his involvement:

> From its beginnings ... correspondence education often grew into big enterprises, where the teaching became more industrialised - if you allow the expression of Otto Peters - with considerable division of labour, specialisation of teaching functions, mass production of the material, application of the assembly line principle for certain functions, piecewages to the correspondence tutors, and so on. As we know, this mass education form of teaching is nowadays the prevalent type of correspondence education.
>
> What about the role of two-way communication by mail in this kind of correspondence teaching? Is it still an important element?
>
> This question became real to me during the sixties when I worked as a correspondence course writer, editor and senior tutor. Prom personal experience I found 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.
>
> When writing correspondence course materials I was struck by the idea that it was possible to provide some kind of two-way communication within the material, by means of exercises, questions or self-check tests with detailed model or specimen answers. Could such twoway communication, to any considerable extent, replace the postal two-way communication induced by assignments for submission? (1980:11-12)

This combination of personal experience and theoretical and empirical investigation led Bääth to place two-way communication as central to the distance education process and the distant tutor as central to his concept.

Bääth writes well of the importance of the tutor in a distance system. He indicates that there is evidence to show that distance learners need special help with the start of their studies and that they need help in particular to promote their study motivation. (1982:22)

Bääth sees the role of the tutor going well beyond that of correcting errors and assessing students' progress:

> This is the role of the distant tutor: he can have important pedagogical functions, not only that of correcting errors and assessing students' papers. He may play a principal part in the linking of learning Materials to learning - by trying to relate the learning material to each student's previous reinforcement patterns (Skinner), or to his mathemagenic activities (Rothkopf) , or to his previous knowledge and cognitive structure (Ausubel), or to his previous comprehension of the basic concepts and principles of the curriculum (Bruner), or by concentrating on the task of establishing a good personal relationship with the learner (Rogers) - as I have tried to demonstrate (Bääth, 1980:121).

and he quotes with approval the hundred year-old statement on tutors in correspondence studies:

> The correspondence teacher must be painstaking, patient, sympathetic and alive; whatever a dead teacher may accomplish in the classroom, he can do nothing by correspondence. (William Rainey Harper, 1880)

A query about Bääth's work is that he does not seem to attempt a theoretical framework for two-way communication in correspondence education. He has greatly furthered our understanding of twoway communication but has not explained how it would fit in an overview of this field.

Guided didactic conversation

B6rje Holmberg (pronounced Burr-ye Holm-bery) is also from Sweden and today is Professor of the Methodology of Distance Education at the FernUniversitat in Hagen in the Federal Republic of Germany. He has written profusely on distance education in Swedish, German and English.

A number of characteristic traits link together the publications of Holmberg across a twenty-five year span. Among these are a generous, humanistic philosophy that values highly student independence and autonomy, an early concentration on two-way communication in distance education, an emerging concept of distance education as guided didactic conversation, an unhappiness with non-print media and the provision of face-to-face sessions as components of a system, a concentration on assignment marking and its importance in a system, a difficulty to move from further education to university level education (Hermods is cited, even in 1981, as an example for a university teaching at a distance - 1981:45).

Like the dedicated humanist he is, Holmberg bases his view of distance education on his conviction that the only important thing in education is learning by individual students. Administration, counselling, teaching, group work, enrolment and evaluation are of importance only in so far as they support individual learning. He would like to see systems with completely free pacing, a free choice of examination periods and plenty of twoway communication for tutorial and feedback purposes.

Distance education is considered to be particularly suitable for individual learning because it is usually based on personal work by individual students more or less independent from the direct guidance of tutors. The distance student is in a situation where the chances of individually selecting what educational offerings he/she is to partake of can be much greater than that of conventional students. The student studying at a distance can , and frequently does, ignore elements of the teaching package that has been prepared for the course being studied. TV programmes or comments on assignments or face-to-face sessions or visits to study centres may all be ignored.

Holmberg characterises study in a distance system as self-study but it is not, he insists, private reading, for the student is not alone. The student benefits from having a course developed for him and also from interaction with his tutors and other representatives of a supporting organisation. The relationship between the supporting organisation and the student is described as a guided didactic conversation. The general approach agrees closely with Wedemeyer's. Holmberg insists on allowing students a maximum freedom of choice in matters of both content and study procedures, individual pacing of the study and far-reaching autonomy generally. Two-way communication in writing and on the Telephone between students and tutors

INTERACTION AND COMMUNICATION

has been one of his chief concerns. Students' assignments are regarded as facilitators of this communication rather than as instruments of assessment.

Distance education is seen as a guided didactic conversation that aims at learning and it is felt that the presence of the typical traits of successful conversation will facilitate learning. The continuous interaction between the student on the one hand and the tutors and counsellors and other representatives of the institution administering the study Programme is seen as a kind of conversation. There is a kind of two-way conversational traffic through the written and Telephone interaction between student and institution. More dubiously Holmberg also argues for what he calls simulated conversation from the students' study of the learning materials that have been prepared in a didactic style.

Holmberg's view of distance education as guided didactic conversation might be presented schematically thus:

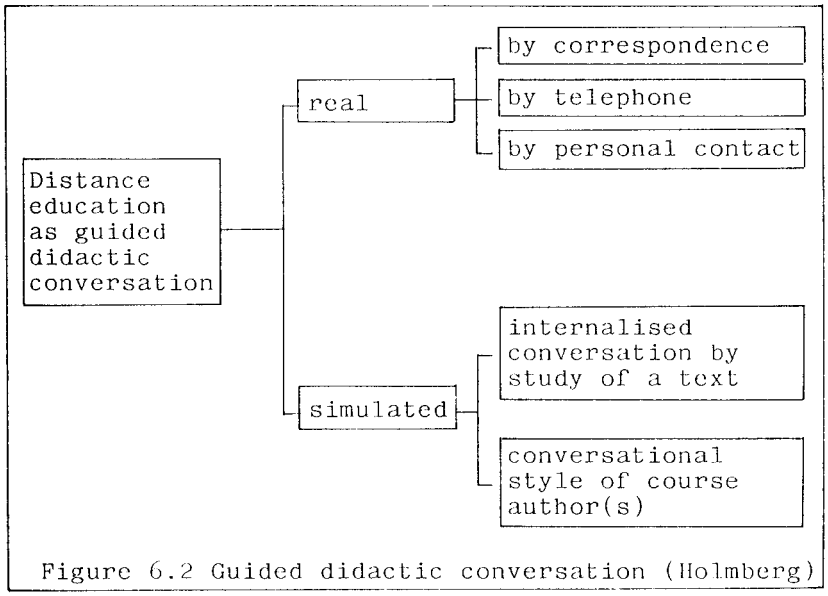

Figure 6.2 Guided didactic conversation (Holmberg)

There are traces of these ideas in Holmberg's early writings but it is only in recent years that he has developed them into the basis for a general theory of distance education.

In On the methods of teaching by correspondence in 1960 he wrote:

> A considerable portion of all oral tuition can rightly be described as didactive conversation. In a great number of successful correspondence courses the atmosphere and style of such conversation is found. It is typical of the style of didactive conversation that advice is given on how to tackle problems, what to learn more or less carefully, how to connect items of knowledge discussed in different lessons and this also characterises many good correspondence courses. It seems to me that advice and suggestions should preferably be expressed in phrases of personal address, such as "When you have read these paragraphs, make sure that...". (1960 :15- 16)

The same paragraph appears with 'didactive' changed to 'didactic' in Holmberg 1967: 26-27 and is repeated in Distance education: a short handbook 1974: 27-28 and in 1982 in the revised edition of that book. Elsewhere Holmberg gives seven bases for his position:

1. that feelings of personal relation between the teaching and learning parties promote study pleasure and motivation

2. that such feelings can be fostered by well developed self-instructional material and suitable two-way communication at a distance;

3. that intellectual pleasure and study Motivation are favourable to the attainment of study goals and the use of proper study processes and methods;

4. that the atmosphere, language and conventions of friendly conversation favour feelings of personal relation according to postulate 1;

5. that messages given and received in conversational forms are comparatively easily understood and remembered;

6. that the conversation concept can be successfully translated for use by the media available to distance education;

7. that planning and guiding the work, whether provided by the teacher organisation or the student are necessary for organised study, which is characterised by explicit or implicit goal concepts. (1978:20 repeated 1983:115-116)

Distance learning materials developed in the light of Holmberg's theory of guided didactic conversation would present the following characteristics:

- Easily accessible presentations of study matter: clear, somewhat colloquial language, in writing that is easily readable; moderate density of information.
- Explicit advice and suggestions to the student as to what to do and what to avoid, what to pay particular attention to and consider, with reasons provided.
- Invitations to an exchange of views, to questions, to judgements of what is to be accepted and what is to be rejected.
- Attempts to involve the student emotionally so that he or she takes a personal interest in the subject and its problems.
- Personal style including the use of the personal and possessive pronouns.
- Demarcation of changes of themes through explicit statements, typographical means or, in recorded, spoken communications, through a change of speakers, e.g. male followed by female, or through pauses. (This is a characteristic of the guidance rather than of the conversation.) (1983:117)

If a course is prepared following these principles Holmberg (1977) forecasts that it will be attractive to students, will motivate students to study and will facilitate learning. In two interesting experiments Holmberg recently re-wrote a Fernuniversitat post-graduate course on educational planning and a basic Hermods course on English grammar in accordance with his theoretical position and replaced the rather analytical textbook-like approaches of the originals with a more .conversational style designed to promote empathy with the student.

By any estimation Holmberg's contribution to the field of distance education is extensive (1979, 1980) - His early pre-occupation with twoway communication in correspondence education provided an impetus for the research of Bääth, Flinck and Wängdahl in the 1970s. Although he is not the only scholar to recommend a conversational style for distance learning materials he has been the only one who has developed a coherent theory from his early (1960:8) statement:

> 'A correspondence course must by definition be something different from a textbook with questions. A correspondence course provides actual teaching by itself and is thus a substitute for both a textbook and the exposition of a teacher,'

and then submitted it to empirical testing. In general this position has been beneficial to practitioners in the field and has contributed to making distance learning materials now a recognisably different genre from text books.

Interaction and independence

From 1973 to 1977 John Daniel was director of studies at the Télé-université, Université du Québec, and then Vice-President, Learning Services at Athabasca University in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. In 1980 he took up the post of Vice-Rector (Academic) of Concordia University, a conventional university in Montreal and moved to Laurentian University, a conventional university with a small distance department in the summer of 1984.

Daniel has thus had experience of academic management in both French and English distance systems and his theorising about distance education is frequently from a management perspective. He sees the emergence of distance education systems as coming from three sources: a long tradition of independent study; modern developments in the technology of education; new theoretical interest in open learning. The fusion of these elements has produced new educational enterprises which teach it a distance and fulfil important economic and political needs of societies.

When Holmberg and Bääth write extensively of two-way communication in education at a distance they envisage constantly a situation in which the major part of the communication will be by postal correspondence, Daniel (writing from the start from a university perspective) sees distance systems as comprising activities in which the student works alone and those which bring him into contact with other people. The first grouping of activities he labels 'independent activities' and the latter 'interactive'. He provides a listing of possible activities in the two groups:

Independent	Interactive
- reading a text - watching television at home - conducting a home experiment - writing an assignment	- discussion on telephone - marking and commenting on assignments - group discussions - residential summer schools

Figure 6.3. Interaction and independence (Daniel)

A major function of distance systems is to achieve the difficult synthesis between the two: interaction and independence - getting the mixture right. All learning in a distance System is achieved by a balance between the learning activities the student carries out independently and those which involve interaction with other people. The balance between the two is the crucial issue facing distance study systems.

The balance chosen between the interactive and independent activities in a distance system has extensive repercussions on the administration and economics of the system:

> Independent activities have great possibilities of economies of scale since the marginal costs of printing extra copies of texts or broadcasting to more students are low. However, the cost of interactive activities tends to increase in direct proportion to the number of students. (Daniel and Marquis, 1979:32)

Increasing the proportion of interactive activities improves student performance but it does so at a price. The cost of interactive activities is broadly proportional to the number of students, involved. There is little opportunity for the economies of scale which characterise independent activities, and are responsible for the overall cost advantage of distance education. Daniel states that distance systems should be dearer: things done at a distance usually are. He then parts company from much of the writing on the economics of distance education by stating that there are two economic structures for distance systems: one for the independent activities in which economies of scale are possible; and one for the interactive activities in which they may not be. (Snowden and Daniel, 1980).

He believes that courses should not be designed that are entirely independent. Socialisation and feedback are the main functions of the interactive activities and whereas the importance of socialisation in education is less vital for adults studying part-time than for children and those involved in compulsory and full-time education, the feedback role of interaction is of crucial importance. Students want to know how they are doing in relation both to their peers and to the criteria of mastery set by the course authors. Distance students are only weakly integrated into the social system of the teaching institution and feel low involvement with it. Therefore they are at risk and the importance of interactive activities is enhanced.

The thrust of Daniel's thinking on distance education comes through clearly in his attitude to pacing. (Daniel and Shale, 1979) He suggests that the more freedom a learner has the less likely he is to complete the course. He is of the opinion that distance systems can either give students the dignity of succeeding by pacing them or the freedom to proceed towards failure without pacing. Holmberg, on the other hand, claims that students should be free to pursue distance courses without the pressure of pacing. Where Moore and Wedemeyer emphasize autonomy and independence of the learner studying at a distance, Daniel looks for a balance between interaction and independence in the structuring of the system and shows how this affects the pacing of students and the cost structures.

Continuity of concern

David Sewart joined the Open University of the United Kingdom in 1973. After a period in the Manchester regional office he moved to the university's central site at Walton Hall near Milton Keynes where he had managerial responsibilities for the provision of support services to students. In 1980 he returned to Manchester as regional director.
Sewart sometimes tries to trace distance education back as far as the epistles of St. Paul but sees a rapid development in the last two decades. This he attributes to the new communications techniques which have been perfected in the twentieth century, the increasing costs of conventional education and the rapidly expanding range of knowledge.

His theoretical approach to teaching at a distance can be summed up as a continuity of concern for students learning at a distance (1978).

Teaching, he tells us, is a complex matter. It is an amalgam of the provision of knowledge and information plus all the advisory and supportive processes with which this provision is normally surrounded in conventional education. He is unhappy with the notion that the package of materials in a distance system can perform all the functions of the teacher in face-to-face education. He shows that, if it could, it would become an infinitely expensive package as it would have to reflect the complex interactive process of the teacher and each individual student.

In many of his writings he discusses the efforts of course developers in distance systems to produce the 'hypothetically perfect teaching package'. He finds this unrealisable and seeks to prove this with his view of the role of the intermediary in complex civilisations. He argues that just as in most complex bureaucracies an intermediary is necessary (a social worker, a hospital orderly) to bridge the gap between the individual and the institution, so in distance systems an intermediary is necessary between the individual student and the teaching package. The intermediary is employed by the institution but works for the individuals. in the system and individualises their problems when confronted with the bureaucracy.

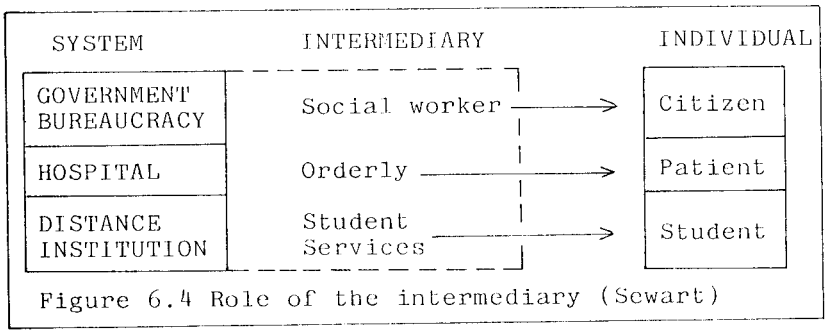

Figure 6.4 Role of the intermediary (Sewart)

Sewart's clear emphasis not only on teaching at a distance but on the needs of students 1-earning at a distance, demands an interactive mode in distance s stems which can hardly be supplied by the learning materials however well they are developed. Failure to recognise this has, he considers, led to the almost universal lack of esteem for distance systems which he judges to hive been the norm until quite recently. He considers that advice and support for students in a system of learning at a distance poses almost infinitely variable problems and this creates the need for an advisory and supportive role of a distance institution in addition to the provision of a teaching package.

Sewart writes clearly of the differences between conventional and distance education and presents both the advantages and disadvantages of education at a distance. As advantages he lists:

- Freedom from the 'strait-jacket of the lecture hall'
- Ability to study whenever and wherever desired.
- Freedom inherent in the individuality of the distance student's situation
- Student not bound by the learning pattern of a learning group
- Distance students needs are not subservient to the needs of a learning group.

The debits are also well- presented in Sewart's writings:

- no measure of progress available
- no framework of study for the distance student
- no peer group clarification or pressure
- no benchmarks on progress or failure. (1981)

He considers the situation of the student learning at a distance to be quite different from that of conventional students because of the absence of swift feedback and because the learner's peer group does not act as a benchmark:

> Perhaps this failure to recognise and concentrate on individual needs arises out of a failure adequately to appreciate the difference between the conventional student and the student learning at a distance. Conventional students in digesting the academic pabulum of their chosen study, exist within a highly artificial and wholly supportive framework. For most of them their study is merely a further stage in an unbroken linear development which began when they were infants. Whereas the infant school class and the university lecture have easily discernible differences, they are generically similar in offering a group learning situation with a face-to-face teacher/ student contact, and the subsequent possibility for instant feedback of an oral and visual nature. The group learning situation is itself supportive of the learning process, not only because of the potential interaction between students in relation to the academic content of the course - learning through discussion with one's peers - but also because the group learning offers a benchmark to the individual members of the group. The students might naturally expect to fall short of the comprehension of a particular subject which is demonstrated by their teacher. The benchmark of 'how far short or how much of this are we expected to understand?' is provided by the group and through the group a common denominator of success or achievement is established for all its members.
>
> The situation of students learning at a distance is wholly different. Often they are returning to learning after a number of years. For such people the concept and practice of their previous learning is somewhat clouded. They have an experience of life and work and hence a framework into which their new learning has to be set. Often the students learning at a distance are part-time. Their work and families are of prime importance. It is not open to them, as it is open to the conventional students, to devote themselves entirely and with singular purpose to learning. Moreover, the process of learning at a distance is generically different from the conventional mode. The swift feedback available from the face-to-face learning model is almost entirely absent. (1980: 177).

The differing study patterns of distance students, the need for intermediaries in complex processes, the absence of the learning group against which the distance learner can measure himself and the infinite variety of individual problems all lead him to the conclusion that the introduction of the human element is the only way to adapt a distance system to individual need s. This provision should ideally be available whenever and as often as the student needs it and is part of the richness and variety of a system that can adapt to the needs of individualised, independent study. Unlike Peters, however, he clearly sees all education provision as a continuum with forms of distance education fusing into conventional provision.

Sewart's views provide an effective counterbalance to those who see distance education merely as a materials production process. He claims that it is the continuity of the institution's concern for the quality of support in a distance system that has been the Open University of the United Kingdom's success in solving the age old problem of distance systems - the avoidance of avoidable drop-out.

An integrated mode

When the University of New England, Armidale, New South Wales, Australia began teaching externally in 1955 it adopted a system of integrating external and internal teaching by the full-time faculty of the university. External enrolments were limited on the basis of a staff-student ratio similar to that already existing in the traditional lecture situation so that staff bore responsibility for teaching both student groups as part of their normal duties.

This system (which came to be known as the 'Australian integrated mode') has had two able proponents, Howard C. Sheath (1956-1972) and Kevin C. Smith (1973-)- It would be too much to say that the writings of Sheath (1965,1973) and Smith (1979) contain a theory of distance education; rather they present a series of heartfelt beliefs on how external studies should be administered.

Smith feels that institutions planning external studies must come to terms with an educational dilemma. The dilemma lies in the fact that external studies depend essentially on an independent learning situation and must be designed so that motivated mature-age students can plot their own path through a particular course with a minimum of outside assistance. On the other hand, systems which rely solely upon the stamina, perseverance and intellectual capabilities of students to survive the rigors of external studies without assistance do not fulfil their academic responsibilities. The compromise is to provide a core of independent learning material but add compulsory provision for staff/student contacts and regular student group activity.

In contrast to Peters' theory of industrialisation, Smith advocates dividing the work of the university faculty equally between on-campus and off-campus students. For the distance education students the lecturer performs all those functions, and more, that are performed for normal students: the design and presentation of courses, the marking of assignments, the conduct of residential and weekend schools, final assessment and examination of students. The external students enrol in the same courses, follow the same syllabus, are tutored by the same lecturers, sit for t ' he same examinations and are awarded the same degrees as the conventional ones.

Smith bases this structure on the following principles:

- external teaching should not be done by part-time tutors but by the full-time university faculty

- by being part of a normal university a distance system remains in the educational mainstream
- a university has only a small pool of outstanding staff; external students should be in contact with them, not with what he calls ‘part-time recruits' (1979:57)
- a university is a community of scholars and all distance students must become part of this community by attending compulsory residential schools
- concentration on the 'learning package' can lead to a debumanising of the learning process, as this is a social experience
- distance education must not depend solely on correspondence methods. Some degree of interaction not only with materials but also with other students and the teachers is essential. (1979:31)

The system of the University of New England which embodies the principles listed above is contrasted by Smith with other systems in the following passage:

> Compared with most distance education systems overseas, the New England model has a certain cohesiveness and underlying strength that appears to be lacking elsewhere. These qualities are derived mainly from the fact that academic staff are responsible for the total teaching/learning process of writing courses, teaching them through a combination of independent study materials and face-to-face tuition arid assessing the students by way of assignments and normal examinations. In almost all other contexts, in Britain, North America and Europe, teaching at a distance is a shared responsibility. Courses are generally written by authors on a contractual basis, teaching in tutorial sessions and grading of assignments is delegated to part-time or adjunct staff recruited for the purpose and assessment often falls between these part time recruits and

> the full-time staff of the institution concerned. Consequently there is a distinct tendency for the quality of the product to be regarded with suspicion. In other cases where open learning institutions have been set up to cater exclusively for off-campus students, there seems to be a certain self-consciousness about operating on the periphery of the educational. mainstream. (1979:33)

In conclusion Smith lists his eight beliefs about how a distance education system should be justified (1979:54):

1. Legitimacy: continuing education and external studies are legitimate functions of universities.
2. Mainstream activity: distance teaching should be undertaken by full-time academic staff as part of their normal teaching responsibilities so that it will receive the scholarship, resource allocation and status it deserves.
3. Commitment: commitment is likely if the whole process remains the responsibilities of the academic staff and is not divided; personal contact between academic staff and students is required; quotas are imposed to reduce external numbers to the same ratio as on-campus allocations.
4. Parity: parity of esteem for degrees can best be achieved if the same staff of the university teach and assess both categories of students.
5. Interaction: group discussions between staff and students and between students themselves are beneficial.
6. Variety: variety of teaching methods is recommended because of the diversity of students.
7. Independence/pacing: pacing of students is a characteristic of successful systems.
8. Communication: a distance system requires an adequate administration.

A critique of Smith's position is that he frequently puts forward the particular solutions of his own institution as normative for other institutions. The Australian integrated mode as it evolved at New England is certainly of interest as a model for a small system of less than 5,000 students, but even in other Australian universities which teach both at a distance (Deakin University, Murdoch University for example) and on-campus it has by no means been followed in all its details. Far from being in the mainstream of university studies as Smith (1979: 33) claims, the distance departments of many integrated systems appear to be well on the periphery with little influence on university budgets or planning.

There is the constant problem that when a lecturer's time is divided between the demands of conventional and distance education, both functions are done less than perfectly. (Shott, 1983)

If an institution is offering full degrees or diplomas in a non-traditional way it does not seem appropriate that such provision should be located among the continuing education and extra-mural departments which do not normally offer full university degrees (Townsend-Coles 1982: 29 – 37), yet this is where normally finds integrated distance departments.

Nevertheless, Smith's contribution is a refreshing one. It is of value to find a thoughtful basis for rejecting concepts of mass production, cost effectiveness and industrialisation in distance education especially when one finds emphasis placed on bringing the distance student into continuos contact with the best brains of the university and, secondly, the admission that the education of a distance student should be just as costly as a conventional one.

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