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**“PRINCIPLES OF DESIGNING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS IN
TEACHING ENGLISH AT PRIMARY SCHOOLS” mavzusidagi**

R E F E R A T I

THEME: PRINCIPLES OF DESIGNING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

Plan:

1. Learning styles of Primary School Children
2. Designing Instructional materials
3. Concept and Characteristics of Learning Materials

This paper introduces you to some aspects of the design of instructional materials. You need to know the functions of instructional materials and advantages and limitations of selected instructional materials. The Gerlach/Ely Instructional Design Model is to introduce you to the basic ideas and components involved in the instructional design process. The example of the communication process and model presented here will help you to know the importance of effective communication in the instructional process and how the media assist classroom communication.

At the end of this chapter, you should be able to:

- list the functions of instructional materials
- outline the advantages and limitations of selected instructional materials
- explain the Gerlach / Ely instructional design model in relation to the design of instructional materials
- explain the importance of the communication process and model in the instructional process.

1. Learning styles of Primary School Children

In this part, you learnt about teaching and learning. The emphasis was more on teaching and the teachers' responsibilities. This is alright in itself, but it should be emphasised here that learners are the central focus in all efforts regarding education in school and human development. For this reason, you looked at the characteristics of primary school children in unit 2. You were able to learn just four out of the many factors that influence children's characteristics.

In the design, development, and implementation of instruction at every stage and at all levels, a constantly recurring step is the analysis of the learners' characteristics. It is so important in the instructional design process that you are going to look at another aspect of the topic so that you will have adequate reference points when you decide to design instructional materials or plan lessons.

Therefore, in this unit, you will be examining "learning styles" as an aspect of individual differences. You will need to consider learning styles when you are designing, producing and utilising learning materials.

Except we are impaired in one form or another, all humans learn through the five senses. We use the sense of sight, through our eyes seeing and observing things around us. The aural sense operates through the ears. We gather information by listening to sounds in different forms. We learn by doing something personally, through the sense of touch and feeling. We also learn by employing all the senses. We use a combination of all the senses: sight, smell, touch, sound and taste.

It is a well established fact that we learn more effectively when we employ at least a combination of three of our senses. Both media and psychology scholars have found out that our ability to learn and remember the points longer can be enhanced by methods appealing to all our senses.

Holt (1990), says children are born learners. He believes this because there is a natural curiosity in all children that begins at birth when they are put in school. We also know now, through the new brain technology, that children's brains are always absorbing at an alarming rate, as they make sense of the world around them. Hepper (2005), found children's brains have grown to their full adult size. Therefore, Holt says that children can think and that they do like to think. Although their thoughts are somewhat limited by their experiences we must provide answers to their questions in order to clarify their thoughts and extend their experiences.¹

Holt further says that self esteem and self-confidence are important in the learning of a child. For this reason, overbearing parents and teachers, rote learning

¹ Gagne, R. (1985). *The Conditions of Learning and the Theory of Instruction* (4th Edn). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

and certain methods of testing serve to crush their curiosity, creating a sense of anxiety in them. What do all these translate into for all children?

- Children learn when they are free.
- Children learn by actively participating in the learning.
- Children learn concepts where relations between ideas are demonstrated.
- Children learn in a supportive environment where their thinking abilities can find expression.
- Children learn by playing, experimenting at their own pace.
- Children learn when their needs are met.
- Children learn when they can see, hear, touch, smell and taste.
- Children learn by asking questions.
- Children learn by remembering.

According to Dunn (1978), memory is not only situated in the head. There is body memory. As a result, human beings would not only learn in a particular way, unless information is presented in their preferred modality, some people cannot learn. How do we consider this when designing instruction, learning materials, or planning lessons? Every individual is uniquely different, and this difference is a central determinant to human behavior (Alhassan 2006).

In unit two, we explored individual differences in their abilities but we did not say much on learning styles. However, it is our business in this course to:

- design instruction materials that will ensure learning.
- produce learning materials that will be appropriate and relevant.
- apply/use instructional materials that make learning more effective.

So it is important to investigate as many aspects of the learners' behaviour as possible.

Piaget's Categorisation

We have said that meeting the pupils' learning need is an interpersonal process, which also requires the teacher's ability to identify the different types of learners in his/her classroom, in order to help them. It also follows that the teacher needs to study and learn the characteristics associated with the different learners as

individuals. As a result, some people generally group learners into three or more categories:

- the talented or gifted learners
- the average or normal learners
- the slow or backward learners
- the special needs learners

It was mentioned in unit two that this generalisation is applied to children throughout all the age brackets in primary school. However, researchers, such as those listed below have disagreed with that generalization (See Appendix 2).

- Piaget (1970): stage theory
- Gardner (1989): multiple intelligences theory; David Kolb (1984); Greenberg (1987); Flemings (2009), – learning styles.
- The application of cognitive theory
- Brain researches etc.

The table is an attempt to make you see the relationship of the common classification of children with the developmental stage theory of Piaget. The point you should note is that the children most concerned with in this course transcend through three stages i.e. pre–operational, concrete and formal stages. Apart from the categorisation of Piaget as illustrated in the table above, other researchers have also found that intellectual beings possess multiple intelligences that they even display a particular learning style.

Learning styles are various approaches or ways of learning. They involve methods which are particular to an individual. Fleming, (2009), explains that students learn in many different ways. That a simple way to understand learning styles is to remember that some students remember best the materials they have seen or heard or personally experienced. She identified these various learners and classed them into three listed below.

- **Visual learners**

Students who learn by observation, watching, viewing and using mostly their sense of sight are referred to as visual learners. These groups of learners are skilled in tasks that require the use of their sight.

- **Auditory learners**

Some learn by listening, talking, thinking and being told. The learning material can be both in oral and written forms. Students who are disposed to this style of learning are referred to as Auditory or Verbal Learners.

- **Kinaesthetic/tactile learners**

Some can learn best when they personally experience things first hand, experimenting, exploring and practically doing things. These learners are classified as the kinesthetic or tactile learners.

Table 3 provides a comparative overview of the characteristics of Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (M.I.) and learning (See Appendix 3) styles .

Other Learning Styles and Preferred Learning Activities

1. **The competitive style** – shown by students who learn material in order to perform better than others in the class – to get rewards and the teachers' attention.

Characteristics

- a. Want to lead in discussion or project
- b. Ask questions
- c. Want to be singled out for doing a particularly good job on a class related activity
- d. No real preference for classroom methods (lectures, seminars etc.) as long as the method has more of teacher centred focus than student centred focus

2. **The collaborative style** – shown by students who feel they can learn the most by sharing ideas and talents. They co-operate with teachers and peers and like to work with others. They see the classroom as a place for social interaction as well as content learning.

Characteristics

- a. Like lectures with class discussion in small groups – small seminars
- b. Student designed and taught courses

- c. Peer determined grades
- d. Instructor group interaction

3. **Avoidance style** – this is typical of students who are not interested in learning course content in the traditional classroom. No participation with student or teachers. Uninterested or overwhelmed by what goes on in the classroom.

Characteristics

- a. Generally turned off by classroom activities
- b. Do not want grading tests, instead prefer self evaluation
- c. Like blanket grades, everyone having a passing grade
- d. Do not like well organised lectures and instruction or individual interaction

4. **Participant style**: Characteristic of students who want to learn course content and want to go to class. They take responsibility for getting the most out of class and participate with others when told to do so. They feel that they should take part in as much as class related activity as possible and little that is not part of the course outline.

Characteristics

- a. Like lectures with discussion
- b. Like opportunities to discuss materials
- c. Like both objective and essay type tests
- d. Prefer teachers who can analyse and synthesise material well
- e. Like reading assignments

5. **Dependent style**- shown by students with little intellectual curiosity and who learn only what is required. They see teachers and peers as sources of structure and support. They look to authority figures for guidelines and want to be told what to do.

Characteristics

- a. Like teachers' outlines or notes on the board
- b. Clear deadlines for assignments
- c. Like teacher centred classroom method

6. Independent style- shown by students who like to think for themselves. They prefer to work on their own, will listen to the ideas of others in the classroom. They learn the content they feel is important and are confident in their learning abilities.

Characteristics

- a. Like independent study
- b. Like self-paced instruction
- c. Like problems which give the student an opportunity to think for himself
- d. Like projects which the student can design
- e. Prefer student-centred classroom setting over a leader centred one

Theoretically, learning styles can be used to predict what kind of instructional strategies or methods would be most effective for a given individual learning task. Romiszowski (2010), however, says that rather than label students with a particular leaning style, it seems most appropriate that we should systematically plan to accommodate varying learning styles, multiple intelligences and cognitive styles. What we need to do as teachers or instructional designers, is to be flexible in our teaching approaches to adopt and integrate multimedia approach to our lesson plans and presentations.

To sum up this section, Table 4 shows utilisation of your knowledge about multiple intelligences and learning styles (see Appendix 4).

In this unit, you have seen how having profound knowledge of the learning styles of your pupils is important. Apart from giving you adequate information about the pupils, it will give you a wider view of possible approaches/method you may adopt in your lesson plans. You will also be able to involve pupils more in various instructional activities which will serve as motivation for learning. The design and production of learning materials of every type will become more relevant and appropriate. The unit concludes by presenting contextual situations establishing the need for learning materials in primary schools. A recall of the points from the beginning of Chapter 1 to this stage will help you to see the dire need for more than just text books as learning materials.

2. Designing Instructional materials

Instructional materials are necessary in the learning process. They assist both the teacher and the learner to have meaningful and effective teaching and learning. At the primary school level in particular, pupils need to be able to relate what they are taught to their environment and nature. The following are the functions of instructional materials in the primary school.

1. They allow the pupils to relate what is taught to their environment, experiences and nature as young learners.
2. Instructional materials help to gain and sustain the attention and interest of the pupils.
3. They emphasise areas of interest and importance in the learning process.
4. They facilitate the understanding of abstract concepts.
5. They help pupils to be active and ensure active participation.
6. They provide equal opportunity or a common framework of learning experiences to a large number of learners.
7. They stimulate reality.
8. They provide opportunity for pupils to manipulate objects in their environment, thereby making learning more concrete.
9. Instructional materials create lasting impact in learners.
10. They employ all the senses of the pupils in the learning process thereby promoting mental activity.
11. They increase the vocabulary level of the pupils.
12. Instructional materials simplify and condense difficult and large quantity of instructional information into understandable format.

Advantages and Limitations of Selected Instructional Materials

1. Pictures (still pictures)

Advantages:

- a. good representative of the real thing (realia).
- b. easy to prepare.
- c. easy to store.

d. easy to use.

e. able to stimulate interest and create correct impressions; they can be locally produced

Limitations:

a. may require artistic skills.

b. pictures may fade or tear with time.

c. pictures traced, lifted or copied can be distorted.

d. details of the object represented are often omitted.

2. Charts (flip charts, diagrams, flash cards, cartoons, graphs, posters, etc)

Advantages:

a. they are visual summaries.

b. they can pinpoint events in story form.

c. they are good in showing condensed information e.g. graph or quantity symbols.

Limitations:

a. they require a lot of money.

b. they can be very complicated if details are necessary.

c. they present storage problems especially with large charts.

3. Flannel graphs – (felt boards, magnetic boards)

Advantages:

a. they can present a story in sequential order as the pictures used are mounted one after the other and as desired.

b. the pictures used can easily be removed or stored as the need arises.

c. attention and interest of students can easily be aroused.

d. they can be locally produced.

e. the materials are cheap and easily accessible.

Limitations:

a. the pictures are not permanent and thus can easily fall off, especially in the case of flat boards or magnetic board.

b. they may be bulky and may pose storage problems.

4. Maps/atlasses/globes

Advantages:

- a. they are excellent in showing condensed information.
- b. they can show a very large area (even the whole world) at a glance.
- c. details are not normally confusing or boring.
- d. the instructor can face the class when using it, thus allowing direct eye contact with the learners.
- e. they are very useful and adequate for large groups or classes.
- f. they do not require any special skills in production.
- g. little or no planning or preparation is required.
- h. they do not require a completely dark room.

Limitations:

- a. they require special and professional skills.
- b. all maps or globes tell lies as most information is exaggerated.
- c. inaccuracies in directions, distances, shapes etc. can occur if care is not taken.
- d. they are highly conventionalised and capable of creating misconceptions.

5. Modules, modes and specimens**Advantages:**

- a. they have a distinct appeal to young learners and attract them better than pictures, maps, etc.
- b. their 3–dimensional character gives a better conception of reality than pictures.
- c. specimens can represent the real things themselves.
- d. learners learn by the collection, modeling and care of materials.
- e. they can be produced by the learners with local materials.

Limitations:

- a. a lot of time may be wasted in collecting specimens.
- b. modeling is messy.
- c. they require storage space.

6. Blackboards or chalkboards as a unique medium

Each type of educational medium should be chosen for what it can do best or for what it can do that no other medium can. As you begin to accumulate ideas for

teaching with media, consider the important characteristics of the chalkboard, such as the following.

- Materials can be big, bold and colourful.
- Unplanned information can be listed as needed during the class.
- “Down time” is no worry. It requires little maintenance, no electricity or operating instructions, and cost for materials is very low.
- Availability is nearly universal; you can count on always having one in a classroom (portable boards are also available for use in unusual locations. You can even make your own chalkboard by using special paint on Masonite hardboard or plywood).

Long term notices and an announcement can be recorded on the board and kept there, since the board is permanently located in the classroom. There is no doubt that the use of the chalkboard creates a much richer instructional setting than does a presentation that is strictly verbal. You might be tempted to place the chalkboard in the category of “instructional aid” because of its necessary role in teaching.

Because of the high esteem that live teaching enjoys, it is natural to assume that machines or devices are merely aids. However, when any device is used, even a simple one such as the chalkboard, a new form of teaching results. The chalkboard can be regarded as a visual aid because of the already mentioned advantages generally and the following specific advantages and limitations.

Advantages:

- a. they are the most accessible aid.
- b. they are the easiest form of teaching aid.
- c. they do not require any elaborate preparation.
- d. they are excellent for summary notes and illustrations.
- e. they can be used for practice by learners themselves.

Limitations:

- a. writing may be poor and illegible for those who are not properly oriented
- b. partially blind or blind learners may not benefit from them.

c. they are large and immovable.

7. Textbooks

Advantages:

a. they contain more permanent sources of information.

b. they can be used over and over again.

c. they may provide self study guide for individualised learning especially a where workbook is included.

d. they are hidden treasures for the serious learner.

e. they can be an effective guide for the trainers and teachers.

Limitations:

a. storage facilities may not be adequate.

b. they may be expensive to purchase.

c. they may be outdated and circumstances may hinder their use.

d. they can pose the danger of being copied by both the learners and the teachers.

8. Realia

Advantages:

a. It shows the real situation of events, experiences or true and life-like presentations and sometimes the real object itself is used.

b. It may be easy to get.

c. It is cheap as you don't have to spend to get most realia objects.

d. It does not distort or exaggerate facts.

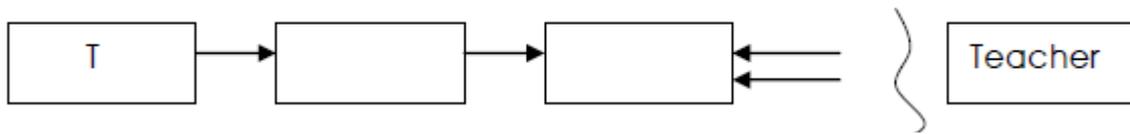
Limitations:

a. It can be dangerous and unrealistic to show or go through real events or things e.g. snakes, war situations, seas, hills or mountains.

b. It may be too far, too big, or too small to be taken to the learning environment, classroom or venue.

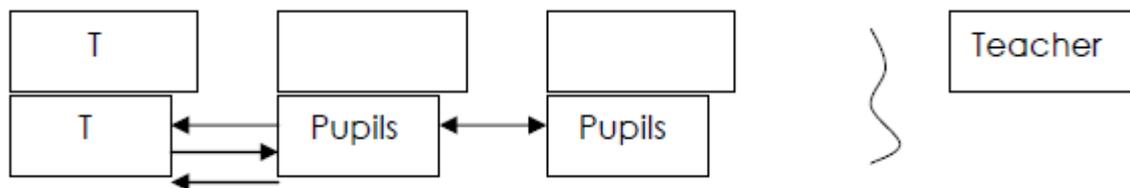
You may want to know what communication is. All disciplines define communication based on its use or in relation to their peculiar practice and needs. Communication in education is simply the interactions among members in the education system. Specifically, communication in the classroom is the transfer of a

message from the teacher (sender) to the learner (receiver) and vice versa. Effective classroom communication is not a one-way affair, all the elements in the teaching –learning process, i.e. the teacher, learner, media etc interact or communicate for the system to work as illustrated below.



Teacher communicates with Pupils, pupils communicate with teacher.

Figure 1: (a) Classroom Communication Process



Pupils communicate with each other and the teacher.

Figure 1: (b) Classroom Communication Process



Teacher with media communicates with pupils who interact with media and teacher. In order to achieve the interaction media or instructional materials and the content, there should be a free flow of transfer of information between the teacher, pupils and media.

David Berlo’s Model (1960).

This is one of the most popular models known as the S-M-C-R model. It was developed by a psychologist known as David Berlo in the 1960s. The model is popularly used by psychologists and educators.

Figure 2: David Berlo’s Model

- **Noise:** this relates to any distraction or misunderstanding during the communication process. Noise can present itself in different ways such as physical, emotional, psychological, linguistic etc. This should be prevented by the teacher as much as possible.

This unit has presented the functions of instructional materials. It is hoped that this will prompt the teacher to use instructional materials in the teaching process. You further learnt about the advantages and limitations of selected instructional materials which can assist the teacher when taking decisions on what materials to produce or select from. The Gerlach/Ely instructional model is presented here to enable you know the basic components involved in the instructional design which will help in the application and integration of instructional materials in teaching. Also, the communication process and model show the importance of effective communication in instruction and the role media play in effective communication in the teaching and learning procedures.

3. Concept and Characteristics of Learning Materials

In this unit, you will be exposed more to learning materials, the rationale for the use of learning materials, variety/sources of learning materials and the classification and characteristics of learning materials. Learning materials can be regarded as the teacher's companion because they assist him to provide all that is needed to make his lesson concrete, productive, effective and individualized. Learning about the various instructional materials and their characteristics will help the teacher to produce the appropriate materials that will help him achieve the stated objectives for the lesson.

What are learning materials? Most teachers often think of only complex materials whenever this question is asked. But learning materials refer to anything the teacher employs to make the instructional process more active, interesting, interactive and scientifically based. Learning materials should be based on the objective of the content and should appeal to more than one sense (seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting) employed in the teaching – learning process. Learning

materials can be audio, visual (projected and non- projected) or audio–visual (to be discussed in detail later). They range from the simplest material to the most complex materials at the teacher’s disposal. Learning materials are those resources that help learners gain knowledge through participation and reinforcement.

Now that we have defined what learning materials are, what is the rationale for employing materials in learning? According to Onasanya and Adegbija (2006), learners, especially primary school children, are acutely aware of their senses which they use continuously to acquire new skills and ideas. Learning materials or instructional media sharpen the senses for this purpose. Other reasons for learning materials /media include the followings.

- They develop a continuity of thought in learning through the use of pictures, slides, films, and especially motion pictures.
- They supply a concrete basis for conceptual thinking and hence reduce meaningless word responses of students.
- They supply the necessary basis for developmental learning and hence make learning more permanent.
- They offer a reality of experience that simulates self-activity on the part of the learners.
- They contribute to the growth of meaning and hence, to vocabulary development.
- They arouse and maintain the interest and attention of learners.
- Learning materials contribute to the efficiency, depth and variety of learning.
- They are unbiased in dealing with and effecting desirable change in learners.
- They are accepted by and appealing to all categories of learners.
- Learning materials provide experiences not easily secured from other sources. • They make learning participatory and scientifically based.
- They provide equal access to education and contribute to the individualisation of instruction.

This unit gives a break down of the different learning materials and their characteristics in a tabular form. There are various ways of categorising media but we will just focus on the following units.

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