An Instructional Materials Design for Development Education

By Carl H. Templin.

Recent issues of *The Ethiopian Journal of Education* have contained articles which deal with proposals for reforming the Ethiopian educational system, with the intention of relating the system to the overall design of Ethiopian national development.[1] A recent study has documented the gap between the development orientation and objectives of the former national government, the output of the current academically-oriented educational system, and the unrealistic aspirations and expectations of Ethiopian secondary school students.[2] There is widespread agreement among educators for the need to provide a new educational environment which will deal with, and remedy, the counter-productive aspects of the present academic curriculum.

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> "...African education would be defeating the task of nation-building if it failed to produce citizens who are not intellectually and normally equipped to make decisions and choices of their own..."[4]

> "...It is only individuals who have had the benefit of an educational experience that develops their capacities to reason and judge, that can intelligently participate in the exercise of value-judgment. This is the challenge to, African education."[5]

One of the most domesticating aspects of Ethiopian education is the great emphasis on rote memorization. This begins with the unthinking recitation of "alphabet charts" in 1st grade and culminates in the reams of "notes" which teachers give to their students to "prepare" them for the national exams. However, leading Ethiopian educators feel that domestication as an educational output must be exchanged for a liberation which will deal with the authentic problems which Ethiopian students are, and will be, facing for the remainder of this century. "The emphasis on rote learning has done more harm than good in the past. The most effective approach is the problem-solving approach."[6]

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which the educator can introduce into the learning environment, a process which is congruent with the latest discoveries in cognitive psychology.

"...As Piaget has pointed out, telling is not teaching and is not convincing. The *child* must transform the date, by reversing his action, or putting parts together in different ways, *or by some other logical means. The teacher can suggest such ways of operating upon the materials in order to facilitate the transformational process...* (italics mine)"[7]

A basic need in Ethiopian education, therefore, appears to be for the educator to inject into the learning environment kinds of problems of a real (i.e. development or modernization) nature with which the student can struggle within the cognitive framework of his own personal and cultural logic, and by so doing engage in a transforming process of learning .

"...Thus far the effort to mobilize the resources of Ethiopia's youth on behalf of modernization has proceeded chiefly through a pattern of increased *differentiation*: establishing a structure of secondary socialization separate from that of the traditional structures and thereby transmitting new beliefs, skills, and values to the youth. As yet, relatively little has been done with respect to the problems of devising modes of *integration* commensurate with these new differentiated patterns ... (the Ethiopian student) can only be helped to work through these conflicts by a transformed education program, one which educates for self-education and seeks to enlighten students concerning the complex realities of economic development and culture change..."[8]

During the 1973-74 (1966 E.C.) school year, a preliminary attempt was made to expose students in various American Mission elementary schools to a series of essay questions of a development-education nature. The schools were as follows: Pokwo School and Gilo School (Anuak students in Gambela Awraja), Adura School (Nuer students in Gambella Awraja), Godare School (Majangir students in in Teppi Awraja), and Maji School (Amhara and Dizi students in Maji Awraja). The intention of the essay questions was to pose open-ended stimuli of a development nature upon which students could operate and transform cognitively into solutions that were logically meaningful from their cultural perspective. The framework from which the essay questions were devised was the Christometric Development Education Goals.[9] Students in 4th, 5th, and 6th grades were required to write an essay which was related to a Christometric Goal. Since it was known that the students were weak in communication skills in Amharic, the classroom teacher was required to re-write the students' essays into correct Amharic, being careful not to change the ideas expressed by the students but only the grammar or spelling. When a ll essays had been rewritten, the teacher arranged for an Amharic class period during which all of the students were required to read their revised essays to the class. Students were instructed to look for patterns emerging from the essays wichh were subsequently discussed with the teacher. At the conclusion of the discussion period, the teacher summarized the class responses by relating them to development

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education theory. The author, as a participant-observer in many of the discussion periods, and through informal interviews with participating students and teachers, found a generally postitive response to this teaching-learning methodology. The only major negative response was from some teachers who felt that re-writing the students' essays was an extremely tedious and burdensome task.. All, however, were willing to make the sacrifice of their personal time as they began to see increased intellectual development unfolding in their students.

The author, though satisfied with the preliminary results, feels that a major push forward in this methodology is called for which will hopefully result in significant cognitive behavior dealing with development problems. Therefore he is proposing to include into the elementary curriculum in grades 1-3 a daily period of conversational Amharic which is composed of topical frames which deal with consciousness-raising in relation to Ethiopian development. Beginning in grade 4, students will write essays - possibly two per week - dealing with development-related questions. Since it will be impossible for teachers to re-write this large volume of essays, they will be instructed to mark grammatical and spelling changes on the original essay, and the student will then be required to revise his own essay, taking into consideration the corrections which the teacher has suggested. The revised essays will be utilized for the classroom discussion period.

In previous writings[10] the author has used the following definition for development - DEVELOPMENT MEANS PROGRESS TOWARD DESIRED GOALS. Since any development plan involves value judgments, a development-oriented curriculum must likewise do so. In searching for an indigenous Ethiopian framework from which to pose development-oriented stimuli, the author has attempted to summarize what appears to be the main emphases of the article "Aims and Objectives of Education in Ethiopia" by Germa Amare, Abraham Demoz, and Abuna Samuel. Since this paper was an input of major importance for the Education Sector Review of 1972, it was felt that it would give a valid perspective of progressive thinking among Ethiopian educators. The following outline is admittely sketchy, but will serve our purposes in providing a framework for the essay questions. Readers are strongly encouraged to study the original article.

I.   ATTITUDINAL AIMS

To change ideas which are inconsistent with the modern society desired by Ethiopians

From	To
1. fatalism	a rational outlook on life a. natural phenomena have natural explanations b. problems are solvable
2. education for assimilative faculties (i.e. rote memorization, "domestication")	education for critical and creative faculties

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3. negative attitude towards   positive attitude towards the dignity
   manual labour   of labour at all levels of society

II. ECONOMIC AIMS
1. the direct economic utility of education
2. preparation for the needs of the area
3. participation in community activities of a development nature

III. POLITICAL AIMS
A. To promote national integration (strength through an acceptance of cultural diversity - blending of indigenous cultures into a rich national culture)
1. it is necessary that each Ethiopian feel proud of his indigenous culture
   a. by understanding his cultural environment
   b. by understanding his physical environment
2. to create a national consciousness
   a. understanding other Ethiopian cultures
   b. loyalty to, and willingness to sacrifice for, national institutions
   c. closing the generation gap
   d. encouraging self-identity to counteract alienation
B. To promote egalitarianism
1. democratic orientation
2. tolerance
3. equality of educational opportunity (town vs. countryside, male vs. female, region vs. region).
C. To prepare for life in the International Community
1. teaching about neighboring countries of Africa (African Unity)

IV. SOCIAL AIMS (Cultural and Moral Values)
1. study of other cultures
2. history of Ethiopian peoples
3. performance of artistic expressions from local culture
4. collection of oral literature from Ethiopian cultures
5. vertical relationship to God
6. horizontal relationship to men (brotherhood)
7. healthy living (sanitation)

Utilizing this framework of educational objectives, the author proposes that the following questions or essay topics be posed to students in elementary schools in Ethiopia in a manner which allows them to operate upon these ideas. It is felt that if students transform these development-related stimuli according to their personal and cultural logic, significant gains will be made by the students regarding (1) their understarding of their self-identities as students in the midst of rapid cultural and societal change in Ethiopia, (2) a basic understanding of factors involved in Ethiopia's development process, and (3) dialogical concepts upon which they can act if they wish to participate in the development of their people and their nation.

The topical essay questions for Development Education are as follows: [11]

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FROM FATALISM TO A RATIONAL OUTLOOK ON LIFE

1. What causes hunger times among your people?
2. What are some of the big problems which your people are facing?
3. What do you think is the purpose of the science class in your school?
4. What can be done to eliminate hunger times among your people?
5. Which has a greater effect on development - fate, or hard work toward the goals of people?
6. Which is a more realistic way to solve differences between inter-tribal enemies - to fight until one tribe conquers the other, or to try to resolve the issue through discussion?
7. How do people in your community use science to improve their lives?

EDUCATION FOR CRITICAL AND CREATIVE FACULTIES

1. What subject do you consider to be most useful in school, and why?
2. What things have you learned in school in the past years that improved your life?
3. If you knew that you could not go on to junior secondary school, what would you want the school to teach you before you left primary school (or 6th grade)?
4. How many years does a person need to go school in order to become "educated" (more useful to his community)?
5. If there was no national exam to prepare for, what would you want to learn at school?
6. How can literacy help farmers become more productive?
7. Should a person be allowed to have his own ideas, or should he be forced to agree with what the group decides?
8. Because of medicine, more people in Ethiopia are living longer lives. In the past in many areas of Ethiopia, about half of the babies died before they were three years old. Now most babies who get medicines are living longer. Therefore the population of Ethiopia is increasing. Good farming land is scarce in many parts of Ethiopia. If the population contines to increase and all the good farming land is used there will not be enough food for all of the people. What do you think should be done about the increasing population Ethiopia?

POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD LABOUR

1. What kinds of tools would you like to be able to use (or learn to use) in your school?
2. What kinds of practical skills should be taught in your school?
3. What things (skills) do you want to learn in school which will be helpful for you in serving your community?

4. In what ways should students in your school work co-operatively?
5. Should students be required to serve their communities?
6. Which kinds of work are more important for the development of your people/nation, and why?
7. Which kinds of people are more important for the development of your people/ nation, and why?
   a. teachers or farmers
   b. government administrators or traders
   c. bankers or police
   d. elected officials or appointed officials
   e. rich people or laborers (i.e. potters, blacksmiths, tanners, weavers, etc.)
   f. a student who asks others to help him with school fees or a student who serves his community during vacation times
   g. a person who thinks others should help him or a person who thinks he should help himself, etc.
8. Which do you think is better - to work for yourself or to be hired to work for others?
9. Which is a better way to do a big job (like planting a field) - to work a few hours each day for many days, or to work hard until the whole job is finished and then to rest from work for some time?
10. What can students do to increase agricultural productivity in Ethiopia?

PRODUCTIVITY FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Write a short story about something which happened in your community which was very good or very bad.
2. What kinds of people in your community do you consider to be bad? (who hold up development)
3. Which people in your family went to school? - what grades did they finish?
4. What is the thing which your people do best?
5. From whom can you learn the most important things for your life?
6. What kinds of activities do your people work co-operatively on?
7. What are the chief goals in life that your people have?
8. What do your people have to offer as their greatest contribution to national development?

UNDERSTANDING PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Which area of Ethiopia do you think holds the greatest prospects for economic development, the lowlands or the highlands?
2. What environmental conditions (natural resources) in your area can contribute to the economic development of your people?
3. What environmental conditions in your area hold back economic development?

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RESPECT FOR OTHER ETHIOPIAN CULTURES

1. Which would be the best way to achieve national development in Ethiopia, to try to destory the cultures of the tribal people of Ethiopia and create a new Ethiopian Culture that was the same for everyone, or to permit each culture to develop in the way that the people of that culture feel is best for them?

2. Do you thing there is any particular culture in Ethiopia which is superior to others in making the greatest contribution to Ethiopian Development, or can all the cultures of Ethiopia make somewhat equal contributions?

CLOSING GENERATION GAP

1. Is it safe to trust an older person?

2. Who can make the greatest contribution to development - young people or older people?

3. Is it possible for small children to make good decisions for themselves by thinking, or should they always be made to be obedient to the orders of older people?

FOSTERING SELF-IDENTITY

1. Who are you? - write a short story about yourself.

2. Write a short story about what you would like to do when you are finished with your education.

3. What are some of the problems that you can see in your own life?

4. What kinds of things in your school do you consider to be bad? (to hold back development)

5. If you found $100 what would be the best thing to do with it?

6. If a student's father or mother was needing his help, would it be better for him to leave school and go to help them, or to continue on in school?

7. Which type of person is more important for development - a clever person or an honest person?

8. Which type of person is more important for development - a brave person or an honest person?

9. In what ways has your life changed in the past five years?

10. Write a short story about some things which you think are important to save money for.

11. Do you think that you can have a better life in the countryside or in a town (or city)? - What would be better about that kind of life?

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EGALITARIANISM

1. What do you think domocracy means?

2. What do you consider the main characteristics of a good political leader should be?

3. Can women make as great a contribution to national development as men?

4. Do you think that Ethiopia can have faster national development with elected government officials from the local population, or appointed government officials?

CULTURAL AND MORAL VALUES (INCLUDING HEALTH)

1. Write a short story about the kinds of food you eat (your diet).

2. What do you do when you get sick?

3. Write a short story about a clinic and the kinds of help you get from a clinic?

4. What can students do to improve the health of their people?

5. Do you think that Christian faith is necessary or important for the development of your people?

6. In what ways do you think fasting contributes to the development of Ethiopian people?

CONCLUSION

This article has attempted to present an instructional design for posing development-oriented stimuli upon which students in Ethiopian elementary schools can cognitively operate. The essay stimuli are based on a framework which represents an indigenous philosophy of education for Ethiopia. It is proposed that this form of problem-solving, dealing with authentic problems in Ethiopia's cultural, political and economic life, will assist in bringing congruence between the educational system and the development process in Ethiopia. Preliminary experimentation with this instructional materials design has indicated its applicability for inducing cognitive growth regarding development-education problems in cross-cultural situations found in southwestern Ethiopia.

FOOTNOTES

1. see, for instance, the following:
   Germa Amare, "Some Questions of Values in Nation Building: An Educational Perspective," Vol. VI, No. 1 (June 1973), pp. 1-17

   Germa Amare, Abraham Demoz, Abuna Samuel, "Aims and Objectives of Education in Ethiopia," Vol. VI, No.2 (April 1974), pp. 1-26

Carl H. Templin, "Development Education: An Alternative for Africa," Vol. VI, No. 2 (April 1974), pp. 27-43.

2. Solomon Gidada, "The Role of Education in Ethiopian National Development", unpublished doctoral dissertation from the University of Syracuse (USA),1973.

3. Mesfin Wolde-Mariam, *An Introductory Geography of Ethiopia*, HSIU (Addis Ababa 1972, p. 206.

4. Germa Amare, *op. cit*, p. 11.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

6. Germa Amare, Abraham Demoz, Abuna Samuel, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

7. Celia Stendler Lavatelli, *Piaget's Theory Applied to an Early Childhood Curriculum*, Center for Media Development: Cambridge, Mass., 1970, pp. 46-47.

8. Donald N. Levine, *Wax and Gold*, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1965, pp. 146-147.

9. Carl H. Templin, "Training Teachers for Development Education," *The Ethiopian Journal of Education*, Vol. VI, No. 1 (June 1973), pp. 76-77.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 73 and *op.cit.*, p. 28.

11. Experimentation is being carried out to serialize the questions for use in the classroom, ranging from easy Amharic vocabulary, grammar, and conceputalization in the lower grades to more complex stimuli in 5th and 6th grades. This serialization will be constructed for students for whom Amharic is a second language. The serialiation which follows in this paper will most likely differ from the order implemented in the classroom, since the author has arbitrarily arranged the questioons on the basis of what he feels to be most logical from the perspective of English grammar and conceptualization. The reader is encouraged to experiment with his own serialization.