

# **TELEVISION AS AN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY : ITS USAGE AT THE OPEN EDUCATION FACULTY, ANADOLU UNIVERSITY**

Assistant Professor Dr. Mediha Saglik  
Assistant Professor Dr. Serap Ozturk  
Anadolu University, Open Education Faculty, Eskisehir/Turkey

## **INTRODUCTION**

Anadolu University opened its Open Education Faculty in academic year 1982-1983 since its inception, printed materials have been used as well as the supportive technologies of radio, television and academic counseling. Since 1993 computer technology has also been used.

### **WHY TELEVISION AT THE OPEN EDUCATION FACULTY?**

Alkan points out the major assumptions for distance education as follow:

- Individuals are in need of different education. As the present situation cannot meet this need, it is necessary to provide mass education with free learning by developing new opportunities.
- New options must make the insufficiency of traditional educational practices disappear.
- New models must give opportunities to outsiders of the present education system
- New opportunities must provide individuals with an equal education (Alkan, 1999, p.7).

All the alternatives Alkan has pointed out to the use of television, which is viewed by a large audience and is able to reach a mass of the people. This availability makes television inevitable in the practice of distance education in the conditions of Turkey inevitable in the practice as a developing country. From the point of the faculty, television broadcast can reach a large audience across the country through its national network. The faculty can also make use of newer, synchronous or use interactive technologies such as teleconferencing, computer aid instruction, internet services, etc. The use of these technologies must take into account the target community and the possibility of those individuals to be able to access the provided technologies. In other words, the best technology to provide all individuals with equal opportunities is radio-television technology.

### **WHY TELEVISION?**

Television, which has an important place in mass communication, has a significant role in distance education with its special features for the way of presentation and qualities.

Technological developments in the field of communication technology can be adapted in the field of education as it is adapted to many fields of life. With the existence of the new technologies in this field and the advantages

they provide, television can already be seen as an outdated tool. But while the opportunities it provides still keep its validity, television technology is not far from the new developments.

Television in distance education fulfills the below mentioned functions:

- Supporting and enriching teaching
- Explaining ambiguity
- Summarize
- Reinforcement
- Motivation and encouragement
- Filling in the blanks
- Imposing study speed (determining rate of study)
- Presenting a reference to large masses
- Changing behaviour
- Presenting unreachable facts and events (Hizal, 1983, p.57).

Thanks to its special features, television fulfills these functions. Of these special features, perhaps the most important one is that television is a very familiar and attractive source from the point of view of buyers. As television presents people with their faces and feelings, it is also a heart-warming tool.

At the result of developments in communication technologies, the price of radio and television sets is dropping and their being part of our daily life has made these tools necessary in the field of education (Kaymas, 1999, p.76).

Information transferred by television is different from traditional education methods with respect to the audio-visual presentation. Explanations related to the subject and examples can be presented audio-visually. The learner gets highly motivated, his desire for learning increase, and therefore learning and remembering become easier.

Reaching of television broadcast to thousands of people spread throughout a large geographic region at the same time provides the individual with an education far from the student psychology in the traditional education and it also directs education to individuals (Kılıc, 1988, p.4-5).

Allowing thousands of people spread throughout a large geographic region to receive the same programme at the same time, television broadcasts provide individuals educational chance as being different way than traditional education.

Television transfers the events or processes through a time process peculiar to itself. In fact a process that might require a long operation can be broadcasted with main points in a short period of time. Television may grant positive motivation such as calling the learner's attention to a certain point or arousing attention with the characteristics of the camera's coming close, going away, and seeing details.

Invisible or nonexisting objects in present time can be animated with different expression methods such as cartoon films. Television is active in using human sources fruitfully. It enables distinguished instructors in their own field to reach to a large mass of students at the same time. The most remarkable characteristics of television are its ability to present information sources to the student. Other tools cannot do this. This is an important opportunity for students who were unable to study at a university or in other educational institutions (Bates: 1998 p.215). Education methods such as conference, lesson, show, and experimentation, which are present in traditional education, are accepted in a different view. By using the screen as a laboratory, it is possible to show normally complicated experiments to the students through all its phases (Gokce, 1997, p.239).

Television is an effective tool in transmitting abstract concepts or ideas. Abstract concepts are usually conveyed with words. Besides this, in making an abstract concept concrete the role of animation and visual experimentation is very important. The limitation here is how to form the text involving information with moving views, animation, concrete ideas, utterance and objects like pictures. Television in the learning process could be helpful in understanding abstract ideas directly (Bates: 1998 pp.215-217). Television is especially useful for lessons like geography, because it enables us to see whatever possible to see (Turan, 1994, p.160).

Though production is a complicated process, the cost per person is low (see for compare Potashnik-Capper, 1998). All these features point out the superiority of television in the presentation of information.

### **IN WHAT PROJECTS HAS IT BEEN USED?**

The projects which the Open Education Faculty used television as an educational technology.

#### Academic Year 1999-2000 University Degree Programs

Faculty of Economics

Faculty of Business Administration

#### Academic Year 1999-2000 Pre-licence (two years) Programs

Business Administration

Local Public Administration

Public Relations

Accounting

Foreign Trade

Banking and Insurance

Office Management

Sales Management

Tourism and Hotel Management

Social Sciences

Home Management

Medical Institutions Management

Theological Studies

Television programmes prepared and produced for this project are given in Table 1:

<b>Academic Year 1999-2000 Television Programmes (*)</b>		
	The number of programmes (total)	Duration of Programmes (hours)
<b>University Degree Programs</b>		
Lesson Programmes	785	721
Preparation for exams	60	30
Preparation for exams (live)	30	30
<b>Pre-licence Programs</b>		
Lesson Programmes	496	456
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1371</b>	<b>1237</b>
* Information from Anadolu University, Radio and TV Production Centre		

**Table 1:** Academic Year 1999-2000 Television Programmes

Besides these televised broadcasts, learners can buy videotapes of these programmes if they apply to the faculty. Videotapes of lessons that the student ask for are prepared and sent to his/her address. For such demands students pay a fixed price.

#### **West Europe Project**

This project, put into action by the Open Education Faculty in 1986, is aimed at Turkish Citizens living in Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and Austria. With the project carried out for the purpose of rendering higher education for Turkish Citizens living abroad, learners there have chance to study Business Administration and Economics for a licence degree, and Foreign Trade and Tourism for pre-licence.

In this project, television programmes about their subjects are posted to the learners as a videotape together with other materials. Thus students are given a chance to make use of these materials in their own convenience.

#### **Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Project**

This project is carried out with the purpose of presenting higher education to the Turks living in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and covers all the licence and pre-licence programmes of Open Education Faculty. Television programmes are conveyed to the students via television broadcast. But due to the distance between two the countries, we are not able give academic counseling. Interactively such services are given using teleconferencing. Teleconferencing was put into practice in the academic year 1999-2000. A total of 8 hours of advisory is given two days a week, with getting together students in the Open Education Faculty's office in Nicosia. All students there are able to have an interactive communication. Thus an synchronous technology was first started at the Open Education Faculty in this project.

## **PRODUCTION POSSIBILITIES**

The radio- television Broadcasting Centre, established at Anadolu University in 1982, has two well-equipped television and two sound studios containing out-shot equipment (6 ENG cameras, light and sound sets, prompter etc.). It makes possible all sorts of television productions with its own graphic, decoration, animation, archive and planning, and video tape copying departments. The centre also has computer, sound maintenance and repair laboratories. It employs highly distinguished and experienced producers who graduated from a higher education institution or with an post doctoral degree. In the departments on the centre, in-service training is carried out periodically by native or foreigner experts. In addition, produced programmes have been revised during observation meetings in the centre and the suggestions for improving the productions are put into practice.

## **PRODUCTION PROCESSES AND PRODUCTION WAYS**

Producing and broadcasting television programme is an expensive endeavor, especially to keep the same rating in a state of multi television channels and programmes. To produce high quality programmes requires a lot of effort. It is easy work for an announcer to keep talking before a camera. In past years, with the influence of accepting the understanding of producing television programmes for each unit of each lesson, this method has been used frequently. Yet with the comprehension that an educational television programme must use all the possibilities of television, the process of television production was, in time, re-evaluated and different methods have been accepted. In the on-going process, groups of experts for each subject were formed for each project, and by watching the existing television programmes, the groups decided on the renovation of the programmes that have become invalid in context or presentation. The content and structure of the programme to be renovated or reproduced has been determined with the cooperation of the expert group, a director and a scenarist. After deciding what unit or subject within that unit needs to be adapted for television, it is started.

For the planning of a more reliable and effective media, and the purpose of meeting the expectations of a changing student profile, we formed a new structure within the Open Education faculty- "Distance Education Planning Unit" (DEPU). A group of experts in their field in this unit has begun to act to reform television as well as all technologies. DEPU has considered each project separately, and aims to determine the proficiency to be gained by the learner. In accordance with this determining, DEPU settles what information will be presented in what order and how. And in the next stage, the established content is transformed into teaching material (book, television programme, web page etc.) The productions, which the students have not received yet, but the studies of which are still in progress, are planned to be presented to the learners in coming years. During this process, a media production director, (MPD) who is also in charge of television programmes, is generally responsible for media conception planning and development. The MPD, who receives academic counseling during the

production process, has been evaluating the produced material together with Project Coordinator and the Teaching Conception Directory, and if necessary, does any reproducing. The studies of this group cover all the projects at the Open Education Faculty. Hence, it has been aimed at increasing the influence of television as well as all materials and meeting the demands of the learners in a better way. (personal communication, February 2000, Anadolu University, Radio-TV Production Centre, The Presidency of DEPU). At Open Education Faculty nearly 300 programmes have been produced annually. Below mentioned production ways are used in the present production process:

#### 1. Making use of individuals

- Instructors
- Speaker
- Players
- Field expert
- Common people

#### 2. Making use of visual production possibilities

- Graphic materials (pictures, photographs, maps, tables, diagrams, caricatures, illustrations, written texts etc.)
- Making use of real events (places, processes, progresses etc.)
- Making use of objects (real or model)
- Making use of archive ( images from archives or gathered from different sources)
- Two or three dimensional animation
- Dramatization

### **TELEVISION BROADCAST**

Broadcasting of the television programmes of the Open Education Faculty has been accomplished by means of Turkey Radio and Television Broadcasting Company (TRT) with the approval of the Counsel of Ministers. Before each academic year, the Open Education Faculty requests broadcasting time from this institution, and the hours suitable are reserved for the Open Education Faculty broadcastings. Broadcastings are shown on TRT 4, an educational channel, everyday during 34 weeks in that academic year. During weekdays the broadcasting which lasts 3 hours is rebroadcasted at night. There is no repetition of the weekend broadcast. For videotapes prepared as serial according to broadcasting time, the order of the tapes is sent to Ankara. In the serials, besides the lesson programmes, there are also programmes such as News from Anadolu University and short programmes. The Open Education Faculty television broadcasting covers a 3-hour broadcast reserved by another institution. During this time, there may be several lessons of the same department one after the other. Not to bore students and enable them to get ready for the next lesson, in this academic year, a new project was set up. Between the lesson programmes are sprinkled three minute-short programmes. With these programmes, which are generally documentary, it has been aimed at giving a cultural

education as well. For this broadcasting year, nearly 70 short programmes have been prepared.

Here is the Open Education Faculty television broadcasting hours:  
Every weekday: 10:00 a.m.-13:00 p.m. On Saturday 18:00-21:00, on Sunday, 18:00-22:00.

Broadcasting days and hours of these programmes are gathered in a broadcasting catalogue and sent to the learner at the beginning of the academic year. The broadcasting programme is also available on the web site of the Anadolu University (<http://www.anadolu.edu.tr>).

Live television broadcasts of the Open Education Faculty has been executed in the Open Education Faculty studios by means of a transponder rented from TRT.( personal communication, February 2000, Anadolu University, Radio-TV Production Centre, The Presidency of Broadcast Planning and Coordination Unit)

## **THE WAYS OF USE TELEVISION AT OPEN EDUCATION FACULTY**

### **Student support**

Pettit, in the presentation “Learning Swimming on Your Own” related to the learner support systems, points out that all distance education course elements can present learner support (Pettit, 1998, p.259). With this in mind, it is natural to use television, a multifunctional tool, in providing student support. Gibson emphasizes that supporting the students, though expensive, is a significant factor in passing from information to learning. (Gibson: 1998 pp.247-249) Rowntree remarks that learners face some difficulty and problems in their own environment while they are learning and he also states that they may feel worried as the result of this. He lists these problems as feeling of being unable to learn on his own, fear of failure, and feeling like an outsider due to being outside of the faculty environment. (Rowntree, 1994, p. 218) In brief, while experts emphasize the importance of learner support, they also make clear the need of individual support. With this respect, television at Open Education Faculty has characteristics of a massive support system rather than individual one. It can be said that television at the Open Education Faculty is in a position to assist in basic support services as well as in content.

### **The Support Role of Television Programmes of units Content**

Television programmes at the Open Education Faculty give the following services with the purpose of learner support.

- **Single Lessons:** In these programmes, broadcasted at the beginning of each project, in the overall purpose of the project expectation from the learners, educational technologies and the way that learners make use of these technologies as well as the introduction to the lesson are given.

- **Selected Units:** These are serials prepared with the purpose of supporting sections selected from the course syllabus. The subject matter choice of such serial programmes has been selected by the person in charge of the project, the director and the expert group. At the end of the choice of this committee, unit sections or contents within that unit section that need to be adapted for television are selected. For this reason, the number of each television programme is different.
- **Full Units:** is a concept of transmitting the content of certain lesson via television parallel to the books. This has been accepted more and more in past years. Programmes have been used in accordance with the number of units for each lesson of each project. While renovation continues, some programme serials, which are still current and produced with this consideration, are still broadcasted. But it is also planned that these programmes should be renovated in time. (see “College Of Engineering of Idoha” for this classification)
- **Teleconference Lectures** is a method effectuates the communication between groups or individuals who are located in two or more places. In this way of communication, sound, view, information and other elements of television can be brought together. As Garisson pointed out, this method facilitates the real synchronous communication between participants. This communicational capacity brings about good results with visual (transferred by Lynn Oliver, 1994, pp.171-172).

Video conference system, another way of using teleconferencing, is used as a way of overcoming the problems of travel that interactive meetings will cause. This system can be extensively and effectively used as it decreases the cost, develops work applications and speeds up decision making. In video conferencing, better use of human sources can contribute to education. As information is conveyed not only with words but also together pictures, notable information could be presented from an important person to the people flexibly, quickly, pragmatically and most important than all interactively, that is to say two-way interaction. Although use of video conference systems in distance education is costly, it is obvious that it will be as effective as interactive education due to the fact that the system makes the communication possible with live presentations. Because this makes information exchange, asking question, influencing the ideas, problem solving, gaining new ideas and visual information is possible (Cora, 1996, p. 104).

The Open Education Faculty, having teleconference systems, has practiced this distance education practice using the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Project and has begun to give academic counseling services through this system. In practice, the expert has all the equipment to use all the written and visual materials.



- **Selected Units:** These are serials prepared with the purpose of supporting sections selected from the course syllabus. The subject matter choice of such serial programmes has been selected by the person in charge of the project, the director and the expert group. At the end of the choice of this committee, unit sections or contents within that unit section that need to be adapted for television are selected. For this reason, the number of each television programme is different.
- **Full Units:** is a concept of transmitting the content of certain lesson via television parallel to the books. This has been accepted more and more in past years. Programmes have been used in accordance with the number of units for each lesson of each project. While renovation continues, some programme serials, which are still current and produced with this consideration, are still broadcasted. But it is also planned that these programmes should be renovated in time. (see “College Of Engineering of Idoha” for this classification)
- **Teleconference Lectures** is a method effectuates the communication between groups or individuals who are located in two or more places. In this way of communication, sound, view, information and other elements of television can be brought together. As Garisson pointed out, this method facilitates the real synchronous communication between participants. This communicational capacity brings about good results with visual (transferred by Lynn Oliver, 1994, pp.171-172).

Video conference system, another way of using teleconferencing, is used as a way of overcoming the problems of travel that interactive meetings will cause. This system can be extensively and effectively used as it decreases the cost, develops work applications and speeds up decision making. In video conferencing, better use of human sources can contribute to education. As information is conveyed not only with words but also together pictures, notable information could be presented from an important person to the people flexibly, quickly, pragmatically and most important than all interactively, that is to say two-way interaction. Although use of video conference systems in distance education is costly, it is obvious that it will be as effective as interactive education due to the fact that the system makes the communication possible with live presentations. Because this makes information exchange, asking question, influencing the ideas, problem solving, gaining new ideas and visual information is possible (Cora, 1996, p. 104).

The Open Education Faculty, having teleconference systems, has practiced this distance education practice using the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Project and has begun to give academic counseling services through this system. In practice, the expert has all the equipment to use all the written and visual materials.

distance education as a second study (doctors, engineer, etc.) or those who have an interesting personality (such as being at the age of 70 or over) or students with degrees are chosen. In other word, suggestions which are encouraging and motivating to other students are reported by the student himself.

- **Communication Lines:** This part takes the questions from students. Among the questions forwarded to the Open Education Faculty Communication Centre those which were frequently asked or chosen according to the order of importance are replied to in a programme where there is an announcer and an authority.

It has been observed that this programme has reached its goals. For instance, after the announcement of the test exam on the Open Education Faculty web site, the number of the visitors to the web site increased and more questions about this exam were received. (personal communication, February 2000, Anadolu University, Radio-TV Production Centre, The Presidency of News Team)

## **FUTURE OF THE TELEVISION AT OPEN EDUCATION FACULTY**

Sherry states that research consistently shows that television motivates the learners by attracting him/her and increases of the interest in the learning process (Sherry, 1996). Taking this and the possibilities television has provided into consideration, the use of television as a supportive educational tool at the Open Education Faculty will continue in the coming years as it better since the beginning. Especially with the studies started by the DEPU. With planning television along other materials, it has been aimed at meeting the expectations of the students and using more effectively the Open Education Faculty has the necessary infrastructure to use television to realize for many purposes. But programmes being carried on by another institution are one of the obstacles in this field. However it must be stated that the programmes have been broadcasted on a nation wide channel. Additionally Turksat satellite, which is in the process of national structure, and telecommunication systems are being used when necessary for Open Education Faculty services by paying the fee. Live programmes and teleconference are realized by means of these technologies. In the coming years, besides record on tape broadcasting, live television broadcast and teleconference are expected to continue to grow.

## REFERENCES

Alkan, C. (1999). Eğitim Teknolojisi ve Uzaktan Eğitimin Kavramsal Boyutları=Educational Technology and Conceptual Dimension of Distance Education. Uzaktan Eğitim Dergisi, 1999 Yaz-1999 Kis. Uzaktan Eğitim Vakfı, Ankara, Turkey, 5-10.

Anadolu University, Distance Education Planning Unit

Anadolu University, Radio-Television Production Centre, Television News Team.

Anadolu University, Radio-Television Production Centre, Broadcast Planning and Coordination Unit.

Bates, A. W.(1998). Television, Learning and Distance Education. Journal of Educational Television. Val.14, No.3, 213-225.

College of Engineering University of Idaho (october 1995). Guide 5-Instructional Television. Distance Education at a Glance.  
<http://www.uidaho.edu/evo/dist5.html>

Cora, A. (1998). Uzaktan Eğitimde Telekonferansın Rolü=The Role of the Teleconference at Distance Education. Türkiye Birinci Uluslararası Uzaktan Eğitim Sempozyumu Bildirileri. Uzaktan Eğitim Vakfı, Ankara, Turkey, 104-112

Gibson, Dr. C. C. (1998). Supporting the Distance Learner in Context. Türkiye İkinci Uluslararası Uzaktan Eğitim Sempozyumu Bildirileri. Uzaktan Eğitim Vakfı, Ankara, turkey, 545-550.

Gokce, G. (1997). Televizyon Programı Yapımcılığı ve Yönetmenliği=To Make Producing and Directing at Television Programme. Der Yayınları, İstanbul.

Hizal, A. (1983). Uzaktan Ogretim Surecleri ve Yazili Gerecler=Distance Teaching Process and Print Materials. Ankara Universitesi Egitim Fakultesi Yayinlari, Ankara, Turkey.

Kaymas, S. (1999). Gelismis ve Gelismekte Olan Ulkelerde Radyo ve Televizyonla Yapilan Uzaktan Egitim Yayinciligi=Distance Education Broadcasting in Developing and Developed Countries. Uzaktan Egitim Dergisi 1998 Yaz-1999 Kis. Uzaktan Egitim Vakfi , Ankara, Turkey, 73-85.

Kilic, L. (1998). Televizyon Egitim Programlarinda Yapim-Yonetim= Production and Directing at Television Educational Programmes. Anadolu Universitesi AOF Yayinlari, Eskisehir, Turkey.

Oliver, E. L. (1994). Video Tools for Distance Education. Distance Education: Strategies and Tools. Ed: B. Willis, Educational technology Publications, Englewood Cliff, New Jersey.

Pettit, Mr. J. (1998). Learning To Swim Alone. Turkiye İkinci Uluslararası Uzaktan Egitim Sempozyumu Bildirileri. Uzaktan Egitim Vakfi, Ankara, Turkey, 259-267.

Potashnik, M.-Capper, J. ( March 1998) Distance Education: Growth and Diversity Table 2: Average cost Per number of students for each distance education technology Finance and Development, Volume 35, Number 1. <http://www.worldbank.org/fandd/english/0398/articles/0110398.htm>

Rowntree, D. (1994). Exploring Open and Distance Learning The Open University. Kogan Page, Great Britain.

Sherry, L. (1996). Issues in Distance Learning. Instructional Journal of Educational Telecommunication 1(4). 337-365. <http://www.cudenver.edu/~Isherry/pubs/issues.html>

Turan, E. (1994). Medyanin Siyasi Hayata Etkileri- Effects of The Media To Politic Life. Irfan Yayıncılık, İstanbul, Turkey.