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## Training and Teaching English in Corporate set up: the Dichotomy

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### ABSTRACT

Training is any planned activity designed and performed to help an individual or a group to perform a job or a task effectively. The need for training arises when there is a gap between what the employer requires and what the employees are able to deliver. The difference between the entry level and the target level of a learner or a group of learners is the training gap. A training gap highlights what the focus of training should be. It refers to what needs to be achieved on a particular course. It is arrived at by establishing the entry level and needs analysis. The training gap relates only to the differences between current level and the target level as defined by the job needs. It may not be uniform across the different language skills nor will the gap be uniform within a skills area.

It is seen in various organizations that training helps in career progression and should be planned to meet corporate goals and objectives. It must be treated as a development process rather than as a series of isolated events

The competitiveness among organizations leads them to conduct training programmes for their employees so that they can upgrade their skills and become self-reliant.

To understand the concept of training better, we need to look at the characteristics of training and education

### 1. Introduction

Training is any planned activity designed and performed to help an individual or a group to perform a job or a task effectively. The need for training arises when there is a gap between what the employer requires and what the employees are able to deliver. The difference between the entry level and the

target level of a learner or a group of learners is the training gap. A training gap highlights what the focus of training should be. It refers to what needs to be achieved on a particular course. It is arrived at by establishing the entry level and needs analysis. The training gap relates only to the differences between current level and the target level as defined by the job needs. It may not be uniform across the different language skills nor will the gap be uniform within a skills area.

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To understand the concept of training better, we need to look at the characteristics of training and education

## **2. Characteristics of Education and Training:**

Education broadens the mind, increases knowledge and understanding without necessary or immediate evidence of behavior change. Organisations and individuals search for an inexpensive change in behavior from training. Training demands an immediate change in behavior. Training enables people to try to do things practically and this is often different from the theoretical inputs derived from education. Training begins with employment analysis, knowing the talents, knowledge and attitudes needed. Identifying the gap between the talents, knowledge and attitudes is vital so as to realize the objectives for the training session. The training process is then administered to succeed in the specified standard.

Thus a training plan may be a systemic process that involves- deciding what has got to be learned, defining explicitly a learning objective, arriving at an idea to satisfy the target, enacting the plan and checking whether the target has been met.

The real difference between education and training is that of “purpose”. Education isn't geared to employability. It equips individuals with the potential for applying their knowledge domain to the wants of any work situation. The output of education is academic excellence-the students acquire a standard agreed standard which standard is itself graded. Education underpins training therein the upper the extent of education; the greater the potential complexity of coaching which will be undertaken.

Alison Hardingham(1996) in *Designing Training* recognizes characteristics of training in contrast with general education. In his view, education is designed mainly for children and young people where the emphasis is on knowledge transfer. The objectives for learning are general rather than specific. He refers to education as ‘normal’, i.e., often what everyone in a particular age group is doing. In contrast, training is mainly for adults with emphasis on change in behavior. The objectives for learning are tightly focused. He refers to training as ‘special’, i.e., ‘time is taken off’ normal’ work activities to do it. He further

highlights the challenges faced in training. The major challenge will be to facilitate change in adults, whose patterns of behaving, ways of behaving, ways of viewing the world are established. The learner must be relevant, important, and valuable to the possessed skills and experience of the individuals. The main aim of training would be to bring about a continuing change in a person's behavior by means of a finite intervention and to ensure that change continues outside the training context.

### **3. Language Training Vs Language Teaching/Education:**

In many studies it has been observed that the terms training and education are contrastive concepts (the term language teaching and education has been used interchangeably in this study; we are referring to the way English is being taught in any educational institution; a school, a college or any academic set up.)

The distinction between the terms 'education' and 'training' has been emphasized by Peters, R.S. in his writings on education and by many other writers.

R.S. Peters in *Ethics and Education* (1966) explores the implications of 'education' and 'training'. He tests the hypothesis that 'trained' suggests the development of competence in a limited skill or mode of thought whereas 'educated' suggests a linkage with a wider system of beliefs. A 'trained mind' tackles particular problems that are posed in a rigorous manner. An 'educated mind' suggests much more awareness of the different facets and dimensions of such problems.

Training suggests the acquisition of appropriate appraisals and habits of response in limited conventional situations; it lacks the wider cognitive implications of 'education'. With examples Peters tries to point out that training has application when a skill or competence has to be acquired which is to be exercised in relation to a specific end or function or in accordance with the principles of specific mode of thought, or practice. Training has its natural home in the realm of skills where something has to be done or manipulated. He then, contrast it with 'education' makes the point that with 'education', the matter is different. A person is never described as 'educated' in relation to any specific end, function, or mode of thought. It is not something that pertains to a person in respect of his competence in any specialized skill. When we refer to someone as 'trained', the person has gone through some sort of discipline routine, has performed certain kind of operation in a specific and skilful way. He argues that 'education' involves the intentional transmission of what is worthwhile i.e., it has a necessary implication that something valuable or worthwhile is going on.

Peters explains the difference between 'training' and 'education' with the help of an illustration from the field of physical training. He says that 'physical training' merely suggests disciplining the body in relation to a narrowly conceived end such as, physical fitness; 'physical education' suggests the cultivation of physical fitness as a necessary foundation for a balanced way of life.

Education does not pertain to a person to a person in respect of his competence in any specialized skill, activity, or mode of thought.

In his article 'What is an Educational Process?' in *The Concept of Education* (1967) Peters gives a detailed description of the education process. He also contrasts training with education. He says education has no particular process, it is like 'reform'. Similarly, people become educated by their own process and attain certain standards. 'Being educated' is relative to the processes of education.

Education is inseparable from the values of judgment. When we educate people it commits us to morally legitimate procedures, and whatever is learnt must be regarded as worthwhile, morally objectionable.

Talking of the achievement aspect of education, Peters mentions that for a person to be educated, he/she should develop a conceptual scheme in the area in which he/she is liked and must have a fair amount of information by means of it. To be educated implies the possession of knowledge and understanding of principles. At this stage Peters mentions that training always suggests confinement. People are trained for jobs. No one can be trained in a general sort of way. This lack of specificity is suggested by 'education'. Another aspect of knowledge requirement built into education is the attitudinal aspect i.e. the knowledge which a person must possess to be called educated must be built into their way of looking at things. Schools and university curricula are criticized as the academic inputs are not goal oriented. But it is actually this knowledge gained during education that is the basis for future application.

In education a learner must know what he is doing, must be conscious, understand, or remember. These involve attention and action, activity, or performance. The achievement of being educated is complex and as already mentioned involves mastery of some skills, knowledge, and understanding of principles. Peters further adds that it is impossible that there can be just one educational process. 'training' is also an educational process; a process involving the learning of skills. It also has application whenever anything coming up to a clear-cut specification has to be learnt. Education suggests more of transmitting the underlying rationale, the understanding of principles lying behind a body of knowledge.

H.G Widdowson in *Learning Purposes and Language Use*(1983) talks of ESP (English for specific purposes) and GPE(General Purposes English). He calls ESP a 'training concept and GPE an 'education' concept. He differentiates ESP from GPE in the terms of purpose. In training one establishes as precisely as possible what learners need the language for and then designs a course which converges on that need. It is an eventual practical use to which the language will be put in achieving occupational and academic aims. Whereas, in 'education' the purpose is the formulation of objectives which achieves a potential for later practical use. If education is to develop a general capacity for language use, training is to develop a restricted competence to cope with a specified set of tasks. Widdowson notes that the central problem in education is to know how to define objectives so that they project students the achievement

of aims, how to fashion particular subjects so that they have relevance beyond themselves.

Widdowson has characterized ESP as an area of training rather than education because the purpose of GPE is understood as a matter of objective i.e. pedagogic constructs designed to facilitate learning and to develop a capacity in the learners for achieving such aims for themselves, and ESP as a matter of aim i.e., eventual behavioral targets. Since the actual practical needs for the language can be described in advance, they can represent a quite precise specification for the course. This aim-oriented nature of ESP allows its practitioners problems of pedagogy.

In education , the actual use of language is a vague and distant prospect whereas in training, actual language use is immediately brought to the foreground and into focus so that it serves as both the immediate objectives and the eventual aim of learning.

The implications of the study show that within Communicative Language Teaching the assumption has sometimes been made that adult language needs are to a large extent concerned with interpersonal communication. Interpersonal, informational and creative use of language, culture and general knowledge, and organizational and thinking skills are required at junior levels, though in varying degrees of need depending on the work sector and the type of job. The study confirms that the workplace communication situation is far more complex than it is supposed to be. The study also shows that employees with a technical and business education are very much in need of 'educational' qualities. It is necessary to provide and meet the needs of students preparing to function in an increasingly global and multicultural workplace. Post-education training continues and fine tunes this process in line with individual and workplace specific requirements.

In the view of John D. Folley, Jr, training brings about learning. Folley ,Jr. in his article 'The learning Process' in *Training and Development handbook* (1967: 34, 35) defines

Training is an overt process, a sequence of experiences, a series of opportunities to learn, in which the trainee is exposed in some more or less systematic way to certain materials or events. The trainee's behavior is supposed to be modified by means of this process so that after it is completed he behave in some way that is different from the way he behaved before training. Training is what is done to the trainee. .... Training is a process by which the trainer expects to bring about a change in response to a given environment or set of circumstances.

Similarly N.Ramaswami in *A Handbook of Training and Development* (1992) defines training as a planned process to modify attitude, knowledge, skill, behavior etc., through learning experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities. He further says that training is a critical activity since it helps in improving skills, attitude and knowledge. The only area of possible differential advantage for an organization over the others is the quality of its human inputs-people's skills, capabilities, accomplishments and activities.

Content or subject matter area covered in Education are broad in nature so that students can gain general understanding and skills to adapt in society or get absorbed in jobs. Education in general and higher education in particular emphasize development of attitudes and knowledge. Skills are also imparted to some extent.

However, the aim of training is to provide job-skills to improve job performance. Thus it is said that education is generally for knowing more whereas training is for behaving differently.

Widdowson in *Learning Purpose and Language Use* (1983:17,18) mentions language training being different from language teaching. Language teaching develops an understanding of principles in order to extend the range of their application. Referring to Haliday, Widdowson says, education in a language presupposes the internalization of “meaning potential”

Widdowson differentiates education and training as differences between skills and abilities. From his previous article written in 1978, he quotes “the purpose of training is to impart a set of skills, which are, in effect’ a repertoire of responses tagged with appropriate stimulus indicators”. Education develops abilities for the individual’s adjustment to changing circumstances. Thus abilities provide for further learning through creative endeavor: what is given can be altered by what is new.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Thus we talk of education or general language teaching, the eventual use of language being learned is not clearly recognized, the purposes are specified by objectives, pedagogic constructs which seek to provide for the achievement of practical communicative aims when occasion arises after the completion of the course.

Unlike education, with training we associate terms like restricted repertoire, restricted aims, a set of behavior, and behavioral change. The quality of restrictedness in training as opposed to openness in education makes training a very intensive activity with immediate results.

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