Elementary?

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Volume I of AECT’s impressive effort to define educational technology was fourteen years in the making. It is composed of two parts: the definition statement (which is complete) and the glossary (which is not).

The definition statement occupies the first 150 pages and consists of a series of essays dealing with educational technology as a theoretical construct, as a field of endeavor, and as a profession. A summary of the definition, which has sixteen different parts and has been endorsed by AECT as its official definition, can be found in Chapter I. This section also includes a model of the domain of educational technology—a concept that is further explored in the new sound filmstrip Understanding Educational Technology ($19.95 member, $24.95 nonmember), now available from AECT.

Chapter II serves as an introduction to the definition section; in it the arrangement of subsequent chapters is described. Chapters III and IV consider educational technology as a theoretical construct, taking into account historical developments as well as current thought. In Chapters V and VI the intellectual techniques and practical applications of educational technology as a field of endeavor are considered, while Chapters VII, VIII, and IX address the question of educational technology as a profession. Chapter X is an evaluation of the entire first section of the book.

The remaining 215 pages make up the glossary portion. Users of the glossary are reminded that it is not yet complete; it contains only terms relating to the development and production of learning resources. Terms related to the management of learning resources are slated to be covered in volume two, scheduled for release in late 1978.

The glossary is not in a straight alphabetical format; rather it employs a somewhat cumbersome classified presentation that requires instruction in its use (provided on pages 153–59). The glossary consists of sections labeled “functions”; these include theory, research, design, production of materials, evaluation-selection, materials, devices, and techniques.

Each function includes an alphabetical glossary, plus, in some cases, lists of related but undefined terms. The theory section, for example, contains a glossary plus vocabulary lists drawn from communication theory, learning theory, perception theory, and systems/cybernetics/information theory. Readers needing definitions of terms in the related terms listings are advised to consult other appropriate publications.

The majority of the definitions given in the glossary section are drawn from existing sources (with citations given). Some, however, have been developed especially for this publication and are so identified. Occasionally there are conflicting definitions, as in the cases of “system” and “programmed instruction.”

Although some conflicting definitions are presented deliberately, one suspects that there are some inadvertent conflicts as well. On pages 2–4 of the definition statement, the authors are at pains to explain that educational technology and instructional technology are not the same thing; on page 163 of the glossary, however, the domain of educational technology is defined as “a model which shows the elements and interrelationships of instructional technology,” and on the following page exactly the same definition is given for the model of the domain of instructional technology.

The classified glossary format creates two problems for users that might have been avoided by choice of a straight alphabetical format. First, the user must know the function in which the desired term is most likely to occur. An alphabetical index is provided for the unlucky user who is not so prepared, but consulting it requires one more step in the search for definitional clarity. Second, the classified format necessitates the repetition of terms applicable to more than one function—a feature that doubtless added to the length of this volume. “Self-instruction,” for example, is repeated under techniques, design, and theory, while “kit” occurs in theory, design, and materials.

The glossary makers have thoughtfully provided a mechanism whereby suggestions and criticisms from glossary users can be communicated; a set of glossary input cards are printed at the back of the book, and glossary users are invited to make use of them.—Cathleen Flanagan, Department of Educational Systems and Learning Re-
sources, Graduate School of Education, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.


This book, a greatly revised version of Mrs. Stone's Historical Approach to Library Development (University of Illinois, Graduate School of Library Science. Occasional Papers, no.83, 1967) opens with a fifty-three-page chronological chart in eight columns: private, special, and government libraries; academic libraries—school libraries; public libraries; technical services; legislation; publications; professional activities; and buildings and miscellaneous. A section of some 270 double-column pages follows in which each item is expanded into a paragraph or two, with an abbreviated citation to the source quoted or paraphrased. Approximately 1,000 sources are listed in the bibliography; the most recent are dated 1975.

This review is concerned with academic libraries, but items pertaining to academic libraries are found in all sections except two. This scattering is one of the first difficulties encountered in using the book. Items about library regulations, for example, may be found under professional activities, technical services, or academic libraries. The appointment of librarians is sometimes reported under professional activities, sometimes under academic libraries. Catalogs of the libraries may be noted under technical services, publications, or academic libraries. If there is a logical plan for this arrangement, it is not apparent.

A more serious difficulty is that a number of important sources have not been consulted. Among them are John M. Jennings' Library of the College of William and Mary in Virginia, 1693–1793 (Charlottesville: Univ. Pr. of Virginia, 1968), and his "Notes on the Original Library of the College of William and Mary in Virginia" (Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America 41:258-67 [1947]); Henry B. Van Hoesen's Library of the College or University in the English Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England in America, 1767–1782 (Providence, 1938); Papers in Honor of Andrew Keogh (New Haven, 1938), a storehouse of information about the early Yale Library; Herbert and Clara Schneider's Samuel Johnson, President of King's College: His Career and Writings (New York: Columbia Univ. Pr., 1929), valuable for both Yale and King's College; Ezra Stile's Literary Diary (New Haven: Yale Univ. Pr., 1901), which deserves to be cited rather than secondary reports about him; and neither Thomas Hardy's College Literary Societies (New York: Pageant, 1971) nor his shorter account in the Library Quarterly (29:1–26, 94–112 [Jan., April 1959]).

Still more difficulties appear in the text. The section on academic libraries opens with a 300-word account of Henrico College and a similar plan in New England, although neither the colleges nor their libraries ever existed. Some myths about early college libraries are perpetuated, e.g., the gift of William Ames' books to Harvard and Thomas Clap's account of the founding of Yale. The gift of Elihu Yale's books in 1718 is mentioned only in connection with the sale of duplicates thirteen years later. The early library gift to the College of New Jersey was from Jonathan Belcher, not Jeremy.

The appointment of Charles Bellini as librarian of the College of William and Mary was in 1780, not 1760. To cite 1723 for the establishment of this library ignores the gift of Governor Francis Nicholson's library in 1698. What happened in 1723 was the erection of the Brafferton building for Indian students and an attempt to tap the bequest of Robert Boyle for support of the general library.

The inventory of the Harvard Library ordered in 1707 was surely not an unusual event; the laws of 1697 required annual inventories. The note on John Harvard's library omits the most recent identification of the titles by Henry J. Cadbury. The 1848 index to periodical articles in the library of the Brothers in Unity at Yale, which preceded Poole's Index, is surely worth noting. And, regrettably, there are other slips.

Because of its uncritical use of sources, unpredictable arrangement of items, and too-frequent errors, this book is a less than satisfactory guide to American academic li-