CHAPTER 1

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In the old educational system, the students and the teachers were tied to the passive character of learning and teaching. Reading and listening to the teachers were the only method of learning, while oral lecturing and writing down on the chalkboard were the only method of teaching in the schools. This certainly paralysed the intellectual and creative powers of the students for they had no chance of learning by doing, by testing, by experimentation or by applying their own experiences.

According to John Dewey, schools have responsibilities to provide opportunities for children to learn from their own experiences and creative activities. Only by this way, the children can develop their minds and keep pace with the changing situations and the demands of life.

The educators of today have accepted instructional aids as one of the most important ingredients to effective teaching. Transferring knowledge to the learners is not merely by repeating the verbal meanings - by words and letters, to them. Other equally important sources of knowledge are through hearing, touching, seeing and doing by the learner. Verbal symbols, the spoken and written words
and number, are the most abstract form of instructional material. Connection between these symbols and their meanings is rather arbitrary. Their meanings have no perceptual link to reality. Direct experience is purposeful participation in a real life situation in which the learner accepts responsibility for the outcome of the experience.

Direct experience of is the way to better understanding and long-lasting learning. All the aids which help attain these direct experiences and vicarious experiences are called "Audio-Visual Aids". "To be a competent teacher today" suggest Wittich and Schuller, is "to understand the method available in the classroom for providing all manners of needed and meaningful learning experiences, and to understand audio-visual techniques as a means of accomplishing learning goals efficiently".

Edgar Dale stated that "Visual and auditory techniques offer great opportunities for improving learning".

No Clusky mentioned that "Audio-Visual aids have a high value to the achievement in the instruction of every subject in every level of teaching".

Adolf Ferrier pointed out that "The school of today too often strives violently to stuff the young minds with verbal reasoning and abstractions far beyond their grasp that the adolescent has his intellectual growth stunted by the need of memorizing endless large doses of material given in the curriculum".

Blount and Klausmeier wrote, "Many students cannot get sufficient meaning from reading alone. They would profit from the seeing and hearing, looking and listening, experiences made possible with those audio-visual materials that concretize the abstract. Events, concepts, and processes become more meaningful to the student when audio-visual aids are used to help him better conceptualize what the printed or spoken words attempt to describe."

The time has changed. Today there is a greater demand for education resulting in the increase of the school enrolment. The students come from different home backgrounds. The schools have become bigger and the students have to be taught in large groups. If we wish to increase the productivity of education without increasing the wastage, we have to use every device and every medium that the educational technologists can devise, as Brymore Jones Committee stated, "There is a wide-spread need for the provision of a co-ordinated communication service in most academic institutions.".

1. Adolf Ferier, "Activity School". P.6
Besides, numerous researches and experiments have shown the worth of audio-visual aids in the teaching-learning process. While technology has been embraced by industry and business, little attention has been paid to its application in the field of education. According to many educators, we are on the threshold of a new era in education labeled by some as the "Communication Revolution". It is predicted that this era will see the broad application and use of technology in the instructional process.

Educators themselves differ as to the role to be played by technology in education. This has created problems which have been summarized by Finn as follows:

1. Those connected professionally with education have not developed a well-conceived point of view concerning technology and education;

2. Because of this lack of a clear point of view and because of certain cultural lag factors naturally associated with education, the acceleration of technological development has tended to by-pass the entire educational enterprise until very recently;

3. Professionals in education are not prepared to deal with the tremendous impact that technology is beginning to have on the instructional processes itself as, by the technological process of extention, technology begins to invade education in full force, and

(4) the absence of an understanding and a point of view among the professionals creates a situation where the Neo-Technocraft not only can but are beginning to move into the field of instruction.

Since the utilization of audio-visual aids in the instructional process is increasing in the developed countries and has effectively helped in teaching and learning, the Ministry of Education of Thailand has also realized its significance. An Audio-Visual Aids Centre in the Ministry was established in Bangkok in 1963 and audio-visual aids departments are managed in the various secondary schools throughout the country. The teacher training institutions have trained new teachers in this technique for which finances have been provided by the government.

The teachers, however, had to face difficulties in the utilization of audio-visual aids in the schools. Some of these difficulties are those that have been discussed by Finn, besides the lack of sufficient audio-visual materials and equipments or suitable school buildings, and lack of appropriate training to teachers in this field. Though these are serious problems but they can certainly be overcome if the real causes of failure can be found out and suitable methods adopted to eliminate them.

The Objectives of the Study

This study aims at finding out the problems connected with the slow progress of the utilization or implementation of the scheme referred
in the previous paragraph and to offer suggestions for improving the situation with special reference to secondary schools in Thailand.

The study will be limited to the secondary schools in the capital of the country (Bangkok and Chonburi) and the schools of some advanced areas where the enrolment is not less than one thousand (which may be called a fairly large school). The schools selected will be both public and private existing in these areas. The schools selected for this study are considered fairly advanced and fairly large enough to have better chances of improving their conditions and providing facilities than smaller schools or schools in the rural areas. Moreover, the author has looked forward to the future need of the country. The country faces today the problems of insufficient schools. This problem will become more and more acute with greater demand for education. The schools of the future would be larger and there is a possibility of small-sized schools getting less in number. In the opinion of the author the schools with large enrolment will be more efficient, economically feasible and better administered.

This study will be a field study based mainly on survey method. The investigation will cover all the areas which may be affected by:

1. The attitude of the three important groups in the schools—the school administrators, the teachers, and the students.
(2) The knowledge and ability of the teachers in the application of audio-visual aids in actual classroom situations.

(3) The frequency of actual utilization of audio-visual aids.

(4) The schools providing audio-visual materials and equipment to their teachers and students.

(5) The schools' audio-visual service.

The data will be based on the responses of the questionnaires sent to a number of secondary schools in Thailand. Three groups of personnel of each school will be requested to respond. These are the school principals, the teachers, and the students. When the nature and the needs of the required problems in those schools are revealed, some proper guidelines for solving the problems will be suggested.

The author hopes that this study will be helpful to the Ministry of Education, the educators, the school principals, the school administrators, the teachers and other persons connected with instruction in the secondary schools in Thailand.