THE IMPACT OF LRC CONCEPT ON MEDIA EDUCATION

Dr. Robert H. Chang
Director of Library and AV Services
The University of Houston Downtown Campus
Houston, Texas

Abstract

The development of the learning-resources center concept and the development of the integrated library media education program in the U.S. were reviewed; studies related to library media education were examined; a curriculum for a fully integrated media education program was proposed; the importance of such a curriculum changed by library schools and educational technology departments was discussed.

American education is facing a revolutionary change influenced by modern educational technology. The focal point of this change is the emergence of the learning resources center concept on campuses of colleges and universities, and in shcools during recent years.

For students, expanding educational technology has two major advantages: it increases opportunities for independent study, and it provides a richer variety of courses and methods of instruction.

The Carnegie Commission of Higher Education (1972) urges that the library should occupy a central role in the instructional resources of educational institutions. It recommends that:

> The introduction of new technologies to help libraries continue to improve their services to increasing numbers of users should be given first priority in the efforts of college and universities, government agencies, and other agencies seeking to achieve more rapid progress in the development of instructional technology.(p. 51)

It is becoming increasingly obvious that a major portion of man's information resources will be in non-book formats, and that the library will be expected to assume the role of a learning center with programmed materials and access to electronic data banks and multi-media resources (Qunily, 1971, p. 35).

The evolution of libraries away from their traditional fucntion as repositories of books has paralled the evolution of audio-visual centers away from their traditional function as agencies for showing films. There has been a confluence of accelerated development in both areas which is inextricably interwoven with the technological revolution in education. The change in the cocept of the library has been demonstrated by the use of terms such as "Learning Resources Center," "Instructional Materials Center," and "Educational Resources Center," in the nation's elementary and secondary schools and its institutions of higher education.

The Development of the LRC Concept

Although the term "learning resources center" is relatively new, the LRC concept was born early in the 1930's when Louis Shores initiated the "library-college movement" (Black, 1971, p. 175). B. Lamar Johnson, R. Stafford North, Samueld Postlethwait, and Louis Shores are several of the many leading educators (Fusaro, 1970, p. 40) who have poineered an expanded concept of the library, the "library-college," in which the library is viewed as the media center where all the formats of man's knowledge, the "generic book" (Shores, 1973, p. 15), would be collected, organized, and disseminated, and where independent learning occurs. The philosophy of a unified program of audiovisual and printed services and resources in the individual school is one that has continuously grown and been strengthened in the last forty years.

The publishing of Standards of School Media Programs by ALA (American Library Association) and NEA (National Education Association) in 1969 marked the first vital victory of the crusade for unity. The 1969 *Standards* was replaced by *Media Programs: District and School* in 1975. The publication of the *Media Programs* demonstrates the continuing concern of ALA and AECT (Association for Educational Communications and Technology) for establishing and maintaining standards of excellence in media programs in schools throughout the nation.

More and more colleges and universities have combined their libraries and AV centers as learning resources centers in recent years. Ten percent of the 1,193 libraries surveyed by Sidney Foreman in 1968 (p. 486) indicated that they were involved in implementing some aspect of the learning resources center concept and 37 percent reported they were planning to introduce part of the concept at a future date. By November, 1970, there were over 300 colleges and universities carrying out experiments along Library College lines (Shores, 1970, p. 154). Another study done by Donald Nelson in 1971 indicates most of the major universities investigated (36 out of 58 respondents) favored combining the library and AV center into a single academic system. Among these, 10 universities already had a joint system (LRC), and 26 universities were anticipating such a change in the next five years (p. 10).

Although, at the present time, there is no generally accepted definition of a learning resources center, the primary function of the learning resources center is the facilitation of learning by students. Ellison (1972) pointed out that this is a "fundamental change from the concept of facilitating teaching by the faculty which traditional libraries and AV centers engaged to do" (p. 2). Learning resources centers should provide such services as "instructional research, evaluation of learning, course development, training services, production of instructional materials, instruc-

tional experimentation, and demonstration" (Eleventh Lake Okoboji, 1965, p. 40), along with "the regular library and audiovisual services of consultation, selection, dissemination, distribution and utilization of all instructional materials, information sources, and facilities in order to promote effective learning" (Ellison, p. 2). The *Guidelines for Two-Year College Learning Resources Programs* (ALA, 1972, p. 305) indicates that the learning resource center should include a library, audiovisual equipment and telecommunications, and should encompass instructional development functions and instructional system components. The *Guidelines* define the role and purposes of Learning Resources Programs as follows:

1. Learning Resources Programs exist to facilitate and improve learning.
2. Learning Resources Programs, like the instructional staff, are an integral part of instruction.
3. Learning Resources Programs provide a variety of services as an integral part of the instructional process.
4. Learning Resources Programs cooperate in the development of area, regional and state networks, consortia or systems. (p. 308)

ALA had issued the *Guidelines for Audio-Visual Services* in 1968. The issuing of the *Guidelines for Two-Year College Learning Resources Programs* jointly by ALA, AAJC (American Association of Community and Junior Colleges) and AECT in 1972 represented a significant breakthrough in the unifying movement.

James Brown (1970) sees that media and media services must be regarded as integral to the teaching-learning process. College and university librarians must begin to give more than lip service to providing a full range of communication services required in modern curricula. They must themselves understand, and be able to help others understand, how to use various communication media, processes and techniques (p. 35). It is suggested by the

American Library Association (1968) that: "The entire library staff should be fully conversant with the various types of materials and with the equipment necessary for their use" (p. 3). Traditional education programs for librarians and audiovisualists currently face a critical challenge: how may they be altered to suit the needs of a new breed of LRC professionals?

The Development of Integrated Library Media Education Programs

The integration of library and audiovisual services will inevitably affect the staffing structure and the responsibilities of libraries and AV centers. The need for learning resources center staff to acquire knowledge of the potential of the various media as instruction devices, and also of the equipment for applying media to the learning process to provide advice and assistance to users, will profoundly affect the role of the librarian by directly involving him in the learning process. The traditional role of the librarian will be changed "from one of being mainly a dispenser of learning materials to one of active participation in the dynamics of the teaching-learning process" (Kremple, 1968, p. 479). The role of "educational librarianship" (Christ, 1972, p. 141) opened a new era for the profession.

According to Shores (1973) the first library school with the concept of unifying library and media education was founded at Florida State University in 1947 (p. 9). Basic audiovisual instruction was incorporated into a required course, and into units for all other library science courses. Another unified department was organized in 1958 at Southern Illinois University. It was established "under the philosophy that all learning materials form a continuum, that the traditional dichotomy of print and non-print materials is largely an artifact based on tradition rather than on adminstrative efficiency or characteristics of the media" (Southern

Illinois University, 1974). Following this philosophy of the integration of all materials, the Department of Instructional Materials at SIU offers courses at undergraduate and graduate levels in librarianship, audiovisual technology, and combination of both. Other institutions which led in the unity concept of professional education were Purdue University, San Jose State University, St. Cloud State College, the University of Colorado, and Arizona State University.

The 1969 AASL (American Association of School Libraries, ALA) and DAVI (Department of Audiovisual Instrucation, NEA) *Joint Standards* contains some general statment concerning changes in the school media program.

> . . . In those universities and colleges having separate programs in library science and audiovisual instruction, the development of a unified or closely coordinated program is desirable. (pp. 13-14)

Needless to say, there are pros and cons concerning the unity concept. In contrast to many others, David Gilman (1970, p. 157) questioned whether joint standards and training can be effective. He felt that library programs and instructional technology (audiovisual) programs have different concerns and orientations. He said:

> These differences clearly necessitate that in most cases, the role of the instructional technologist be different from that of the school librarian. It is this difference which must characterize the future school media and technology programs and will characterize the future developments of instructional technology (p. 157).

William Oglesby (1971) analyzed and compared four contemporary personnel studies in the library and audiovisual fields (1969 *Standards for School Media Programs.* 1970 *Media Guidelines,* 1970 *Jobs in Instructional Media Study,* and 1970 *School Library Manpower Project).* He concluded that: "It seems rather clear . . .

that our fields are converging, if not becoming one and the same" (p. 72).

Studies Related to Integrated Media Education Programs

Six major studies have been conducted since 1940 on the subject of non-print media instruction in the library education: Irving Lieberman in 1955; E.T. Schofield in 1956; Herman L. Totten in 1966; Frederic R. Hartz in 1967; Totten and Mitchell in 1973, and Chang in 1975.

The focus of Lieberman's (1955) study was on the integration of audiovisual instruction with programs of traditional library education. The study reported that only 11 percent of the 61 library schools he surveyed offered separate audiovisual courses (p. 85).

Schofield's study carried out at Rutgers University in 1956 found that only 11 of the 23 accredited schools which answered his inquiry offered separated audiovisual courses (Hartz, 1967, p. 233).

Drawing from the two studies above, Hartz concluded that library schools are simply not offering the training necessary for the media specialist. Hartz's study, conducted in 1966, indicated that the situation has not improved significantly, He found that only 15 of the 32 accredited library schools responding to his inquiry offered separate audiovisual courses (p. 233). He commented that "the integration of all materials of communication. . . are being taught in library school by precept and not by example" (p. 234).

Totten's 1966 study determined the extent to which educational media are used in the teaching of library science in accredited American graduate library schools and analyzed the judgments of library science teachers relative to how effectively they were using media according to established criteria. Findings of the

study revealed that "the basic educational media (equipment and materials) are available to teachers and that teachers feel that educational media play neither a weak nor strong role in effective instruction" (p. 107).

The study by Totten and Mitchell (1973) sought to answer the following questions: 1) To what extent are non-print media courses made available to the current library science student" and 2) To what degree is non-print course work integrated into the general curriculum of graduate library school? (p. 58). After detailed analysis of data, the investigators concluded that "although library schools have come a long way in terms of their non-print media programs they are still merely at the beginning of their work in dealing with this problem" (p. 65).

Attitudes toward the LRC concepts and toward an integrated library science and educational technology program held by administrators of library schools and educational technology departments were investigated by Chang's study. (p. 38).

A total of 109 administrators' responses were used in the study. Through the use of Q analysis, a three type solution was produced. Type 1 was positive toward both the LRC concept and the integrated media education program. This group contained 67 administrators and accounted for 31.83 percent of the total variance. Type 2 was comprised of 17 administrators and accounted for 7.14 percent of the total variance. Type 2 agreed with the LRC concept but disagreed strongly with the notion of an integrated media education program. Type 3 included 25 administrators and accounted for 13.37 percent of the total variance. Type 3 was a somewhat heterogeneous group; these administrators avoided indication of either positive or negative attitudes toward the LRC concept and toward the integrated media education program (p. 61-63). Type 1 contained a large number of younger administrators and a large portion of integrated library media programs. Type 2 contained principally educa-

tional technology administrators. Type 3 contained primarily old library school administrators (p. 64).

In 1963, the graduate library schools of the country participated in a workshop under a U.S. Office of Education grant which resulted in the publication of *Proceedings of the National Conference on Implications of New Media for the Teaching of Library Science.* The importance of the new media in library education was recognized by the educators in the workshop. As pointed out by C. R. Carpenter,". . . relative to these demands new media and library instrumentation become integral parts of library operation . . . All of these demands create the needs of designing, planning and putting into effect new, revised, and advanced patterns of library education" (p. 18).

Library educators involved with non-print media have suggested many reasons for the failure of a non-print media impact on the library profession. Totten (1972) pointed out three major problems: 1) Lack of commitment of library science schools and their faculties, resulting in shortsighted content of library science media course; 2) negative attitudes of practicing librarians, and 3) lack of concern of the professional organization. According to Tooten, unless the individuals responsible for administering the media are convinced of the benefits to be derived from these materials, they will do little to support the program. In summarizing the plight of non-print media in library education, Totten had this to say:

> Most library educators are not committed to learning about, much less using, multi-media materials, the few multi-media courses which do exist are not adequate in intellectual contents or in technological preparation, as a result, practicing librarians are both ill-informed about and resistant to new media; furthermore, the American Library Association has failed to lead the way or even attempt to fill in some gaps. (p. 186).

Totten then concluded that "the vicious cycle return back to the hands of library educators, who, like it or not, must shoulder the responsibility of raising multi-media to a level of importance. They will be held accountable for the success or failure which media achieves within the profession" (p. 186).

Another library educator, Harold Goldstein (1967), saw the same symptom in library education. He commented that the media courses currently offered in library schools tend to be more concerned with the "nuts and bolts" aspects of the new media (p. 259). This can also be proved by checking the title of the ALA 1980 accredited library schools. Among 68 of them, there are only three schools using library (science) and media (educational technology) simultaneously.

Due to the content increase in both library science and educational technology fields, the curriculum for an idea integrated media education program should contain the following components:

I. foundation, philosophy, and history of librarianship and educational technology;
II. administration and management of various types of learning resources centers, including fiscal management, personnel management, collection development, automation, management by objectives, evaluation and selection of hardware, educational innovations, information management;
III. literature for various age groups;
IV. reference service, bibliographics of sciences, social sciences, humanities, legal, medical and government publications;
V. cataloging and classification;
VI. information storage and retrieval, network and on-line systems, system analysis;
VII. planning and production of AV materials, instructional

TV, photography, computer-assisted instruction, and telecommunication;

VIII. instructional development, communication theory and process, learning theory, educational psychology, statistics, measurement, testing design, system approach, curriculum foundations, and data processing;

IX. research methodology;

X. practicum.

Conclusions

Curricular change, or program change, inevitably is a slow and difficult process. Diversity of opinion concerning goals in professional education is manifested strongly among educators in the fields. It was unfortunate that the 1963 Chicago Conference on the Implications of the New Media for the Teaching of Library Science failed to produce a "revolution" in library education. However, due to the increasing importance of educational technology in the educational process and the rapid emergence of the learning resources center concept in colleges and universities, the educators of library science and educational technology now have a critical challenge. At a new library dedication ceremony at the University of Michigan at Dearborn, Terrel Bell, Secretary of U.S. Department of Education, recently commented that "the educational community has been remarkably indifferent to technology, but the educational structure of tomorrow can not be built with the handtools of yesterday" (Higher Education Daily, p. 3). He further warned that" . . . to ignore these powerful new tools because they don't fit the traditional idea of teaching and learning is more foolish" (p. 4). The author hopes that more and more educators in both library science and educational technology fields can join together and integrate their programs to meet the needs of the technological age.

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