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9. ABSTRACT

A report of the 1968 conference planning the study of Instructional Television (ITV) in El Salvador. Participants in the conference are listed, as well as the agenda and the various questions on the type of research to be done. The report ends with an outline of data to be collected during the first year of El Salvador's Education Reform for this research.

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Administrative Report No. 1
of the
Study of Instructional Television in El Salvador

FIRST MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Institute for Communication Research, Stanford University
Academy for Educational Development, New York and Washington

U.S. Agency for International Development

October, 1968

A planning conference on the study of instructional television in El Salvador was held at Stanford on 3 and 4 October, 1968. It was preceded by consultations between project personnel and individual members of the advisory group, and followed by further meetings and consultations intended to firm up the design of the research tasks approved in general terms at the conference.

Participants were:

William H. Allen, University of Southern California, Editor, A-V Communication Review;

Clifford Block, Educational Research, Agency for International Development;

John Clayton, Consultant, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare;

Stewart Dean, Deputy Director, El Salvador Educational Project;

Alvin C. Eurich, Academy for Educational Development (who acted as chairman);

James Fellows, Research Director, National Association of Educational Broadcasters;

Generoso Gil, Institute for Communication Research, Stanford;

Ronald Gross, Academy for Educational Development;

Stanley Handleman, Director, A.I.D. El Salvador Educational Mission;

H. Thomas James, Dean, School of Education, Stanford;

David Lingwood, Institute for Communication Research, Stanford;

Nathan Maccoby, Institute for Communication Research, Stanford;

John Mayo, Institute for Communication Research, Stanford;

Roman Mayorga, National Planning Council, Government of El Salvador;

Emile McAnany, Field Supervisor, El Salvador ITV Research;

William R. Odell, Chairman, Department of Educational Administration, Stanford;

Hugh Oppenheimer, Academy for Educational Development;

Benjamin C. Paul, Chairman, Department of Anthropology, Stanford;

Donald Roberts, Institute for Communication Research, Stanford;

Wilbur Schramm, Director, Institute for Communication Research, Stanford;

George Temp, Educational Testing Service, Berkeley;

Sidney Tickton, Academy for Educational Development.

Prof. Jerome Bruner, of Harvard, and Prof. Arthur Lumsdaine, of the University of Washington, were unable to attend.

The agenda for the two days was as follows:

1. The Conference

Purpose
Participants
Schedule and details

2. The Project

Progress of the educational changes
Status of the instructional television
Conditions for research

3. Research Needs

As seen in retrospect of other ITV projects: What would have helped them?

As seen by A.I.D.: What will help future project and policy decisions?

As seen by the directors of the El Salvador project: What will be most useful to us?

4. Research Plans and Patterns

Learning
 Attitudes
 Teaching styles
 Administrative studies
 Social effects

5. Further Advice

Making the product useful
 Manpower and consultation needs
 Other matters

After status reports on the progress of educational reform in El Salvador, and discussion of research needs led by participants in other large ITV projects (Samoa, Colombia, Jamaica), by representatives of AID, and by officials of the El Salvador educational project, much of the discussion focused on the following outline prepared by the Stanford communication research personnel:

WHAT RESEARCH SHOULD WE DO?

Some "practical" questions, and some ways of answering them

1. What difference is the new program making in children?

a. Are they learning as much as we expect them to?

[The obvious time to begin to study this is with the beginning of the first year of the new televised curriculum, in February, 1969. Before-and-after tests, in February and October, and perhaps also in June, seem to be indicated. The problem is to choose a standard of measurement. There are severe difficulties in the way of adequate experimental design using a control group; and there is no standardized testing in El Salvador by which to measure annual achievement and growth.]

b. What are the cognitive effects of this kind of education?

[As a consequence of the new curriculum, and of television teaching, important changes may be taking place in the

children's way of learning and of relating to the world around them. Are they learning to seek answers and solve problems, rather than memorize and play back? These changes have been postulated as a result of learning from television, but very little evidence exists. It will be possible in the first year, or at least so it seems, to separate out the effect of the new curriculum and of teaching it by television. What measures should be applied?]

c. What attitudes are being built up in the pupils?

[What changes are occurring in their attitudes toward school, toward their teachers in the studio and in the classroom, toward subjects they do and those they do not see on television? Are there discernible changes in their own image of what a pupil should do in school, and what opportunities lie beyond school? What is the trend in their attitudes toward school and television teaching as they have more experience with it?]

d. What effects on attendance and dropouts may be ascribed to the new program?

[Attendance records and re-registrations are available for previous years, and will be available both for ITV classrooms and others which might supposedly be matched on important variables.]

2. What difference is the new program making in teachers?

a. What changes are occurring in styles of teaching?

[Is the questioning, problem-solving method of teaching replacing the rote memorizing and drill? This question can probably be answered by systematic observation at different stages. But there are important questions of precisely what to observe and record, and how to observe without encouraging an abnormal performance.]

b. What changes are occurring in the role and status percepts of teachers?

[Do teachers think they are degraded, or privileged, to have television in their classrooms? How does their idea of what a teacher should do change with experience? Are they able to get as much satisfaction out of teaching in the television classroom as out of managing their classes without the picture tube? What is the trend over time of their attitudes toward the new methods? In this case it should be possible to separate out the effects of television and of experience with the new curriculum.]

3. How is the program going?

a. What procedures can be established to obtain feedback very early in the process of making programs?

[Here it should be possible for studio teacher and producer to record some of the early lessons on videotape, and actually observe classroom reaction to them. It is also possible, although not feasible in too many cases, to administer tests to a few classrooms immediately after a televised lesson, to find out what may have been misunderstood, and how many of the desired objectives have been achieved. Actual pretesting of programs in the studio is also possible, with videotape machinery, although there will be no classes in session during the three months before February.]

b. What can be learned from regular reports from classroom teachers?

[We understand that teacher-report forms have already been prepared. After they have been in use for two months or so, they should be reviewed and if possible the questions or headings should be improved.]

c. What do the administrators think of the new program?

[A brief questionnaire to administrators in schools where the new program is being taught should reveal their ideas of how well the program is going, and some specifics of how it might be made to go better. If this questionnaire were given, say, in April and October, the trend line might be interesting.]

4. What can be found out about televised teaching and the context of television in the classroom that would help this program and future programs using television?

[When the first rush of program-making is over, it should be possible to conduct a few experiments using two versions of a televised lesson, or other comparable treatments. These might examine such problems as the usefulness of different amounts of active response to the televised lesson, different amounts of directional cueing, some of the relationships of sound track to picture, etc.]

5. What can be found out about administrative problems and procedures that would help future projects?

a. What happens week by week during the first six months of a massive new project like this one?

[If section heads and chief consultants would record each week in 100 to 200 words what their groups have been doing, this combined picture would provide for future administrators of such a project some guidelines as to what must be done, in what order, and how long it takes, to change curriculum and introduce television.]

- b. What "critical incidents" require administrative attention in the development period of such a project?

[Recording "critical incidents" has proved useful in describing administrative relationships and procedures, and also in delineating problems. Would it prove too sensitive to ask key members of the project staff, on different administrative levels, to recall critical incidents that have happened to them, say, in the last fortnight? And if so, how could the recording be made as simple and pleasant as possible, without a great deal of interviewing time? Perhaps using a tape recorder?]

- c. What does the program cost?

[At some time it will be desirable to state the cost of this program, per student, per televised hour, etc. Would it be helpful for a financial consultant to spend a little while in San Salvador, to set up procedures for recording and accounting costs so that they could easily be obtained and interpreted at the appropriate time?]

6. What difference is the new program making outside the school system?

- a. Are there discernible effects of the new technology?

[Is there any industrial growth, any important addition to skills in the labor force, attributable to the new technology? Are there new training courses or other opportunities? Are there secondary effects on printing, computer use, transportation, or any other such activities?]

- b. What do the parents think?

[Parents will be able, if they wish, to see some of their children's classes on television. They will also hear a great deal from their children about the new kind of teaching. What are their attitudes toward it, and what is the trend?]

c. Are there any discernible effects on Salvadoran society? and culture?

[Is the new technology and the education on the air having any effect on values, customs, goals, or other aspects of the culture? How could such effects best be measured?]

To answer all these questions, it was agreed, would require more money than the contract provides and extend far beyond the present termination date of the contract. A rough design was sketched out which was flexible enough to produce useful data if the contract terminated at the present closing date and could be extended for the life of the ITV experiment. This rough design provided, in the first year, for:

Measurement of pupil learning in three key subjects during the first full year of television (1a).

Measurement of attitude changes toward ITV, teacher, and school during that first year (1c).

Measurement of teacher attitudes before the three-month training course, at the beginning of the school year, and at the end of it (2b).

Collection of a record, for use in later projects, of what was done at every stage of developing the project (4a).

Collection of a series of "critical incidents" to illuminate problems of such a project as this one (4b).

Collection of data on the effect of the project on attendance and school dropouts (1d).

A beginning of studying the effects of ITV and educational reform on classroom interaction (2a).

A beginning of studying the cognitive changes in pupils attributable to the experience with ITV and to the educational reform (1b).

An attempt to weigh the efficacy of the planning in the educational project against the stated objectives (proposed by AID and AED).

This design will be completed, costed against the resources available, and presented in detail in the second Administrative Report, to come.