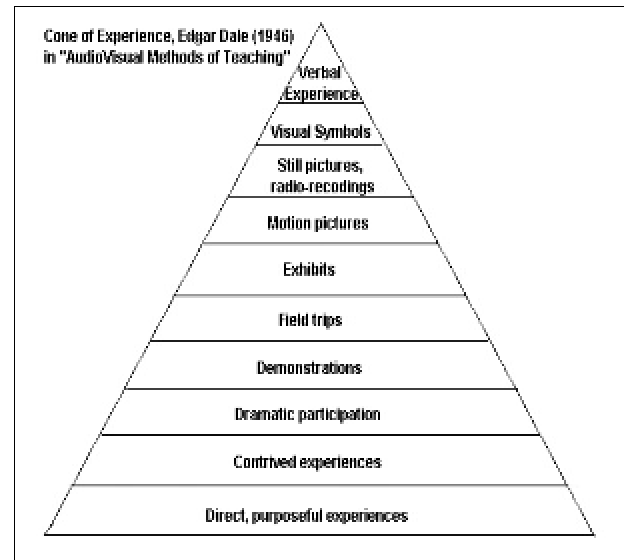


## Definitions of the Field: Chronology

- Historically, the field has been called both "Educational Technology" and "Instructional Technology." Those who prefer "Instructional Technology" make two points
  - "Instructional" is more appropriate for describing the function of technology
  - "Educational Technology" commonly implies a school or educational setting, whereas "instruction" incorporates K-12, higher education, and training.
- Those who prefer "Educational Technology" argue that since instruction is considered by many as part of education the term helps maintain a broader focus for the field.
- **1994 Definition of IT**
  - Instructional Technology is the theory and practice of design, development, utilization, management, and evaluation of processes and resources for learning.

- Domains of the Field

- Contributors to the field
  - [Edgar Dale](#) developed the [Cone of Experience](#) which served as a visual analogy for levels of concreteness and abstractness of teaching methods and instructional materials. It was Dale's belief that abstract symbols and ideas could be more easily understood and retained by the learner if they were built on concrete experience.
  - [James Finn](#), a doctoral student of Edgar Dale, is credited with moving the field of audiovisual communication to instructional technology. A major thrust of Finn's work was to change the role of audiovisual communications personnel functionally supportive of the instructional process to one of leadership and innovation. He argued that IT is an intellectual process that must be based on research. He was a strong advocate for changing the name of the field to IT and promoted the application of systems theory as a basis for the field.
- **1963 Definition of the Field (National Education Association)**
  - Audiovisual communications is that branch of educational theory and practice concerned with the design and use of messages which control the learning process. It undertakes: (a) the study of the unique and relative strengths and weaknesses of both pictorial and nonrepresentational



messages which may be employed in the learning process for any reason; and (b) the structuring and systematizing of messages by men and instruments in an educational environment. These undertakings include planning, production, selection, management, and utilization of both components and entire instructional systems. Its practical goal is the efficient utilization of every method and medium of communication which can contribute to the development of the learners' full potential. (Ely, 1963, pp. 18-19)

- **1970 Definition of IT (President's Commission on Instructional Technology)**
  - Instructional technology ... is a systematic way of designing, carrying out, and evaluating the total process of learning and teaching in terms of specific objectives, based on research in human learning and communication and employing a combination of human and non-human resources to bring about more effective instruction.
- **Kenneth Silber's 1970 Definition** (who later chaired the AECT Committee on Definitions and Terminology)
  - Instructional Technology is the Development (Research, Design, Production, Evaluation, Support-Supply, Utilization) of Instructional Systems Components (Messages, Men, Materials, Devices, Techniques, Settings) and the Management of that development (Organization, Personnel) in a systematic manner with the goal of solving educational problems (Silber, 1970, p. 21)
- **MacKenzie and Eraut's 1971 Definition**
  - Educational technology is the systematic study of the means whereby educational ends are achieved (as cited in Ely, 1973, p. 52)
- **AECT 1972 Definition**
  - Educational technology is a field involved in the facilitation of human learning through systematic identification, development, organization and utilization of a full-range of learning resources and through the management of these processes (AECT, 1972, p. 36)
- **AECT 1977 Definition**
  - Educational technology is a complex, integrated process involving people, procedures, ideas, devices and organization for analyzing problems and devising, implementing, evaluation and managing solutions to those problems involved in all aspects of human learning (AECT, 1977, p. 1).