

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION



A. General Background

Various archive repositories have used computer to solve their problems. Some have made use of it in administering control over their holdings or automated data processing, some have applied computer for their intellectual control over the records or automated retrieval, i.e. subject retrieval, and some are planning on automated access (Dewhitt 1979: 152-157).

The Bank of Thailand's Archives was set up as part of the Library and Information Center in 1976. The archive holdings measure about 1637.70 cubic feet in volume. They are records of the Bank of Thailand's history, development, policies, and activities (The Bank of Thailand 1980: 19-27).

The main purpose of the mentioned Archives is to serve both internal and external users. The internal users comprise the Bank's administrators and its personnel. The external users are mostly researchers who are interested in the economic history of Thailand (The Bank of Thailand 1981: 3-7).

The Bank of Thailand (BOT) records survey published in 1982 showed that the non-current records, which are to be permanently kept as archives, are scattered among various sections. It is very time consuming to handle these manually, so it is suggested that the automated access to archives be considered. The idea of applying

computer to archive works has been outlined since 1980 after the application of computer in the survey of BOT's records (Benjamas : Interview). BOT has processed some of its routine activities by computer for nearly twenty years. By 1984, its own computer has been installed at the Systems Planning and Operations Office Building. The on-line terminals are located at various sections. The Bank plans to extend the automated access to other activities, i.e. Securities Exchange, Bond Issuing, and Exchange Control (Napachorn : Interview). The Systems Planning and Operations Office concurs with the idea of applying automated access to the archives. Thus, preparation, albeit unofficial, is underway. The first step of the plan is to conduct a feasibility study. The pilot project, as a component of this study, thus comes into being. The objectives of the study are presented below.

B. Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. to design and produce the index for two hundred items of BOT's archives while making use of UNESCO's Computerized Documentation System/Integrated Set of Information System (CDS/ISIS), and
2. to survey the users' viewpoints on outputs of the project.

C. Scope of the Study

The subject of this thesis is the implementation of the pilot project on automated indexing in archives of the Bank of Thailand and its attempt to create a data base for an on-line retrieval. In this project, two hundred items of BOT's archives were selected out of some 912 descriptive summary cards which formerly prepared

for the records survey in 1982. Most of them were on economics and the economic history of Thailand. The detail of archives selection for this project is mentioned in 'Archive Samples'. The cost analysis and related aspects are not covered in this thesis, as these are to be the subject of a future study if BOT approves of the results of this study and wishes to put it into action.

D. Method of the Study

At this experimental stage, the study is carried out in four steps. The first step deals with documentary researches. The second focuses on the system analysis and other factors concerning electrical data processing. The third concerns keying the data into the data base and producing the required outputs. The last step engages in the survey of the users' viewpoints on the outputs.

E. Arrangement of the Thesis

There are altogether five chapters in the thesis. The first chapter is an introduction. The second chapter is the literature review concerning index and indexing in general, archive works and archive automation in particular. The third chapter is system analysis and preparation of input and output requirements. The fourth chapter presents the users' viewpoints and the fifth concentrates on the conclusions and recommendations obtained in the study.

F. Related Research

From 1958 to 1980, only Lytle's work (1979) focused on archives retrieval. His work was a comparison of two methods of subject retrieval in archives: Provenance Methods and Content Indexing

Methods.* The experiment to explore subject retrieval capabilities of these two methods was carried out in 1978 at the Baltimore Region Institution Studies Center (BRISC).

The general methodology of the experiment is to run the same questions while using Provenance and Content Indexing Methods and to compare the results. The most salient finding of this study is the poor retrieval performance of both methods. Neither methods is very consistent or reliable, as measured by overlap. The Content Indexing Method exhibits more variants than does the Provenance Method. Lytle (1980: 191-207) concluded that the archivists should evaluate their information retrieval systems. The methodology developed for comparing these two methods would be used, with modifications, to evaluate and compare any two, or more, access system. Performance evaluation should be a component of most subject retrieval design projects, and perhaps should be required by funding agencies in most instances. Results should be reported in the professional publications.

*The Provenance Method is the traditional method of archives retrieval, based on the principles of archives administration and reference practices of archivists. Subjects retrieved in this manner proceed to link subject queries with provenance information contained in administrative histories or bibliographies, thereby producing leads to files which are searched by using their internal structures. The Content Indexing Method derived from librarianship to archives. Subject retrieval through this method matches subject queries with terms from an index or a catalog.