Title of Thesis: Aims and achievements of adults in remedial literacy schemes: with special reference to Cambridgeshire

Submitted for degree of: Doctor of Philosophy

Year of submission: 1978

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Acknowledgements

During the course of this study I have been privileged to experience the disciplined standard of extra-mural University education at its best. This certainly would not have been possible without the unfailing encouragement and patient understanding of Professor H.A. Jones, to whom I express my deepest gratitude. As a mature student, I know how easy it is to become discouraged and without the continual support of Professor Jones this study would not have been completed; I recognise my extreme good fortune in having him as my supervisor and I am indeed grateful.

Much of the theoretical construction of this thesis turns on the adaptation of ethological method and I am extremely fortunate to enjoy the friendship of Rosemary Jellis, who not only commented on methodological aspects of the research but who gave unstintingly of her time to read the many drafts of this work.

Acknowledgement is also due to Dr. Margaret Peters of the Cambridge Institute of Education, who allowed me to take part in her seminars for experienced educationalists on her advanced course and for her constant encouragement and friendship.

Among other specialists who generously gave their time to discuss points of concern are John Bowers, Professor Violet Cane, Dr. A. Ghazzali, Dr. Martin Hyland, Professor Jack Mezirow, John Robinson, Arthur Stock, David Stringer and Margaret Vince.

Most of the research was conducted in Cambridgeshire and I am grateful for the facilities placed at my disposal through the good offices of the Chief Education Officer of Cambridgeshire, his Officers, the Advisers concerned with community education and
Organisers of the various adult literacy schemes. Noel Jones and Marion Young were particularly kind, both in commenting upon my ideas and in arranging facilities for interviewing tutors and students.

Within the City of Cambridge there is a Voluntary Organisation, the Cambridge Reading Project; I am grateful to their Management Council and to their Organiser for all the help I received from them.

I also acknowledge my debt to Evelyn Charnley, who shared my interest in the problems of the adults whose friendship we both valued.

When this thesis is presented I shall be in my fiftieth year; I hope that the kindness I have received from so many people, each of whom is distinguished in their special field, will encourage many other men and women to go to extra-mural departments of Universities and extend themselves to the limits of their intellectual ability. Many others have done so before me; I add my testimony of gratitude to theirs.
Introduction

Until relatively recently the problem of adult illiteracy has been studied only in connection with conditions in developing countries, either the conditions obtaining in the contemporary 'third' world or in the past history of the currently rich industrialised countries. The consensus of opinion has been that industrial wealth provided the resources to offer both an universal, full-time compulsory educational opportunity of at least ten years, and a massive output of written communication which, as part of the ordinary day-to-day business of life, kept the basic literacy skills of adults honed.

However, the fact that the number of adult literacy instruction programmes in England had grown from less than ten in 1950 to more than 230 in 1973, the major rate of growth having taken place since 1967, suggested that adult illiteracy was a problem which deserved to be tackled on a national scale. But perhaps the main reason for concern was the publication of research alleging that adult illiteracy was not a characteristic of a marginal number of people. On the contrary, substantial numbers were involved, whether expressed in proportional or in absolute terms. Haviland suggested that there were "perhaps as many as two million, who can be classified as either 'illiterate', that is, having a reading age of seven years or less, or 'semi-literate', that is, having a reading age of between seven and nine years of age." ¹ Clyne, also writing in 1973, considered that the most probable number of "illiterates" was two million.²

¹ See Bibliography Part I (References) p.369 for this and all subsequent reference numbers
Other estimates suggested that "7% to 10% of 16 year olds were leaving school with a very poor reading ability"(a) and some Local Education Authority officers were prepared to hazard a guess that about 20% of school leavers in 1974 were going forward into adult life without having satisfactorily mastered the basic literacy skills.

Perhaps the most disturbing feature of the situation in 1974 was that the organisations providing literacy resources for adults in the United Kingdom were so ill-funded and overwhelmed with students that their staff had little time to question or reflect on the validity of the ultimate objectives of their activities. Thus the Director of one scheme wrote "time has always been so pressing it has been difficult to justify its expenditure on something not immediately apparently useful."(b) Whilst honouring the dash, verve and deep sense of social service of the front-line troops, nevertheless, on the basis that tactical successes do not constitute strategic victories, I think it proper to examine the aims of adult literacy education and, consequently, to question certain features of the adult literacy schemes as presently practised.

This study is specifically concerned with local schemes in the United Kingdom associated with a massive publicity and educational contribution by ALRA (Adult Literacy Resources Agency) and the BBC, supported by ITV, in the period 1975-1977 (outlined in pp.56 ff). However, this project can only be reviewed in the light of an epistemological discussion which is the purpose of these initial chapters.

(a) From Adult Literacy Paper 1 - Statement of proposal for a broadcast series by the BBC, written in 1975 by D. Hargreaves, BBC.

(b) Letter from M. Bentovim, Director, Liverpool Adult Literacy Project, dated 25 June 1975.
I have taken the word 'success', connoting a series of achievements, as the key notion of the study for three reasons. First, the notion of 'success' clearly focuses attention on the larger issues of adult literacy education in a way that the terms 'output' or 'goal' do not, thereby keeping the question 'Why?' in the foreground.

Secondly, I believe that the idea of 'success' and even the criteria for success in adult literacy schemes have been relatively neglected by many practitioners. The fact that one organiser wrote, "It is almost impossible to find criteria for success;" illustrates their tendency to shy away from the problems. Therefore this exercise may be a contribution welcomed by those practitioners who, through no fault of their own, have not the time for this kind of research.

Thirdly, there is the question of educational policy. If the concept of 'success' as a generic term connoting a scale of discrete achievements can be identified, then national resources are more likely to be efficiently allocated.

A close examination of the objectives or aims of adult illiterates and their tutors puts into question the assumption that remedial adult literacy, defined solely in terms of reading and writing, should be isolated from programmes of adult basic education in general. If the reader agrees with this interpretation of the results presented here, then, notwithstanding the achievement of the pump-priming operation conducted in the United Kingdom during 1975,

(a) Letter from A. Wells, Organiser, Birmingham Right to Read Programme, dated 8 July 1975
new forms of approach must be devised. There is an element of
danger in the present situation, in that the pragmatic solution
of 1975 may easily, because of its very publicity, be thought the
paradigm for the next two decades. (a)

Thus, there are four basic questions:

a) What were the aims of the students?
b) What were the aims of the tutors?
c) How far were the aims of both modified by their
   experience, thereby suggesting the possible need
   for a revision of attitudes or approaches to the
   problem of illiteracy?
d) How far were the tutors and students 'successful'
in achieving their stated aims?

(a) In October 1977, a series called Parosi was started, aimed at
encouraging non-English-speaking Asian women to learn English.
The arrangements for this series displayed many of the features
of the BBC adult literacy provision and it therefore appears that,
by early 1977, the adult literacy system was already considered as
a paradigm for future action (see p. 56)
By contrast with the adult in developing countries, where the opportunity of receiving even primary school education is largely a matter of chance, adults in the United Kingdom, with few exceptions, have experienced at least eight to ten years of compulsory education. As a result, it may be stated with some confidence that in countries where mass illiteracy is rife, by the nature of statistical probabilities, the illiterate adult is as likely to be above average intelligence as not. In the case of the adult illiterate in the United Kingdom, it is very doubtful if a similar assertion would have any meaning.

Someone who has attended school for nearly ten years and has not been able to learn to read and write is, within the correct meaning of the term, maladjusted, but in one particular respect.

Though the problems of the adult illiterate are quite different from those of the child illiterate, the child is to some extent the father of the man, and it is worth reminding ourselves of the findings of Rutter, Tizard and Whitmore that among clinically researched children "deviant behaviour of all kinds - anti-social, delinquent, neurotic, inter-personal difficulties, over-activity and poor concentration - was considerably more frequent in children of low IQ or poor reading ability."
However, "the reading ability of neurotic children was much the same as that in the general population". Current research therefore suggests that while poor reading may simply mean no more than the lack of an unique ability to adjust to the printed word, it may imply severe maladjustment in childhood, properly described as neuroticism. The Report of the Advisory Committee on Handicapped Children, issued by the Department of Education and Science in 1971, states that "the very great majority of children whose reading abilities are significantly below the standards which their abilities in other spheres would lead one to expect will, in time, respond to good remedial teaching which is closely geared to their individual needs." However, all the foregoing implies that although the child's apparent problem may be solely one of a lack of ability in literacy, it may also be that this lack of ability is due to fundamental psychological or physical defects. If this is so then such children are, by definition, so different from the norm that to speak of them as having a higher or lower intelligence quotient than the average for the population is an irrelevance. It would be similar to comparing the records achieved in the Paraplegic Games with those achieved in the Olympics.

On a practical plane when dealing with adults, experiments conducted in the pilot stage of this research to see if adult illiterates would consent to some form of intelligence testing, ended in total failure; no matter how willing the student was to co-operate, as an adult he recognised an intelligence test when he saw it. The obvious distress this caused brought to an end any
further attempt to test illiterate adults on a large scale. Of course, trained psychologists are able to test the intelligence levels of individual illiterates but, so far as this country is concerned, we do not have the slightest evidence for saying that any specific proportion of illiterate adults is above or below the average intelligence of the adult population as a whole. What we do know is that many illiterate adults hold quite responsible jobs, that many have skills which many highly literate people lack but that all illiterate adults are, to some degree, maladjusted, if only because, given the opportunities in this country, most people do manage to learn to read and write, and society generally expects them to do so.

Consequently, when the problems of illiterates in this highly sophisticated, literate, industrial society were investigated in the field, it was found that there was no such person as "the illiterate"; rather there were people who displayed a behavioural pattern denoting a lack of reading or writing ability. Often the real problem was something else, although the registered problem was illiteracy.

For example, the personal problem:

"He was a real social work problem and I think all he really wanted was an older woman friend, thank you! He had 'O' level English language and he didn't believe that was a sufficient standard of literacy for his job." (a)

or the physical problem:

"He has now told the family doctor that he needs spectacles ....Now he has glasses it has made a very great difference to the clarity of his letters. He does not get headaches... I don't think it ever occurred to him to get glasses." (b)

or again, the psychological:

"He simply refuses to wear spectacles and he really does not see letters in the middle of words." (c)

(a), (b), (c) Evidence given by tutors
Of course there are exceptions to the general rule that adult illiterates are maladjusted; some simply did not attend school for long periods:

"I think he is above average intelligence, at a guess about 105 to 110 IQ, though I do not know precisely....he was evacuated during the war to....and he was so far from school that he missed out and has never caught up since."(a)

Nevertheless, the common characteristic of some degree of maladjustment, physical, mental or social, implies that to deal adequately with illiterates is an extremely difficult process, and that the treatment of their problems solely in terms of literacy could be, and should be, questioned.

For these reasons, attempts to classify illiterate adults as adults with a reading age of a child of seven years or less, and semi-literates as adults with a reading age of a child of between seven and nine years of age, seem to be gross oversimplifications.(b)

Reading - the process of decoding - involves the recognition of cues and the correct application of those cues by a predictive process to achieve logical and sensible outcomes. When children are being taught there is a process of developing skills and ideas. When adults are being taught the problem is rather one of reorganising skills which they already possess into a logical framework; or, to be succinct: children build up memories, adults build on memories, and to compare adult reading with that of children is to ignore this difference.

Alternatively, adults may be classified as illiterate or semi-literate by reference to the average level of reading in the adult literate population. Such a classification would, like the child-references one, imply normative testing procedures; procedures which

(a) Tutor's evidence
(b) See p.264
are being questioned by those who consider that criterion reference tests are superior. In any case, it is clear that by these definitions the number of adult illiterates would increase markedly if either the reading ability of seven-year-old children in our schools advanced or the reading ability of the adult literate population improved. This argument was used by Dr Lewis of Nottingham University in 1953 to show that illiteracy was not increasing but rather that literacy standards were rising.4

Some Education Authorities have tried to assess the size of the adult illiteracy problem by asking the Head Teachers of secondary schools to estimate the number of illiterate school-leavers. The disadvantage of this procedure has been that some Head Teachers have used the criterion of what they consider society demands by way of literacy, others have applied a normative test, and yet others have arrived at a guess by using both methods of assessment.

Jeffreys argues that "semi-literates may be people who are educated enough to be got at, but not educated enough to understand what is being done to them."5 My own experience of teaching suggests that although illiterates often do not know what is being done to them, they have a very fair idea that something is being done to them and, indeed, Piers Brendon describes how his apprentice bricklayer students, whose average intelligence quotient was about 90 and few of whom could read or write with fluency, welcomed him with the chant "We're brickies, we're thickies."6 The hypothesis this suggests is that an illiterate student is one who thinks he has a reading or writing problem, whether he is a 'brickie', an executive salesman or a café manageress.
For example, the problem was posed when some students said:

Before I could about write my name and address, but now I'm learning all the time. You see, I want to learn now. I've got so much that I want to learn more.

Reading has always been difficult, but I could read words like 'and', 'was' or 'cycle'. I can now write a word, look at it, and say 'yes, that's right'.

I could read reasonably well. It was the writing, the spelling, words like 'chicken' and 'lorry'.

I can't really explain. I went on a course where I had to read but I left it because my mind went blank. Yet I know I can read. I've no trouble with filling in forms. I'm afraid to write it down...

Interviewer's question:

If I had come into this room and asked you to write something, could you have done this?

Student's reply:

I think I could have done so but I would have asked you "Do you mind turning round?" I don't know what it is, it's just there.

Or in a letter from one tutor "hence the odd phenomenon of people with managerial literacy applying for help, because they need reassurance about their standards."

This hypothetical definition of an illiterate student, summarily presented here, is supported by the full analysis of extensive interviews with tutors and students presented in Part III, especially the summary on page 337.

Literacy projects in practice cater for a range of people with literacy problems: there are those who cannot write more than one or two cyphers and who can read little more than digraphs; there are those with spelling problems only; and those with problems of setting out their ideas, either in business communications or in the exercise of imaginative writing. In common, they need reassurance about their standards; they wish to adjust in a world where the literate is typical, at least to the extent of meeting the literacy demands of
the particular social environment in which they work and live.

Instead of the neat classification of illiterates and semi-literates, there was, in Cambridgeshire, a population coming forward for help representing a spectrum of reading problems and, in practice, this population includes not only native born English-speaking people, but immigrants who consider that their working language is English and that their problem is one of reading and writing in English.

Can the problem of illiteracy in the United Kingdom be quantified in any way? Timothy Raison, MP, writing as a Research Fellow at the Centre for Studies in Social Policy, opted for a series of internal school tests to establish that certain standards in the 3Rs have been met, and to ensure that particular children not achieving these standards receive remedial help. If such a system was introduced, some statistical evidence would be available about the approximate numbers of school leavers lacking satisfactory literacy skills. But even so, there would be no means of determining the number of adults in the post-school population with similar problems. The actual number of people in the United Kingdom with a literacy problem is, therefore, at present unknown. Haviland's figure is possibly a reasoned guess; the figures offered by various pressure groups can only be categorised as inspired guesses. The latent demand could be either much more or much less; in fact, a case could be made for suggesting that the latent demand figure is two million, plus or minus one-and-a-half million or so.

It is only when we consider the effective demand that we are on firm ground. In 1972 about 5,200 adults received literacy instruction over a period of either six months or one school term. During the
first year of advertising by the BBC in 1975-76, some 25,000 people contacted the BBC referral service for help, and an estimated further 30,000 contacted local authority and voluntary-organised schemes directly.

Thereafter the figures became more difficult to establish because, first, there was some disagreement about the period of tuition necessary to qualify a student as being 'on the books' and secondly, there was a question of definition, which was that some students were allocated places in remedial literacy classes and counted as being within the 'scheme' whilst others were placed in adult education classes designed to deal with minor problems of spelling. These students were sometimes counted as part of the 'English' provision of the 'normal' adult education service. Thus, right at the outset, the meaning and place of literacy in adult education became an issue of some importance and, consequently, it seemed appropriate to deal with the matter in the next chapter.
CHAPTER II

THE MEANING AND PLACE OF LITERACY IN ADULT EDUCATION

What is literacy?

Historians, when asked "What is history?", usually mount a two-pronged approach to explain their subject: on one hand they describe history in terms of what historians do, and on the other hand they discuss the philosophical and logical assumptions which set history apart as a specific subject of intellectual activity. In the following discussion, the same lines of procedure have been adopted.

According to Smith (1972), reading is a process in which meanings, words or letters are identified. This basic skill characteristic is extended by Goodman (1969) to include information processing. "The reader, a user of language, interacts with the graphic input as he seeks to reconstruct a message encoded by the writer. He concentrates his total prior experience on the task, drawing on his experiences and the concepts he has attained as well as on the language competence he has achieved." Fundamentally, literacy is mastery of the medium of written language, or code, and constitutes the ability both to encode and to decode messages.

To exercise these skills a person must be able to process the grapho-phonetic relationships, that is, the connections between the graphic representation of language and the phonological system of oral language, the syntactic information implicit in the grammatical structures of the language, and semantic information. The latter skill is the process whereby the reader uses his past experience or conceptual background to create meaning. If the reader lacks the relevant
knowledge, he is unable to supply the semantic component necessary to understand what he has read.

Thus, the syntactic constraints of the English language enable readers, even small children, to predict what words might reasonably follow if the text is going to be grammatical. "I am going to put my ....... here" guides the reader into expecting a noun, or an adjective and noun which constitute a nominal. The possibility of a verb is eliminated. But if the sentence is "I am going to put my ....... on", the semantic constraint eliminates the possibility of "goat" in this case, although "goat" could be semantically correct in the former sentence.

This point has been laboured somewhat because the Goodman analysis of the reading and writing processes clearly illustrates the characteristic of literacy. Since a reader must possess relevant knowledge to supply the semantic component, all readers, regardless of their general reading proficiency, must be incapable of comprehending some material in their native language. The practice of being literate is not only the exercise of a discipline which, to have meaning, draws from other disciplines but is also an experience which, to have meaning, draws on other experiences.

Similarly, in the case of history, the practice of examining ancient documents or of dating pottery involves the exercise of other relevant knowledge: respectively, palaeography and nuclear physics. Consequently, so far as the practice of literacy is concerned, it may be argued that it is philosophically incorrect to treat literacy as an activity which can be isolated from other activities. The question is: "Why is it important to be literate?" and the answer lies in an examination of the place of literacy in human knowledge and communication and of the role of literacy in the educative process.
Of course, it might be said that this approach over-emphasises the cognitive, in the sense that an activity implies the application of personalised perceptions, only some of which may be identified from the perception that one can or cannot read. In particular, if the activity of becoming literate may be said to arise from a sense of shame, how can it be argued that an analysis of literacy as a cognitive experience is relevant to the study of the achievements of adult illiterates? Just as 'shame', to be experienced by illiterate adults, requires an act of cognition or an analysis of their situation before the emotion is identified, so it follows that the remedial action of becoming literate and lessening their sense of 'shame' also contains a thinking component, exemplified by an emotive attitude 'determination to try'.

So one can argue that, unless literacy is considered as part of the activity of a rational man, and the act of becoming literate the result of a rational decision, it is quite possible to maintain that a relationship between an illiterate student and his tutor is, by some mystical process, a total educational experience, even though it is solely one of socialisation (defined here as developing the adult's understanding of his political role in society) and psychological balm. To avoid such a stance, the presumption is that literacy should be viewed as being an activity bounded by a cognitive framework, within which there are several components, some disciplinary, others recognitions of, and responses to, mankind as a discerning animal. As Oakeshott (1972) writes "an educational engagement is at once a discipline and a release; and it is one by virtue of being the other." Therefore a philosophical examination of literacy as part of human knowledge is relevant.
P.H. Hirst (1965) suggests that knowledge is separable into a number of distinct forms, each form being "complex ways of understanding experience which man has achieved." In greater detail: "...by a form of knowledge is meant a distinct way in which our experience becomes structured round the use of accepted public symbols. The symbols thus having public meaning, their use is in some way testable against experience and there is the progressive development of a series of tested symbolic expressions. In this way experience has been probed further and further by extending and elaborating the use of the symbols and by means of these it has become possible for the personal experience of individuals to become more fully structured, more fully understood. The various forms of knowledge can be seen in low level developments within the common area of our knowledge of the everyday world. From this there branch out the developed forms which, taking certain elements in our common knowledge as a basis, have grown in distinctive ways."

Each form of knowledge has certain concepts that are peculiar in character to that form; within each form there is a distinct logical structure which gives rise to certain expressions which may be tested and each form has techniques and skills for exploring experience and for testing their distinctive expressions. From these forms or disciplines Hirst derives a catalogue which includes history as one of the items.

Is literacy a discipline, such as history, or is it one of the "fields of knowledge" which Hirst considers arise when knowledge that is rooted in more than one form is built round specific phenomena? Being literate seems, more naturally, an activity described as a "field of knowledge", on the grounds that the practice of literacy
skills requires, as shown above, other relevant information to implement the semantic condition; and so literacy takes from various forms of knowledge.

However, literacy - the mastery of the medium of the written language - cannot be separated from linguistics, the study of language in all its manifestations. And, in Potter's description:

"Linguistics stands in its right place in the Dewey Decimal Classification between sociology and natural science because it is a social activity on the one hand and a scientific system on the other. It was an outstanding achievement of nineteenth-century philologists......that they succeeded in establishing the autonomy of their science as an independent discipline in its own right. Now, by a kind of paradox, twentieth-century linguists find themselves more closely associated than ever before with researchers in other fields, not only in history, geography, practical criticism, philosophy and psychology, but also in mathematics and statistics, physics and electronics, and, above all, in anthropology and the social sciences."

Hirst's definition of forms of knowledge, and the Dewey Decimal Classification of Knowledge, both account for a proper place for linguistics, including any study of literacy, in a constellation of academic enquiries. But, as Potter points out and restresses later, linguistics is a social activity as well as a scientific system:

"Language is wrongly treated as a separate entity, unrelated to other manifestations of social behaviour."

Linguistics, therefore, also fulfils Hirst's definition of a "field of knowledge" and its dual characteristic is evinced even in the simple framework of adult literacy schemes, where literacy tuition at the level of digraphs, phonemes and sentences is related to students' experiences and disciplinary barriers are irrelevant.

The rub of the matter, in the present context, is that the adult student seeking instruction in literacy rightly regards it as a skill which will lead to other accomplishments. And these, in fact, are
part of the process of education; education, because most students seem to want not only to learn about something but to grow as somebody. For example, to consider the growth of self-confidence:

Interviewer:

Suppose you were in a shop writing a cheque and I said to you "You have misspelt that word!" What would you say?

Student:

I would say now "How do you spell it then?" Before, I wouldn't have got into the position of going into a shop and writing.

or to consider the intricate emotional familial relationship:

Student:

I often wonder why she married an idiot like me.

Interviewer:

Come off it, a lot of us feel that way about our wives, don't we?

Student:

Ah yes, but there's a lot of difference between people who can read and write and spell and who cannot!

or self-respect at the work place:

The foreman said to me "I know why you said no, now; it's because you couldn't read. Do you want to give it a bash on here?" I said "Well, I'll give it a try" and I wrote down all the signs (words on the machine face as instructions) in my book.

For these reasons it is argued that the more profitable basis for planning programmes for ameliorating illiteracy is an understanding of adult illiteracy derived from a general concept of education. The findings of this study support this view. (a)

(a) See Part III passim and especially p. 305
Peters lists four criteria to create the concept of "being educated”, namely:

(a) the body of knowledge and understanding of associated principles which raises a person's education above the level of a collection of disjointed facts;

(b) the ability to transfer knowledge from the principles to relevant particular instances, the transformation of a man's outlook from knowledgeable to educated;

(c) the willingness to care about the scientific and logical structure of the subject under consideration or a commitment to the relevancy, consistency and coherence of subject matter which a person claims to be studying;

(d) the acquisition of cognitive perspective in the sense that a trained scientist, if 'educated', places his specialist knowledge within the context of a coherent pattern of life.

But this list of criteria seems to describe the characteristics of a scholar rather than of an 'educated' man, for as Kubie remarks, "there is no educator who does not know scholars who lack the least quality of human maturity and wisdom, yet who are true masters of their own fields, whether this field is the humanities, art, music, philosophy, religion, law, science, the history of ideas, or the languages by which men communicate ideas." 14

Wisdom and maturity would then appear to be two further criteria to add to Peters' list, as may have been implied when he wrote "Our concept of an educated person is of someone who is capable of delighting in a variety of pursuits and projects for their own
sake and whose pursuit of them and general conduct of his life are transformed by some degree of all-round understanding and sensitivity.¹⁵

McLeish¹⁵ suggests that there are four qualities which, taken together, describe the maturity of an adult student. First of all, there is mental maturity, characterised as "wisdom", with qualities of commonsense, a critical attitude to experience and, above all, a responsible attitude to one's own mental operations.

Secondly, there is social maturity, characterised as "responsibility", exemplified by acts of co-operation with others for legitimate purposes and the acceptance or provision of leadership where this is appropriate.

Thirdly, there is scholastic maturity, characterised as "application", which includes both the exercise of intellectual curiosity and the willingness to labour to satisfy a questing mind.

Fourthly, there is emotional maturity, characterised as "balance", which is primarily defined as an absence of excessive emotionality.

It seems that Peters' cognitive perspective includes the first and third of McLeish's characteristics of maturity. In a sense, McLeish's concept of maturity seems synonymous with both wisdom and Peters' fourth criterion. The possible grounds for separating "maturity" from "wisdom" as qualities of an educated man are that acts of responsibility, one feature of maturity, may result from, and indeed largely result from, society's determination of what is legitimate, and these questions are often outside the framework of what is normally regarded as an educational activity. Similarly, "balance" is perhaps largely a matter of the chemistry of the human organism and the emotional circumstances pressing on an individual when he is exercising "emotional maturity".
It does seem, therefore, that a person can qualify under Peters' definition as an 'educated' man by operating in a library or a laboratory, interacting with the tools of his trade or taking part in discussion groups concerned with his interests. In fact, Peters deals with this point: "An educated person is also one who is capable, to a certain extent, of a non-instrumental attitude, of doing things for their own sake......He has a sense of standards as well as a sense of the setting of what he is doing between the past and the future." 17

As soon as he interacts in any way which demands some form of politico-social activity, then he must exercise the additional qualities of responsibility and balance beyond those associated with scholarship. To some, abilities in social interaction are a necessary test of education; to others, the continued addition of desirable attributes results in such an extensive definition of 'education' that it borders on the meaningless.

Perhaps the acceptability of any one definition depends on the type of society in which an 'educated man' operates. In a democracy he is assumed to need to contribute in societal decisions; thus, a man who does not display qualities of wisdom and maturity would not be deemed as being educated beyond the limits of scholarship. Other possible forms of the organisation of society might well be satisfied in describing 'educated' as having solely the attributes of scholarship in some particular discipline, but the acceptance of such an argument seems to limit and underestimate the potential of human beings. Consequently, whilst admitting that there are philosophical assumptions about the nature of man and the desirability of certain forms of society, the definition of an 'educated man' adopted
here includes both Peters' characteristics and the attributes of 'balance' and 'responsibility'. It is postulated, however, that 'balance' and 'responsibility' may not be properly exercised without the acquisition of the four characteristics listed by Peters as describing "being educated".

The importance of these concepts emerges when considering the problems of illiterates who appear to be normal men and women. They may be mature in the exercise of responsibility and balance on occasions, but it is doubtful if those occasions will be frequent when circumstances change, for they have not the education, in terms of the Peters definition, to deal with change. Their situation is exactly the same as that of a person who behaves with exemplary morality for most of the time but who, if he lacks a fundamental moral philosophy, finds himself at a loss when faced with a novel temptation.

But does this generalisation account for particular cases, such as men or women of limited capability? Is it really possible that a man whose schooldays were spent in a special class for the educationally subnormal is now being educated? One feels that a tutor teaching such a person to spell 'mat' would be astonished to discover that this was his aim. Yet in a way it could be, because the term "educated man" describes, not a final product, but a journey towards an aim which is unattainable. It is, perhaps, a characteristic of the wise - the scholar with cognitive perspective - that he recognises that education is a process, a time-consuming process, during which each step towards the ultimate aim enlarges the comprehension of the possible and increases the length of the
journey to the achievement of the status of an educated man. By analogy, it is like the greyhound chasing an electric hare: however fast the greyhound runs, the electric hare is never actually caught. Consequently, the educationally sub-normal man making a conjunction of a phonic signal and a digraph has experienced the same process as the specialist biologist who realises that the production of human embryos in test tubes has social implications. But to say that both men have taken similar steps is not to argue that one man has not progressed further along the road to the achievement of the aim. It is rather to argue, using Plato's imagery, that men chained in a cave may well all struggle towards the light; the nearer they get to the light depends not only on their willingness to excel but also on the length and weight of their chains. So the educationally sub-normal may try to acquire cognitive perspective, and a recognition of his disadvantages and of the improbabilities of major success should not stop tutors of literacy from helping him.

Levels of literacy

It is evident, then, that the direction of the argument is leading to a concept of objectives emerging from the various levels of literacy, levels which may be analysed in three ways: by reference to the inherent nature of the activity, by reference to a theory of human personality and motivation, and by reference to aims derived from the concept of "being educated".

'Reading as saying' describes the basic skills which are exemplified when a person can use graphemes and cues in a predictive process to verbalise correctly what is written. So far as writing
is concerned, common phonemes can be converted into graphemes.

'Reading as comprehending', like 'reading as saying' has several levels, but it denotes, at the lowest level, a mastery of the syntactical and lexical systems of the language to make correct predictions, and, at the highest level, an ability to manipulate logically the meaning of the sentences which confront the reader.

The third level is 'reading as thinking' which Daniels analyses within the framework of polymorphous concepts. (a)

"Polymorphous concepts are ones which stand in a certain kind of superordinate relationship to other specific concepts; much in the way that a genus stands to its species. But whereas in a genus-species relationship anything which falls under the species concept necessarily also falls under the genus concept, this does not hold for the specific concepts which are related to a superordinate polymorph. If something is a horse, it is thereby also an animal. This is a species-genus relationship. (b) Consider, on the other hand, the relationship between obeying and specific types of obedience. Depending on circumstances, we can obey someone by saluting, walking, singing, writing our name, closing our eyes - or by doing any of an endless number of other specific actions. Any of these can be instances of obedience if done under appropriate circumstances, but any or all of them can be done and not be instances of obedience. Thus the relationship between a specific concept like walking and the concept of obedience is a specific-polymorph relationship. Reflective thinking is such a polymorphous concept.

Notice that reflective thinking is something we do; it is a kind of action. Because polymorphous action concepts can be superordinate to a host of specific concepts, the words which express the polymorphs (polymorphous words) can be used to refer to any or all of an indefinite number of specific activities, any of which can be instances of the superordinate concept. Thus if someone merely says "Jones obeyed Smith", we do not know exactly what Jones did although we do have some idea of the circumstances in which he did whatever he did. We know that Smith commanded (requested, ordered, told, etc.) Jones to do something and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, it seems likely that some difference of rank or status exists between Jones and Smith. But Jones might have done any of a variety of things, any one of which in an appropriate context, count as

(a) From an unpublished study in 1975 of the Concept of Reading by Professor L.B. Daniels, University of British Columbia, Canada

(b) Biologists would find the nomenclature incorrect but this does not destroy the burden of his argument
obedience. To understand some polymorphs all that we need to know is what counts as the appropriate context. For example, "repeating" is a polymorphous word. The one condition for repetition is that whatever is now done must have been done before. Virtually anything that can be done can be done again, so the possible specific activities which can be instances of repeating are virtually unlimited.

With some other polymorphs there are restrictions on the kind of specific activity with which they can be related. Then in order to understand the polymorph we must know not only the appropriate context but must also know the restrictions. Thinking, in the sense of reflective thinking, is like this.

Extending the definition of the reflective act given above, the objective of literacy as literacy is ability to reassess a written passage or passages in terms of lexical, syntactical and grammatical cues in order to identify semantic implications, whether written by another person or by oneself. The emphasis is on the capacity to reassess and the act is restricted to be within a form of knowledge, as defined by Hirst, which describes true literacy.

Trivial literature is consequently that which demands no reassessment and which does not lead to the development of either the reader's susceptibilities or powers of discrimination, or alerts a questing curiosity. It 'supplies', in that it tends to confirm existing knowledge and attitudes; it makes no demands because its purpose is to soothe the conscience and lull the intellect.

There is much to be said for the consideration of these three main levels of literacy ability - reading as saying, as comprehending, and as thinking - because the process of generalisation is explicit and because this position emphasises the need for broader goals in reading programmes.

There are other classifications, such as Barrett's 'Taxonomy of the Cognitive and Affective Dimensions of Reading Comprehension', which suggest five major skill categories or levels:
(a) literal comprehension,
(b) re-organisation,
(c) inferential comprehension,
(d) evaluation, and
(e) appreciation,

each of which is divided into further sub-categories. Like the taxonomies of Bloom (1956),^19 Letton (1958),^20 Gusak (1965),^21 and Sanders (1966),^22 Barrett’s classification suggests a greater precision than the language system appears to warrant and, in practice, does not take the reader’s background into account. Where adults are concerned, their backgrounds are considerable.

In a similar way, the ideas of pyramids of growth, such as that produced in Curriculum Bulletin No.12, State Department of Education, Augusta, Maine, reproduced in ‘Reading - Today and Tomorrow’, whilst possibly suitable for understanding the progress of school pupils, is highly inappropriate for adult students, for the obvious reason that if they had experienced a normal growth, they would not be involved in a literacy scheme.

It is clear, therefore, that analyses of the various levels of literacy performance may help to provide one kind of ladder of achievement, but that, when the various steps of the ladder are precisely codified, the adult student does not fit into the scheme at all well. It is difficult to specify, a priori, precisely which rung he is starting from; it is difficult to say how many of the previous rungs he has used and how many he has missed out; and it is often impossible to know if he has not already trodden on some of the higher rungs.
Thus it is doubtful if the aims of the illiterate adult student can be suitably defined in progressive literacy terms. What may be possible is that, first, tutors, particularly those whose experience is mainly in the schools, may think in progressive developmental terms. Secondly, literacy objectives may be stated in terms of personality development; indeed, during the early stages of this enquiry, quite a number of tutors described the aims of the literacy activities in terms of the satisfaction of various levels of adult needs as developed by Maslow. Maslow's thesis is that the human being develops in a sequence, not haphazardly, and that only as he is able to satisfy the lower needs, those earliest needs in terms of the ontology of the individual, can he move along to the others. There are seven major groupings of needs:

1. physiological needs - food, drink, sleep, etc. - the biological needs;
2. safety needs - freedom from threat, danger, etc.;
3. love and belonging needs - need for affection and relationships;
4. esteem and status needs - sense of achievement, respect for others;
5. self-actualisation needs - self-fulfilment, job satisfaction;
6. cognitive needs - knowing and understanding;
7. aesthetic needs - appreciation of beauty, order, etc.

Maslow criticised certain psychologists for accepting the notion that social motives result from conditioning in relation to primary drives like hunger and thirst. He argued that this leads to a negative conception of man whose virtues are interpreted entirely as efforts to avoid pain or anxiety. Man is viewed as taking active
steps toward his own high-level development and Maslow considers this striving less in terms of conflict, misery and pathology than in terms of psychological health.

As some tutors see the problem, some of their illiterate adult students have not advanced beyond the Maslow Group 2 needs, because illiteracy constitutes such an important disadvantage. Hence they see no need to couch their aims in philosophical terms, but ask "Why bother with philosophical questions when the problem is the gratification of an expressed need?". Moreover, this approach is claimed to have practical advantages in that the identification of a need defines the action which is necessary to achieve the goal which will satisfy a student. On that basis, an illiterate student who wishes to avoid danger will wish to recognise the graphic representation and his tutor will teach him to word-match fairly quickly. The immediacy of utility in this way of proceeding strengthens the student's motivation.

Maslow's hierarchy thus not only suggests that the process of achieving ultimate goals or aims is through a series of necessary intermediate steps, but also provides a theoretical schema explaining that process. However, some of the immediate objectives derive from ultimate aims, so that the Group 5 objective of "seeking self-awareness" is not only a necessary step towards the Group 7 objective of "seeking and appreciating a vision of greatness", as Maslow specifies. It can be argued that "seeking self-awareness" cannot be achieved in any coherent sense without having in view that ultimate objective of "a vision of greatness".

There is, in the Maslow model, a tendency to provide an adult version of the Dewey emphasis on education as a process of growth.26
and to suggest that somehow the educator is solely concerned with intrinsic ends. Of course, no educator is indifferent to the way an individual grows, but it would be a pity if the model were interpreted in a way which converts a necessary feature of the educational processes into a procedural principle.

Another objection to too ready an acceptance of the Maslow schema is the probability that most adults do not perform in this tidy way, and the process is not one of steps upwards but rather one of sitting on a raft in a river, being carried towards one bank by one eddy, and being swept back by another eddy, whilst struggling to maintain one's own course.

**Literacy, education and contemporary society**

One of the hypotheses of this study is that, as in the analogy above when the underlying fluvial current towards the sea was the important determinant, so the ultimate and broader aims derived from the understanding of education account for some present practices and should shape future approaches. It is, therefore, convenient now to consider literacy within the general framework of education.

M.V.C. Jeffreys judged literacy as part of education. In 'Glauc' he writes: "...the political and economic changes of the last hundred years have made bare literacy quite inadequate as an equipment for the modern citizen. If it is true that universal education had to be undertaken because society had reached a stage of development at which it would no longer work unless people could read and write, it is no less true that we have now reached a stage of development at which our society will not work unless people can
do a great deal more. We need not only literate people but an educated people." But Jeffreys does not claim that literacy will lead to educated people; rather, that literacy is the bedrock upon which education is built.\(^{(a)}\)

Two questions arise: first, does the concept of education, conceived in liberal terms, preclude a literacy programme conducted on vocational lines, and secondly, does literacy necessarily have to be the bedrock, the issue being that it may be argued that there are alternative media of communication?

Jeffreys deals with the first question thus: "In antithesis to the liberal idea stands the view that all education is, in the broad sense, vocational - that people cannot be educated in perfectly general terms, but only in relation to some particular kind of society and some particular function in that society, that a culture which is out of touch with the life and work of the people is dead and that vocational bias does not degrade education but gives it significance and that there is in fact no meaning or purpose in developing personal qualities and abilities unless they are used in the service of the community. A system of education conceived on these lines will aim primarily at enabling the pupils to understand the world they are living in and to prepare themselves for living usefully and happily in it. At its worst vocational education is the acquisition of mere tricks of the trade. At its best it is the consecration of service, and can be as generous and philosophical as the apostles of the liberal tradition could wish, while possessing the added urgency of meaning that comes from the direct reference to social utility....

\(^{(a)}\) See also p. 355
The liberal ideal is valuable insofar as it reminds us that men are more than their functions, and that the function needs to be taken up into a philosophy and so redeemed from being merely toil or technique."

So far as the second question is concerned, it is doubtful if Jeffreys, writing in the 1950s, could have anticipated the role that television would play in the life of ordinary men and women. There are statistics available for average viewing hours and so on, but the following, an article from 'Try It' written (with editorial spelling corrections) by a student attending Adult Literacy Classes at the Coleridge Adult Centre in Cambridge, brings to life the role of television as the means of communication and of particular television programmes as the subject of communication during the working hours of ordinary people:

Life without the Box

Television has collected many nicknames over the years, such as the go blind, goggle box, vision to name but a few. We have come to take it for granted. That is to say, the generation to which I belong has not been without a Box in the corner. The conversation at work in the morning revolves around the television programs of the night before.

"Did you see the film last night?"
"What, the one on BBC2?"
"No."
"Not the rubbish on ITVI" "No, it was on BBC1."
Then comes the time.
"The late one?"
"No."
"The sexy one?"
"Yes. Great, wasn't it."
By half past eight the film has been re-played four or five times and if it was really sexy another two times at the tea break. In the afternoon things change.
"What's on tonight?" one bright spark says. The best time to come out with such poetry is a Wednesday afternoon between September and May.
"Football!" is shouted out.
"Who...?"
"It will be ___."
"No, it's more likely to be ___. They're in the cup."
"They'll be slaughtered."
"No they won't. It will be a walk over."

Before five o'clock arrives, the history of the team in question has been well turned over. Then home to the News, Crossroads. I was going to do something upstairs, but this looks good, and this too. Silence, the game is on, and in the morning will come the inquest. Monday is one pleasure these days. Just think, four matches, six or eight films, various detectives to discuss. It puts paid to that day's work.

But what if for some unthinkable reason you don't have a Box.

"Did you see...? Oh, you haven't, have you."

But to be without a television is not so bad as it sounds. There's football on the wireless, and you get all the results as soon as the games are over. There are good comedies too, and also there is the choice of many stations, which is especially good if you know German or French. Without the Box one can play records, or read. It makes it easier to get on with the jobs around the house because there isn't anything to plonk yourself down in front of. When all the jobs are done, you can walk the streets and look at all the things you cannot afford, and pause in front of the TV shop to look at the £350 worth of television that you get with the "free" licence worth £18... then home to your licence-free radio!

In fact there has been a general historical development into the use of communication technology. Flora Thompson records that in her Oxfordshire village of the 1890s, the Penny Reading was still the standard form of entertainment:

The star turn was given by an old gentleman from a neighbouring village, who, in his youth, had heard Dickens read his own works in public and aimed at reproducing in his own rendering the expression and mannerisms of the master. . . . . . . . . . . .

The bulk of his audience did not criticize; it enjoyed. The comic passages, featuring Pickwick, Dick Swiveller, or Sairy Gamp, were punctuated with bursts of laughter. Oliver Twist asking for more and the deathbed of Little Nell drew tears from the women and throat-clearings from the men.

The reader was so regularly encored that he had been obliged to cut down his items on the programme to two; which, in effect, was four, and, when he had finished his last reading and, with his hand on his heart, had bowed himself from the
platform, people would sigh and say to each other; 'Whatever comes next'll sound dull after that!'

They showed so much interest that one would naturally have expected them to get Dickens' books, of which there were several in the Parish Library, to read for themselves. But, with a very few exceptions, they did not, for, although they liked to listen, they were not readers. They were waiting, a public ready made, for the wireless and the cinema.

Equally, the successors of the illiterate labourers who shyly asked "laura" at the Post Office to write their letters for them, have taken naturally to the use of the telephone.

Is literacy, then, necessary in modern communication, and can we conceive of an educated man who is illiterate? Wilkinson argued the case for literacy on three grounds. First, the utilitarian argument: "its use is to manage our lives with even reasonable adequacy, at the level of functional literacy". Secondly, the psychological-sociological argument: "its use is as a skill which you have to have because everyone else does, so that you do not feel tenth-rate". Thirdly, the philosophical argument that derives from ontological assumptions: "both reading and writing imply individual uniqueness and are a bastion in its defence against the forces of conformity generated by modern social and political systems". The utilitarian argument is particularly weak, as one can easily imagine modern society so organised that literacy would not be necessary; to aver that someone must do something because everyone else does seems to reduce human beings to the level of Gadarene swine. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that, in a literate society, an advantage of being literate lies in conformity, and to many this is the basis for personal psychological security.
The third argument is that literacy is a means of retaining individualism. Insofar as the ability to read and write may help an individual to express through writing, or extend through reading, his individual experiences, this skill is no doubt useful, though as noted on page 9 illiterates can be highly individualistic. However, to possess the skill is certainly "not a bastion against the forces of conformity generated by social and political systems". The written word may be used to impose conformity, and so long as people believe that the written word has an authority beyond verbal communication, the State can exercise an unique control over public opinion through the judicious selection of texts for printing and for distribution. The Nazis burned some books - they did not burn the insane writings of their leader, which became compulsory texts.

Wilkinson has implied that reading and writing can be useful only insofar as the written word, as distinct from other means of communication, has two unique characteristics. First, the writer can express himself whilst reflecting, in a way he cannot in the spoken mode; whether he is writing poetry or logic, he can re-read and re-assess what he has written, alter particular words and re-organise the text to follow a new pattern of expression. Similarly the reader can re-read, reflect upon and re-assess passages and examine the precision of particular words. Obviously a tape can be replayed and reflected upon but its presentation is a temporal sequence making greater demands on memory. The argument for literacy as a means of retaining and extending individuality is perhaps strengthened if it is posited that the book is the most efficient medium so far discovered for the process of re-assessment.
How necessary is literacy?

Is literacy, then, useful for all people, but necessary only to those who wish to exercise a process of reflection? To say this does not imply that all should not be given the opportunity to reflect. Is it possible that the ability to be literate is analogous with the ability to be musical? Some people find it necessary to read music to appreciate music: the majority listen to music. Can it be argued that some people find it necessary to read and write, but the majority can 'make do' with aural and oral communication?

This is the crux of the matter: most of the discussions about reading and writing refer to a comprehensive abstraction - literacy - and because of this inexactitude there is a misunderstanding of such questions as: 'Is literacy useful?' 'Is literacy necessary?' If generalisations are discarded, and the particular is considered, then these questions take on meaning and some of the myths surrounding the subject may be avoided.

The written word is an universal; the ability to write comprehends a series of levels of achievement, ranging from the prose of Gibbon to instructional nouns placed on street corners. The ability to read comprehends similarly different levels of achievement.

Consequently, the question 'How necessary is literacy?' dissolves into questions:

- How necessary is it for B to read at Y level?
- How necessary is it for B to write at Y level?
- How necessary is it for B to read at X level?
- How necessary is it for B to write at X level?
How necessary is it for Z to read at B's level?
How necessary is it for Z to write at B's level?

Put in this way, it is clear that 'necessity to achieve a standard of literacy' depends upon whether B's circumstances require a reading and writing level to the degree Y or to the degree X, or a reading level to the degree Y and a writing level to the degree X, or vice-versa. It may also be decided that B has attained a minimum acceptable level (by some criteria at present unspecified) and that the question: 'How necessary is literacy?' means identifying B's requirements and ensuring that everyone else conforms.

In practice, so little is known about illiterate adults in the United Kingdom that the necessity for literacy, as reflected in the aims of a literacy campaign, is often based on an abstraction of the needs of B. For example, the BBC TV broadcasts 'On the move' in 1975 were thought, from their inception, to have a teaching content which assumed that B was totally illiterate; it was more sensible to place B at the bottom of the scale of literacy, where the nature of the UK population was unknown, than to attempt to gear the programmes to a B at a nodal point which was, by definition, unidentifiable.

In theoretical terms, the above analysis suggests a way of handling the arguments put forward by Marshall McLuhan based on the premise that the form of the medium, rather than content, determines what is being communicated. The treatise refers to a host of well-known characters, living and dead, (for example, on page 289, ten artists are quoted) and refers to 'facts' from all types of disciplines. Read in detail, the effect of name-dropping is to make the logic appear suspect; there is an over-simplification of
the 'facts': for example, from the field of economics, it is 
alleged that "Keynes discovered the dynamics of money as a medium" 
and that "the printed word with its specialist intensity burst the 
monks of medieval corporate guilds and monasteries, creating extreme 
individualistic patterns of enterprise and monopoly". (p.142) It is 
perhaps appropriate to view the work as a useful poetic insight into 
the problems of innovation in communication technology.

McLuhan argues that the discovery of electricity has given rise 
to forms of communication which differ from those of the printed word 
or the spoken word without technical aids. The nature of the medium, 
be it television or the telephone, is of such a degree of psycho­
logical importance that it alters the content of what is being 
communicated. This seems to say no more than that an invitation to 
dinner given by someone dressed in Nazi-SS uniform is not the same 
thing as an invitation from a conventionally dressed person. But 
McLuhan goes further; he sees electric power and the radio-wave 
technology derived from it as converting "the world to a village" 
(p.8), and then argues that "the message" of any medium or technology 
is "the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into 
human affairs" (p.8). "Message" is used in a particular way, and 
the meaning of the sentence is no more than that a technological 
innovation changes, to some degree, the environment in which some 
people, or perhaps all people, operate. Such an assertion is not 
too startling.

Nevertheless, McLuhan's work draws attention to the multiplicity 
of alternate methods of communication discovered since the application 
of electricity and radio-waves on a large scale. Secondly, it 
expresses an anxiety that 'literate man' either does not understand
technical innovation or, if he understands it, is somehow opposed to the alternates to literacy.

"We have confused reason with literacy, and rationalism with a single technology. Thus in the electric age man seems to the conventional west to become irrational" (p.15). "Because of its action in extending our central nervous system, electric technology seems to favor the inclusive and participational spoken word over the specialist written word. Our western values, built on the written word, have already been considerably affected by the electric media of telephone, radio, and TV" (p.82). To this insight we should perhaps add the tape-recorder.

So far the 'literate man' is pictured as somewhat slow in the uptake, but McLuhan is not satisfied with this; 'literate man', to him, is also dangerous. "The same separation of sight and sound and meaning that is peculiar to the phonetic alphabet also extends to its social and psychological effects. Literate man undergoes much separation of his imaginative, emotional, and sense life, as Rousseau (and later the Romantic poets and philosophers) proclaimed long ago," (pp.87 & 88). The thematic Rousseau view of the splendid native unsullied by chemical soap is continued: "Literate man, once having accepted an analytic technology of fragmentation, is not so accessible to cosmic patterns as tribal man. He prefers separateness and compartmented spaces, rather than the open cosmos." But by page 156 'literate man' is somewhat redeemed for "Primitive man lived in a much more tyrannical cosmic machine than western literate man has ever invented." Thus, we are to conclude that, though 'literate man' is not quite in the vanguard of the communications industry, he has made some progress over primitive man.
However, 'literate man' is not to be let off lightly, for by page 178 McLuhan returns to the attack: "Permeation of the colloquial language with literate uniform qualities has flattened out educated speech till it is a very reasonable acoustic facsimile of the uniform and continuous visual effects of typography. From this technological effect follows the further fact that the humour, slang, and dramatic vigor of American-English speech are monopolies of the semi-literate."

McLuhan has performed a useful service, in that the extreme position of a literate person who refuses to acknowledge the role of other media simply on the grounds that they are not as good as, or that they replace, literature, is untenable. But most literate people do not assume such a stance. Other media are important in creating popular attitudes or even sectional attitudes. Other media sometimes aid the spread of literature; the television play of the book more often than not leads more people to read the book and to the reissue of the book. Other media can offer different kinds of experience.

But different experiences of content do not mean that each experience is the content, or that the medium is the content, or that somehow the content changes with the medium. The television broadcast of a struggle between police and rioters will describe the same content as a short newspaper report, though the interpretation will depend largely on the established preconceptions of the viewer or reader. The difference is that viewing the riot on television calls for quick reactions - a reaction must take place before the film is over; the reader of the newspaper article on the same event can reflect, turn over the page, re-read each passage.
This process of reflection does not mean necessarily re-reading a passage by a physical action to re-assess the meaning. Rather, the argument comprehends both the possibility of understanding a passage at several levels and the possibility of a physical action to re-read the passage to comprehend at a further or deeper level. In fact, the professional writer takes this phenomenon into account; in a letter to Pascal Covici about 'The Grapes of Wrath', written from Los Gatos in January 1939, John Steinbeck wrote: "There are five layers in this book, a reader will find as many as he can and he won't find more than he has in himself." 28 In this sense, technology may affect the opportunities to reflect, but it does not in some mysterious way gather unto itself the attribute of controlling the content.

McLuhan's 'literate man' does not exist; what does exist is a spectrum of literate abilities. Thus, a fairly literate person may need to see the film or the TV play of 'War and Peace' before reading the book, whereas a more fully literate person will probably simply read it as a classic of literature. Different people will use the alternative means of communication in different ways; contrary to McLuhan's thesis, different ways of communicating may well be both introduced and welcomed more by the literate than the illiterate. McLuhan does not provide any empirical evidence on this issue. Moreover, different media appeal to different people in differing degrees at different times. McLuhan's contribution of setting up the 'literate man' as an Aunt Sally leaves us still without an answer to the questions: How necessary is literacy, what level of literacy is necessary to function in society, and how important are the alternatives?
We have seen how education is a state to which we may all aspire, but to which, in absolute terms, there is no terminal. If literacy has various levels of achievement, is it not possible to assert that there is no ultimate achievement in literacy? It is not possible to learn all the combinations of words and phrases possible within the English language, nor can we read or learn all the literature at our disposal. Is not the process of becoming literate part of the process of becoming educated, that is, the nurture of personal growth?

The educated man

Growth is an end in itself, a fulfilment at each stage of living; it is personal in the sense that if a man adjusts to his reading, he not only responds to the content of the written words but brings his own individual consciousness to the symbols. Viewed in this way, the aims of literacy are ultimately those of education; one part of being an educated man is the ability to be literate, and insofar as it is necessary to be educated, so it is necessary to be literate. We know that some are better educated than others; we accept as a moral value that people should reach the limits of their potential in educational terms, and so, to be consistent, must we argue for literacy. We accept that our duty is to provide the opportunity for education; so must literacy be included as part of the concept of educational opportunity. It is argued that those who cannot reach beyond certain levels of education because of special disabilities nonetheless deserve consideration and help; so would we support literacy tuition for those whose achievements will be necessarily limited?
It is for people at this minimal level of possible achievement that literacy classes may be run which do not exceed the process of matching certain key social words to a list learned by rote. But in this case it is not literacy which is being taught; what is happening is that the students' limitations are being reduced by the provision of certain techniques to make social functioning that much easier. If this is the case, are we sure that those very mundane techniques in matching words are sufficient? Is it not that the students require a package of techniques which together form the content of basic adult education, in which basic literacy is but one constituent? Consequently, it may be easier to sustain the thesis that society, whatever its technology, requires individuals to be educated at a minimum level of basic education than it is to argue the case for one particular skill, whether it be literacy or numeracy or kinaesthetic ability.

At this point it is worth recalling McLuhan, for his thesis that the written word is not the sole means of communication is apposite. Consideration should, perhaps, be given to whether adult basic education should be presented through an alternative medium of communication for people incapable of grasping more than the most rudimentary facets of literacy.

Nevertheless, if it is accepted that the value of the written word is the capacity to allow the individual to reflect, then the uniqueness of the argument for teaching literacy to people of normal capacity who are, by fortuitous circumstances, illiterate, is precisely the argument for taking the education of people to the highest possible level: it is to give them the opportunity to soar intellectually, for symbols
reassure the mind that we need not depend exclusively upon mundane experience. In other words, the ultimate aims of literacy derive from our notion of what 'ought' to be done; as one tutor put it, "to produce a rounded person", and as such, these aims derive from philosophical stances.

In summary, the argument is that there is a band of literacy abilities, the highest of which is the ability to re-assess reflectively; that the ultimate aims of teaching literacy derive from our view of man's role and place in the universe; that there is a series of levels, each with a sub-aim of a type which can be derived from the nature of literacy as such, from societal requirements or individual psychological need, but that these sub-aims only make sense in the framework of a philosophical conceptual system.

If this thesis is a correct generalisation, how far does it explain the assumptions of some of the programmes of adult literacy education mounted in various parts of the world.
CHAPTER III

THE PURPOSIVE IMPLICATIONS OF VARIOUS PROJECTS FOR MASS ADULT LITERACY

In 1966 UNESCO launched an Experimental World Literacy Programme (a) and announced that major pilot projects had been started in twelve countries (Algeria, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guinea, India, Iran, Madagascar, Mali, Sudan, Syria, Tanzania and Venezuela), designed to evaluate 'the selective-intensive strategy of work-orientated functional literacy'. The basic aim of the Experimental World Literacy Programme, as identified by UNESCO, was "to shed light on the nature of the inter-relationship between literacy and development and to study its significance". ²⁹

The notion was, first, to associate the amelioration of individual illiteracy with the growth of individual technical knowledge and, secondly, to link individual performance with national economic development.

Since the idea of functional literacy assumed such a degree of importance in international literacy discussions, it is worth summarising in some detail one of the most precise arguments for a functional literacy approach put forward, that of C. Maguerez. ³⁰

Literacy as part of a technical training programme

Maguerez argued that local technical staff needed to be trained quickly and urgently if third-world countries were to develop. However, as most of the labour force from which they would be drawn was illiterate,

(a) Many of the ideas of the E.W.L.P. advanced in this chapter have subsequently been elaborated in "The Experimental World Literacy Programme - a critical assessment", UNESCO, Paris 1976
training had to take place in the form of either teaching the labour force to read and write in its own language, or to read and write in the 'vehicular' language inherited from the former colonial power, usually English or French.

Though it was not essential to teach such technical personnel to read and write, the normal system was to deal with the problem of literacy before undertaking any technical training, and the results were usually disappointing in that few literates emerging from mass literacy campaigns were in fact given the opportunity for further technical training. Thus, there was a growing body of under-employed or unemployed literates.

Maguerrez also argued that, not only could the illiterate worker not read and write, he could not understand images, technical data nor the efficient use of time. Progress in dealing with the problems of literacy depends more on a broad approach to problems of coping with technology than on a specific focus on reading and writing.

Consequently, training is to be linked to the environment - the workplace; training is to be global, mixing language study, reading, writing, drawing, (and the reading of drawings), general knowledge, technical training, arithmetic and manual training. Moreover, training must come from teachers of the same environment as the trainees, having a level of instruction one step higher, so as to ensure maximum communication between trainer and trainee.

In this way, the words learnt will be repeated actively as they are used in work, and not passively. For example, the word 'file' is introduced in a class about the tools of a fitter. Having seen the tool, the trainee writes down the word 'file'. Reinforcement of the word takes place when the trainee uses the tool again in his workshop duties and in his daily life.
It then follows that the vocabulary being taught must become useful immediately, so that the nature and extent of the vocabulary is functionally orientated. The tasks to be given to the trainee are carefully analysed so that the aims are specified in terms of each function.

Maguerez allows that some additions may be made to the trainee's general knowledge but such a divergence from the attainment of the specified objectives determined by the job analysis must be restricted.

As the literacy programme is defined in these precise terms, it is not necessary for the teachers to be instructed in the wider terms of education theory; they need only to know a little more than the trainee and their understanding of the wider educational implications of their activity will arise solely from their sharing the same social, professional and racial background as the trainees. Hence, the best literacy teacher for Algerian miners is an Algerian mine-foreman.

Such a functional literacy programme implies a conjunction of work analysis - the content of the course - and language analysis, the basic vocabulary and grammar, which is to be taught during the course. In practice, the cost of the resource materials is considerable, though motivation is high.

Until 1966 the definition of functional literacy usually accorded with that given by the International Committee of Experts in Literacy, convened by UNESCO in June 1962; namely: "that a person is literate when he has acquired the essential knowledge and skills which enable him to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in his group and community, and whose attainments in reading, writing and arithmetic make it possible for him to continue to use these skills towards his own and the community's development".
As Bowers points out, this says tautologically: "Literacy is required (is functional) for what literacy is required for". The term 'function' invited difficulty, because 'function' suggests the capability to achieve specified aims, in the same way that a functional building suggests a building for a particular purpose. Maguerrez avoids this problem of circularity in definition because his concept of work-orientated functional literacy identifies the aims as the capacity to fulfil a task and "literacy" means no more than the literate component of that task. It is technical/vocational training applied intensively to a selected part of the population in which the extent of literate knowledge acquired is circumscribed by the technical, and it lacks the vision of the 1962 UNESCO definition in that it does not suggest that literacy, as a skill, must be a permanent acquisition continuously utilised and, as a personal talent, capable of being used for the benefit of the community in a general way.

**Literacy programmes with economic and social aims**

This point was developed in a description of literacy given in the Final Report of the Teheran Conference in 1965. "Adult literacy, an essential element in overall development, must be closely linked to economic and social priorities and to present and future manpower needs. All efforts should therefore tend towards functional literacy. Rather than an end in itself, literacy should be regarded as a way of preparing man for a social, civic and economic role that goes far beyond the limits of rudimentary literacy training consisting merely in the teaching of reading and writing. The very process of learning to read and write should be made an opportunity for acquiring
information that can immediately be used to improve living standards; reading and writing should lead not only to elementary general knowledge but to training for work, increased productivity, a greater participation in civic life and a better understanding of the surrounding world, and should ultimately open the way to basic human culture.

Consequently, whereas 'functional literacy' as used in the early 1950s meant a standard of literacy which could be used for such practical purposes as reading newspapers and writing letters, it now means a strategy for learning rather than a level of knowledge, and the aim now, as argued in the preceding chapter, should be that of producing the educated man. Further, again parallel to the previous discussion, there seems to be an acceptance of the idea that there are several levels of literacy, that although the ultimate aim is to produce the educated man, there are sub-aims which lead progressively and consequentially towards that ultimate aim.

For these reasons, work-orientated functional literacy allows some addition to the trainee's general knowledge, as a step towards the educated man. Similarly, culture-orientated functional literacy describes a further step along the road to the final production of the educated person.

Culture-orientated functional literacy describes a strategy in which literacy training is thoroughly within the context of the trainee's culture. Maguerez acknowledges the importance of culture

(a) But see references, passim, in the rest of this study which suggest that many people, even those directly concerned with current literacy schemes, have not thought through to the practical implications of this approach in terms of organisation and teaching methods.

(b) See p.257
when he insists that teachers should be from the same cultural background as trainees. The culture-orientated protagonists of this approach pointed to such errors as that in the Shipibo primer, which included the phrase "laughing at paternal uncle", a phrase considered offensive, being contrary to Shipibo cultural behaviour.

As concept, the attention to culture seems to be no more than starting from the known and proceeding to the unknown. But the culture-orientated schemes are acceptable in that an understanding of one's immediate environment may lead to a wider knowledge, and certainly the 1965 UNESCO description of functional literacy suggested, in the final phrase of "basic human culture", the educational aim of an understanding of humanity at large.

Indeed, in August 1972 at Tokyo, the Director-General of UNESCO stated: "What we call functional education at UNESCO is the same thing as what some of the conference materials call 'integral' education..........UNESCO is an essentially humanist organisation for which man is an integral whole, a pluri-dimensional being for whom a limited functional approach is by no means adequate."[33]

The adjective 'functional' could then, perhaps, disappear as redundant, but the Director-General considered that "the idea of functional purpose ought to be kept in as education is not an end in itself..........we emphasise the relationships between education and society's needs and between education and the motivation and aspirations of the individual..

As if to emphasise this view, in 1974 UNESCO announced that "the work-orientated approach will continue to be used, insofar as it is supported by a specific country and corresponds to its needs. But UNESCO is now also willing to support large-scale programs and even mass campaigns at the national level."[34]
Not only has literacy been placed back where it philosophically belongs, in the mainstream of adult education, but also claims that technological advance results from literacy have been largely dropped. In the latter case, 'functional' implied the aim of economic growth. The acquisition of literacy became somehow equated with the acquisition of an industrial chemical plant, and the tools of economics were brought to bear. Blaug has argued that "it was realistic to look for economic consequences of functional literacy at the level of the participant and possibly at the level of the work unit. At the level of the community the exercise was dubious: at the level of the whole economy, it had little practicality."35

There are fundamental theoretical economic arguments for agreeing with Blaug's statement, but the point to be made is to question whether literacy is a matter of economics at all. Indeed, so weak has been the performance of economists in showing that literacy leads to higher productivity, that the political aim of trying to prove that somehow literacy was 'good business' has rather backfired. Unfortunately, because economists cannot prove a necessary economic benefit from literacy, literacy programmes have been thought to be less successful than they possibly were. (a)

(a) See also Ch.XI pp.2423 for a different interpretation of 'functional literacy' which can be inferred from the attitudes of those students who agreed to tape-recorded interviews after a period of study.
Literacy programmes in an educational context

Thus, the argument for literacy should be based on the argument for universal education, and it is interesting that in the past fifty years, where society in developing countries made up its mind that literacy ought to be the norm, Soviet Russia in the 1920s, China in 1950 and Cuba in 1961, mass literacy campaigns have proved successful. In each of these cases, the mass literacy campaign has been conceived in terms of adult education as defined by the societal objectives of a communist revolution. There seems no a priori reason why such objectives should not be achieved by a non-communist society if the grounds for action are rooted in firm philosophical arguments, based on the concept of man as a thinking being. Perhaps this is precisely the basis of the humanistic approach suggested by Paulo Freire.36

While it should be noted that Freire seems to be constantly reformulating his anthropological concepts, the main burden of his current thesis is as follows: "Man is an active element within the world around him. His action consists in transforming, historicizing and humanising his world. Consequently, literacy methods must be based on a critical and scientific analysis of the world and of man born to live in it...." The world is the anvil upon which man acts, provided man is aware of his "ontological vocation" as a transformer. Through the development of a critical sense of history and a critical conscience, living conditions may be changed. Freire apparently considers that the capacity to act is presently the privilege of the few who see development in terms of technology and productivity. What is required, therefore, is a humanistic programme involving all members of the population in the process of transforming the world. As in developing countries a large percentage are unable to read or write,
Mass literacy is the means to liberation and the context in which individual "conscientization" takes place. Consequently, the approach of the Freire activists is to encourage illiterates to ask questions about the world, their future role in the world and the historical reasons for their present position in that world. Through dialogue, they become aware of themselves as human beings, and of their vocation; new words are the instruments of human creativity, of transformation, both personal and social, and of communication.

It is worth pointing out how much Freire is a product of Latin America which is, incidentally, one of the most complex of human societies. First, there is the enormous gap between the few rich and the many poor; the middle class, where it exists, is of recent origin and relatively small in number. Secondly, most of the countries contain a variety of racial groups, and each socio-economic layer usually coincides with a racial group. Thirdly, the pressure of population on developed resources is continuous and extreme, so that increases in total national real wealth rarely result in similar increases in per capita wealth. Fourthly, the grinding poverty which seems to be the lot of most of the population was (and often still is) only made bearable by a degree of 'other-worldliness', exemplified by the display of extreme devotionalism in the Catholic church or in primary mystical cults derived from the pre-Christian era in both Latin America and Africa. Conditions, of course, vary between one country and another, but the characteristic attitude of the poor in Latin America is one of acceptance supported by the mystical, and it is to these conditions that Freire addresses himself.
Literacy is the vehicle of hope, but if hope in a better future is not confirmed by some substantial immediate social or economic gain, the poor are hardly likely to be impressed. It seems doubtful if Freire's doctrines will work in practice, because, though his aims are long-term, his methods of approach are short-term without positive implications for the attainment of the long-term. He seeks long-term social change, and provides the poor with, perhaps, an ability to read and write, in skill terms, without at the same time having the means to extend the economic and social opportunities for the exercise of those skills. An Indian community in a remote village may be given certain literacy skills; they may well understand more, but where does it lead them? There are no more doctors, no more jobs for new literates, no more opportunities for Indians qua Indians, and no changes in land tenure laws. Yet they have been sold the message that literacy equals political action equals (if it is to mean anything) the implementation of social justice.

Whilst Freire's contribution is his sensitive insight into the Latin American problem of hopeless passivity, nevertheless his logical aim is of a major social reorganisation, which may be accomplished by education on a broad front in which literacy is only one constituent. Thus, though his method is literacy, his purpose is adult basic education, because his aim implies that adult basic education is a necessary condition for success. The argument is supported if we turn to the definition used by the A.P.L. Project in the Southern States of the United States: "... it should be clear that the concern of the APL Project is much more than the stereotypical notion of literacy. Because the term 'literacy' popularly connotes a low level of functioning (e.g. the ability to read and write one's name) which
may have nothing to do with functional competence, we have chosen to excise the word 'literacy' from the rest of this exposition. Instead, we will consistently use the phrase 'functional competency'. This practice seems to be preferable to re-educating the whole world concerning the true meaning of literacy."

The Adult Performance Level team, at the University of Texas in Austin, accept the fact that what is in question is adult basic education, not simply literacy, and the materials they have produced are, in consequence, those which raise the competency of adults to deal with the problems of the society in which they live. The appropriate necessary 'functions' are determined by an inspection of the demands on individuals by the society as presently organised, including the acceptance of income as a criterion of success. It is, perhaps, disturbing that there is not an equal emphasis on the question of whether or not the current social organisation is desirable.

'Functionality' is, therefore, a conceptual derivative of utility; sometimes the usefulness of the objective is defined in terms of technical competence (Maguerz), in terms of economic and social development (the early UNESCO definitions) or in terms of political action (Freire), and as the ends broaden from technical competence to political action, so does the argument for a specific literacy programme weaken, and the argument for an educational thrust on a broad front strengthen.

The difficulty of identifying the aims of literacy education may be caused by a tendency to conceptual short-circuitry, whereby literacy abilities are thought to lead towards ultimate goals which, in practice, cannot be reached through literacy alone.
If the activity of mass illiteracy education is seen as being part of the extension of knowledge, within the first concept of a field of knowledge, then literacy education is part of a broad front of education. Education is here regarded as desirable in Peters' term as 'a contingent consequence of certain people's valuations.' The long-term goal is to produce the educated man capable of operating within both the fields of knowledge and the forms of knowledge who, because he is educated, produces social and economic advance. 'Advance' is here postulated as an activity defined as resulting from being educated, on the grounds that, without education, 'advance' cannot be identified. The complete logical circuit is, therefore, literacy plus other skills leading to education, and education leading to political, social and economic action which, in turn, create opportunities for the acquisition and exercise of other skills to add to those associated with literacy. On these grounds, there is reason to doubt the validity of literacy schemes whose short-term objectives are not differentiated from, nor linked to, long-term objectives, and whose organisation at the levels of basic literacy instruction attempt to treat literacy as a form of knowledge rather than a field. This epistemological position having been established, it is appropriate now to introduce the mass literacy project mounted in the United Kingdom in 1975, which may be properly described as pragmatic, though two texts, widely read by tutors and discussed on pp. 133-139 take a more long-term, philosophical view.
The Adult Literacy Project in the United Kingdom in 1975

The literacy campaign in the United Kingdom may be dated from November 1973 when, by means of a conference organised by the British Association of Settlements, a national 'Right to Read' committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Lady Plowden, with a membership representing a wide range of organisations, including the British Broadcasting Corporation. This committee, retitled the National Committee for Adult Literacy, skilfully influenced political and, to some extent, public opinion to the degree that by June 1975 a number of institutions, ad hoc bodies and volunteers, working together, had provided a range of organisational and educational resources. There is no doubt that, without the initiative and support of the BBC, funds or real resources at central and local government levels would not have been made available, given the economic circumstances of 1975/76.

1. The BBC's provision

a) Television

(1) 'On the Move' - from October 1975, a series of 50 programmes, each lasting 10 minutes, relayed on Sundays at 18.05 hours (BBC1) with 2 repeats later in the week. The quality of these programmes was such that in May 1976 'On the Move' won the Royal Television Society's Original Programme Award. The structure of the series assumed that students were totally illiterate and aimed to attract students to sources of further assistance. The series was repeated 1976/77.
(ii) 'Your Move' - from October 1976, a series of 20 programmes, each lasting 25 minutes, shown on Sundays at 12.10 hours (BBC1) and repeated Thursdays at 19.05 hours (BBC2). It "would address itself unambiguously to the non-reader, trying to give him a successful learning experience which might tempt him to seek further help locally."

Plans were made for repeating both these series, with remakes as necessary, in 1977/78.

(iii) Television - associated printed material
   a) a student's workbook with exercises to supplement 'On the Move';
   b) a student's workbook to supplement 'Your Move'.

(iv) Television publicity - for example, adult literacy was made the subject of a 'Panorama' broadcast in October 1975.

b) Radio
   (i) Broadcasts to recruit volunteer tutors began in May 1975; these were usually short talks within popular 'magazine' or 'disc-jockey'-compered programmes.

   (ii) 'Teaching Adults to Read' - from September 1975, a series of 8 programmes, each lasting 20 minutes, relayed on Wednesdays at 19.00 hours as part of the Radio Three 'Lifelines' period. The series was repeated in 1976.

   (iii) 'Next Move' - from March 1977, a series of 20 5-minute programmes of readings for students, relayed on Thursdays at 18.45 hours (Radio 2), repeated Sundays at 17.50. The readers were well known radio and/or TV personalities.
Radio-associated print material issued in:

a) May 1975: the BBC Adult Literacy Handbook for tutors;

b) February 1977: 'Next Move' students' reading book for the 'Next Move' radio transmissions.

c) Records
Discs of the signature tunes to 'On the Move' and 'Your Move' were issued in September 1975 and September 1976 respectively.

d) Cassettes
a) In Summer 1975 encouragement was given to tape 'Teaching Adults to Read'.
b) 'Next Move' readings available on tape March 1977 (BBC-produced cassettes)

e) BBC Liaison Officers - produced information sheets, participated in conferences, maintained various channels of communication between the BBC and other providers of resources.

2. Independent Television Companies' provision

a) Central Office of Information public service 'commercial' informing viewers of literacy service was relayed in various regions, beginning in February 1976.

b) Various regional independent television companies ran features on the problems of adult literacy from 1974 onwards (e.g. Granada programmes - Manchester region provision)
3. The Referral Service (Adult Literacy Support Services Fund) was a registered charity funded principally by the Ford Foundation, with staff seconded from the BBC. It maintained a central office in London for the United Kingdom and England, with regional offices in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. A phone number was screened for volunteer tutors and for would-be students to contact the service; particulars of such contacts were sent on a form to Local Authority areas, and representatives of the Local Authorities then contacted each volunteer tutor or student to complete the participatory arrangements. The referral service opened on 1 October 1975.

4. The Adult Literacy Resource Agency provision

AIRA was instituted in February 1975, initially for one year which was extended for a further two years, with an annual grant from central government of £1-million. The Agency provided each Local Authority, according to its requirements, with resources such as tele-recorders, tape-recorders, books, etc. From February 1976 onwards the prior purposes of the AIRA grants to Local Authorities were for training and for the salaries of organising staff. The AIRA staff organised conferences and disseminated information, largely through regular two-monthly Newsletters. Their principal publications were:

(i) 'The Trainers' Kit' - with tape recording - June 1975

(ii) 'The Volunteer Tutor Resource Pack' - with tape recording - November 1975

(iii) 'An Approach to Functional Literacy' - a manual for tutors - February 1977
(iv) 'Helping Adults to Spell' - June 1977
(v) 'Teaching Adults to Read' - 1977
(vi) 'Training in Adult Literacy Schemes' - 1977

By April 1977, two films also had been produced by AIRA: 'Literacy 1975-76' and 'Teaching Adults to Read'.

5. The Local Authorities' provision

The Local Authorities were responsible for providing local information for intending volunteer tutors and would-be students, for operating their own referral service as well as receiving the BBC referrals, for the provision of accommodation, for the local administrative organising staff, for training courses, for local liaison with other services such as the library service and the social services, and for all other local resources, from books to videotapes and resource centres. Where there were voluntary associations for literacy, the Local Authorities often supplies real resources such as accommodation or professional staff support.

It was at Local Authority level that the effects of the five sets of providers listed above had to coalesce, to present to each student a humane and effective service, and, so far as Local Authority providers were concerned, the initiative seemed to be a reaction to a not-clearly-specified problem of mass adult literacy; therefore the purposes of the activity were either not defined or assumed to be the acquisition of skill or, in some way, of personal confidence. For example, Lesson Content 2 of Lesson Pack No.6 of the Adult Literacy Resource Agency Lesson Kit for trainers of adult literacy tutors suggests that a student's long-term objectives may be:
"(a) to build up his own self-confidence;
(b) to achieve fluency in reading and writing;
(c) to improve his handwriting;
(d) to narrow the gap between his ability at reading and writing."

The emphases are clearly on dealing pragmatically with the immediate problems of students who are likely to come forward for help. There is nothing long-term about this. Nor is there any link with a theory of education. Rather it is a series of 'ad hoc' solutions claiming, no doubt, to deal with the practical problems of students. But do these achieve any long-term aims, and are there not implicit long-term aims in the minds of tutors? These problems will be examined later; suffice it to state that the pragmatic approach adopted in the United Kingdom constitutes the background to this study.

At a course held by the Adult Literacy Resource Agency in London on 2nd January 1976, a list of nearly 80 questions culled from organisers and representative tutors contained only three questions about the philosophic basis of the national scheme, namely:

"(i) Do we need a philosophy for the adult literacy project, that is, from becoming a mere extension of schooling to a step towards the 'global classroom'?
(ii) If we agree that learning to read is a political act, what are we doing about it? and
(iii) If we don't, then what are we teaching people to read for?"

One organiser at the same conference reported: "....nevertheless (we should) make it plain that what we do is academic. There are some very 'woolly' training schemes'. 'Academic' can be interpreted as including purposeful concepts; the word certainly implies more than 'ad hoc' reactions to vaguely defined problems. The use of
the word 'academic' may also suggest that the organizer has in mind the concept of literacy as a 'form of knowledge'.

This discussion of various mass literacy projects has, however, shown that these projects lie more within the philosophical activity defined by Hirst as 'fields of knowledge', that the aims of the schemes often account for the nature of the projects' linguistic, psychological and social approach. In most cases their aims connote more than training in the skills of reading or writing, and, indeed, the pragmatic approach in the United Kingdom may well imply that, from training in reading and writing, presently unspecified philosophical objectives will be reached. With a little luck these philosophical objectives will be identified in the future, by a process of the extrapolation of individual achievements on the part of tutors and of students. Though there is a lack of a conceptual framework of philosophical aims for describing the United Kingdom initiative, there is a theoretical case for arguing that the pragmatic approach is appropriate at this stage and in this situation. The dangers of this approach, however, as argued on p.48 and footnote, is that both the organisation and teaching methods which tend to be engendered by it may have a detrimental effect on the student's development, precisely because a philosophic stance has not been adopted at the outset (see p. 201).

In developing countries the term 'mass adult literacy project' describes a campaign to reduce illiteracy in the mass of the population, amounting to some 70-80%; in the United Kingdom, the term describes a massive propaganda campaign to reduce illiteracy in a relatively small section of the adult population, the known figure of those willing to accept tuition being some 150,000, 7.5% of the estimated 'two million illiterates' over the period mid-1974 to mid-1977.
Hence, in developing countries, a conceptual system with an overall aim and with a derived method of teaching directed at the mean will probably be appropriate to about half the population, because the distribution of abilities will have a central tendency towards the mean which, by definition includes about 68% of the population with one standard deviation. This is not the case in the United Kingdom; statistically, the relatively small proportion of the population involved implies the absence of such a central tendency. Moreover, as most of the United Kingdom illiterates have had some schooling, the problem is not illiteracy as such, but remedial literacy. The emphasis is on various skills and on repair work, and the problem may be seen as mainly diagnosing gaps, so that each individual diagnosis determines the objective.

As examples, these quotations from students show the diversity of individual problems:

Reading is not much of a problem, it's the spelling.

and

I just read the newspaper and any books I can pick up.
Writing is terrible - I can join up my writing now (after six one-hour lessons)

and

I can read quite reasonably, slower than some, but I reverse b's and d's, I have difficulty in spelling. I can know a word but if asked to write it down I get it wrong. My problem is self-consciousness, the fact that I was made to look silly at school. I'm extremely good at Mathematics, I finished up top of the class in Mathematics; in English, bottom. From eleven years of age you were taught you're going to be a secretary; in no way were they (the teachers) impressed! A word can be explained to me. I can write it down and tell you how to spell it - and ten minutes later it's gone. I have more difficulty with small words than with large.

and

I can read all right, it's writing.
and

I could write my name and address, and that's all I could write, I couldn't read.

and

I had an accident, fell out of a window, so you see letters are difficult.

and

Yes, I could read 'and' and I would recognise 'cycle', but it's very difficult to write.

In addition to the variety of needs explained by the above testimonies, there are a number of students in classes who are defined as educationally handicapped, students for whom English is a second language, and a few students about to leave school who require extra tuition.

Although this may account for the current approach in the United Kingdom, nevertheless, there is still a case for asking why people should be taught to improve their reading and/or writing, and for arguing that implicit aims are present.

However, some of the philosophical approaches tried elsewhere, in particular that of Freire, seem to make rather grandiose claims for the ultimate aims of literacy as literacy, and perhaps a little pragmatism would have avoided the specification of ultimate objectives which are properly attainable, not by literacy education solely, but rather by education with a literacy component. As Peters says: "On philosophical grounds alone, any curriculum composed of subjects, each structured to objectives within one mode, would do scant justice to the complex interrelations between the modes," and "Developing a person's knowledge and experience necessarily involves developing these in the different modes, but it does not mean that one must concern oneself with each separately in isolation from all others."
Nevertheless, the schemes tried elsewhere, and again particularly by Freire, do make their aims explicit, and fulfil the criteria of Hirst that advances in knowledge, if they are to mean anything, must be subject to some form of public discussion. The fundamental problem with the present United Kingdom approach, as argued on p. 62, is that the philosophical criteria for 'success' have to be identified by extrapolation of tutors' attitudes and students' achievements, and until these are identified, the philosophic aims cannot be open to discussion.

The problems of adult literacy have, so far, been considered in broad international and national terms. This study is primarily concerned with students and tutors in Cambridgeshire during 1975-77. However, my concurrent involvement in the national literacy research project, funded by the Department of Education and Science, suggested that the Cambridgeshire experience, in general, accorded with that of the majority of the English and Welsh counties.

The next chapter describes the environment in which students and tutors lived and the various forms of organisation for literacy tuition which, to a large extent, determined the conditions in which student and tutors learned from each other.
CHAPTER IV

THE ORGANISATION OF LITERACY PROJECTS IN CAMBRIDGE

The present County of Cambridgeshire, which was set up in accordance with the Local Government Act of 1972, with effect from 1st April 1974, consists of the former local authority areas of the Soke of Peterborough, the Isle of Ely, the Counties of Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire and the City of Cambridge.

The land is mainly used for agriculture; the southernmost part of the new county has a gently undulating terrain with mixed farming, including animal husbandry, whilst the remainder is part of the East Anglian plain, mostly Fenland, where dykes rather than hedges separate the arable crops of wheat, potatoes and sugar beet. Small areas specialise in the growing of vegetables and fruit, particularly soft fruit.

The two main centres of population are the cities of Cambridge in the south and Peterborough in the north. Cambridge is, of course, famous for its University and its Colleges, the first of which, Peterhouse, was founded in AD 1280. Academic fame and the wealth of historic buildings has made the city one of the major tourist centres of England, on the itinerary of most American and continental visitors and a year-round mecca for foreign language students.

The University is the major employer in the city, followed by two medium-sized engineering companies and a food processing complex beyond the north-eastern boundary. The city houses a new regional hospital and administrative offices of Civil Service and Local Government and a wide range of companies in the insurance and
consultancy fields; recent additions have been a number of specialist publishing companies. Almost all the remaining employment, both within the city and in the surrounding countryside and 'necklace' villages, is with small, science-based industries and this is the only sector which is receiving official encouragement under development plans for the region.

Thus in the southern area there is a large number of skilled scientists and technologists, many of whose wives are well educated and prepared to assist in the various voluntary social activities organised in the area. To this pool of talent should be added the wives of London commuters who have moved into the county in increasing numbers during the last five years.

In contrast to Cambridge and its surrounding countryside, where buildings of less than 500 years old are regarded as immature, Peterborough, 35 miles to the north, is brash and new. There is an ancient Cathedral standing within its own precincts but much of the old town grew up around the railway marshalling yards; conversion from steam has greatly improved the environment of the north and east of the city, but the brickworks to the south and the sugar beet processing factories to the east still combine to create their own unique aroma.

Engineering works paying high wages turned Peterborough into an industrial boom town during the 1950s and 60s, and it is now designated as a development area; much of the city centre has been redeveloped, with expanded shopping and cultural facilities, and the Nene Valley west of the city is to be transformed into a leisure park interspersed with small, urban communities.
Peterborough has been expanding since the end of the Second World War and the area has welcomed immigrants: Poles and refugees from Eastern Europe, particularly Lithuanians and Ukrainians, during the early years, Hungarians in the mid-50s and, more recently, West Indians and Ugandan Asians. In this area of mainly skilled and unskilled labour, the demand for social services of all types tends to exceed the provision, whether it be statutory or voluntary.

Huntingdon, which lies between Cambridge and Peterborough, is a centre for small scientific firms, such as electronic calculator producers, and is both an administrative centre in its own right and a dormitory town for commuters to Cambridge. In this area, the supply and demand for social services is about in balance, although the population of the town bears more resemblance to that of Cambridge than to Peterborough.

To the north and the east are Wisbech, March and the city of Ely, all market towns serving the Fens, with some industry such as garden furniture makers, small boat builders, agricultural machinery repairers, etc.

The rest of the county contains a series of small villages, some of which, such as Melbourn in the south-west and St. Neots in the west, are rapidly expanding as London commuter dormitory towns, whilst others are increasing in population more slowly. Indeed, the whole region of East Anglia is, in terms of population, growing faster than any other region in Britain; for example, an estimate in 1971 suggested an increase of more than 20% between 1968 and 1980, as compared with less than 10% in South-East England.
The organisation of education in Cambridgeshire

For Local Education Authority purposes the County is divided into four administrative areas with headquarters respectively in Peterborough (Area 1 on the map), March (Area 2), Huntingdon (Area 3) and Cambridge (Areas 4, 5 and 6).

In mid-1975 the total population of the County was estimated to be about 541,000, of whom 97,609 were attending schools, and of whom 443,391 were either of pre-school age or potential customers for the adult education sector.

There were in the County: 8 nursery schools, 276 primary schools (infants or junior) for children usually to the age of 11, and 52 secondary schools. Some secondary schools catered for pupils up to the age of 16 years, others contained sixth-forms for pupils to the age of 18 years, and yet others were sixth-form colleges for students of 16-18 years. Two village colleges were designated as 'middle schools' for pupils aged 15 to 16. In addition, there were 8 further education colleges, 9 teachers' centres, two outdoor pursuits centres and two residential centres and special schools.

The County is converting to a system of comprehensive education for all pupils up to the age of 16 years on a non-selective basis. The last two areas, Peterborough city and Wisbech, will have completed their reorganisation by September 1976. Between the age of 16 and 18 years, some schools and colleges operate an entrance system based on the General Certificate of Education 'O' level or on the Certificate of Secondary Education.

Because the system of comprehensive education is a feature of the last two years, most adults in Cambridgeshire experienced the selective system of education in which either a Grammar School,
Technical School or Secondary Modern School place was allocated at the age of eleven years.

**Village Colleges**

In the former Cambridgeshire area (No.5 on the map) a system of Village Colleges was instituted, which usually amounted to a day-time secondary modern school with evening recreational facilities for pupils, and an evening institute for adults.

Some Village Colleges had sixth forms but usually children selected for grammar school places travelled into Cambridge and attended either the Cambridgeshire High School for Girls or the similar institution for boys. Even now, after reorganisation, some village colleges will not be able to offer sixth form tuition, and pupils from those villages will attend either one of the sixth form colleges in Cambridge or a college of further education.

As the concept of the Village College is the novel idea with which Cambridgeshire is often associated, and since some of the adult illiterates attended these centres, it is appropriate to deal with their history, showing how the system has been extended from the south of the new country into some of the northern areas. A pamphlet issued by the Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely Education Committee in April 1970, emphasised the following points:

(a) the multi-use of an educational building

"The distinctive feature of secondary education in the southern part of the County, formerly known as Cambridgeshire, is the Village College, a combination of a secondary school and a community centre providing for the educational, social and recreational life of a rural area."
(b) the comprehensiveness of educational purposes of the Village Colleges

"They have exerted their influence on the life and culture of people of all ages, providing as they do for the secondary education of children, activities for young people and social opportunities for adults."

(c) the variety of curricula and activities

"The school curriculum at each Village College includes as wide a variety as can be found in any comparable school in the country and is designed to give children and young adults an opportunity of developing their own interests and providing them with a sense of purpose in preparation for adult life."

"The content of the programme of formal Further Education classes for adults and young people differs from one College to another, according to the needs of the district and the tastes of students, and in any one Village College the programme will differ from year to year as interests develop. At most Colleges courses are provided for people who wish to take examinations such as the General Certificate of Education, Vocational and general interest courses and instruction in practical subjects have an important place in the programme of each college. Courses in liberal studies are arranged in consultation with the University of Cambridge Department of Extra Mural Studies, the Workers Educational Association and similar adult education organisations. In all Village Colleges high standard are obtained in a variety of crafts such as Pottery, Sculpture, Carving, Wood and Metal Work.

The Village Colleges have helped adults and young people to make the most of their leisure time. Over the years a large and still growing number of people come not only to join these classes, but also to enjoy the community life provided at these centres of sometimes scattered rural areas. This provision helps many to a more satisfying use of the rest of their leisure time. In addition, the youth service provided at the Village Colleges is designed to help young people - particularly the less purposeful teenager - to grow up. Again, experienced and qualified full and part-time youth leaders are engaged in the growing number of specially provided Village College Youth Centres, which make it possible for young people to have a pleasant social environment where they can work out their relationships with one another and where there is unobtrusive adult fellowship and understanding when needed. The Common Room and Lecture Room at each College are used for a variety of purposes by adults during the day time as well as in the evening. The Common Room, for instance, serves as a meeting place for such diverse activities as meetings of the Parish Council, the Infant Welfare Clinic, the Registration of Births and Deaths, the Over-Sixties Club, as well as casual use by old people for such pastimes as dominoes, cards and reading."
(d) the opportunities for adult student participation in the management of Village Colleges

"Self-government is of the essence of the adult side of the Village College idea and the Students' Councils, which are representative bodies of all students, undertake the arrangements for numerous social functions, visits to other educational establishments, weekend courses, and the provision of amenities which cannot be provided by the Local Education Authority. They are also a valuable point of contact between the students and the Governing Body at the College."

(e) the solution to problems of reorganisation of primary or secondary education

Each major development in the principle of the Village College over the past 50 years has been the response of the Local Education Authority to Central Government initiatives; for example:

"The Hadow Report of 1926 proposed that children over the age of eleven should be transferred to senior schools, each serving a group of villages. In this, the Authority saw their opportunity: resisting the common practice of having the centre of gravity in the school, they created the Village College."

The Ely Federation of Village Colleges was created in 1972 to meet the requirements of a comprehensive secondary school structure for, by means of a federal system, the secondary school children could be given a proper range of subjects at sixth form level.
The following is a list of the existing Village Colleges, with their dates of opening:

- Sawston 1930*
- Bottisham 1937*
- Linton 1937
- Impington 1939
- Bassingbourn 1954
- Soham 1958*
- Swavesey 1958
- Melbourn 1959*
- Comberton 1960*
- Cottenham 1963
- Sawtry 1963*
- Gamlingay 1965
- Burwell 1967*
- Arthu Mellows, Glinton 1970
- Ely Federation of Village Colleges 1972* (inc. City of Ely College, Littleport Village College, Soham Village College and Witchford Village College)

* Providing adult remedial literacy tuition in 1976

**Community Education**

Although Cambridgeshire is still a rural county, there has been a process of urbanisation so that former villages, Trumpington and Girton, Impington and Histon, are increasingly becoming suburbs of the city. Furthermore, many villages are no longer rural communities but rather dormitory communities. Perhaps for these and other reasons, following local government re-organisation, the term 'Community Education' was introduced as a generic title covering Adult Education, the Youth Service and educational aspects of Community Development. This concept demands closer co-operation
between schools and the different bodies in the Service and "... perhaps, their integration on a Community College basis, where this suits local circumstances." Thus Parkside Community College in Cambridge city, the Cromwell Community College in Chatteris and the Sir Harry Smith Community College in Whittlesey were created recently.

"There is a great variety in the nature of the Authority's provision of Community Education in the County based on Village/Community Colleges, major Colleges of Further Education, independent centres including one College of Adult Education and school-based centres. In 1975/76 the total number of 'main' centres was 76 and of 'minor' centres 142, which involved some 90 full-time field staff and 1500 part-time staff. In addition there were many other workers serving in a voluntary capacity with various youth and adult organisations or employed by agencies such as the Extra-Mural Board of Cambridge University and the Workers' Educational Association."

Local authority officials were well aware of the difficulty of ensuring that in the practice of community education any one component, be it adult or youth education, was not allocated more than its fair share of limited resources, and, indeed, the purpose of community education was to harness the resources of the community, statutory and voluntary, in order to provide balanced programmes of activities - educational, recreational and social - for all adults and young people throughout the County. Consequently, many village/community centres involved themselves in providing facilities for remedial literacy instruction for adults.
Schemes for adult illiterates

Interest in the problems of adult illiterates in the County quickened in January 1975 when the BBC announced that a series of broadcasts aimed at adult illiterates and volunteer tutors would start in the following October. At that time it was thought that the broadcasts would bring forward a large, but unspecified, number of illiterate adults who would need assistance. The BBC notified Local Authorities of their intention to publicise a telephone number for volunteer tutors or illiterate adults to ring, and to provide a referral service to give Local Authorities the names and addresses of their contacts. When the BBC quoted a national figure of some two million people in need of literacy tuition, Cambridgeshire had to contemplate producing a tutorial service, assuming one-to-one tuition, of some 20,000 tutors.

However, help had been offered to adult illiterates in the past. In Cambridge city area a voluntary scheme, known as the Cambridge Reading Project, had started in 1974 and had been very active in publicising its service, enrolling some 70 students. The Coleridge Adult Education Centre, which had been offering help since 1969 and which was well known throughout the local community, currently had about 30 students. In addition, other village/community colleges, colleges of further education and adult centres throughout the County had been involved in providing a tutorial service, so that, taking all sources, some 180 students, all with English as their first language, were already enrolled in January 1975.

Experience suggested, in the view of the Authority, that the most likely number of adult illiterates coming forward for help would be between 500 and 1000. Consequently, plans were made on this basis,
although training programmes were organised in such a way that a rapid expansion of the number of tutors could be achieved in the event of a larger number of students appearing.

Cambridgeshire and the national agencies

From 1st January 1975 two national agencies affected operations in the County, the BBC and the AIKA (see pp 56-59). The plans of the BBC were reported in some detail in the local press, so that, from January, voluntary would-be tutors and students began to contact the authority. In May 1975 a BBC publication, the BBC Adult Literacy Handbook, emerged and this became one of the reference books used by some tutors. In April 1975 the BBC broadcast for schools, for a period of eight weeks, a series on literacy called 'The Electric Company'. This series, seen by some tutors, was judged by them to be inappropriate for adults and so the series had little effect on adult provision. In October 1975 'On the Move' began and a referral phone-in number for the BBC in London was given (see pp 56-57).

So far as tutors were concerned, the following is a not uncommon reaction:

Have you seen 'On the Move'?
Yes, I watched that. Well, I think it's done very well. I don't think they spend enough time on it; it's over in a flash. I know it's only meant as a sort of advertising. Do you enjoy it?
Yes, I do from a teacher's point of view. I try to think 'Will it teach them?' but it's very good as advertising for pupils. I think they ought to spend more time on it. It's done well - I think it's done in a light-hearted way which I think will create a sort of - well, make them less worried.

Have you listened to the tutors' radio programme?
Nevertheless, the BBC, supported by the Independent Television Companies, created a general background of interest in literacy and many tutors expressed their appreciation of this aspect of the BBC's initiative. So far as the recruitment of students was concerned, the BBC broadcasts resulted in the following weekly referrals to the Local Authority:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of students referred</th>
<th>Number of tutors referred</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-8 October 1975 (radio &amp; promotion)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-13 October (1st 'On the Move', cut off before 'Panorama' transmission)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21,00 hrs after 'Panorama' up to &amp; including Saturday, 18 October</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Week ending:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of students referred</th>
<th>Number of tutors referred</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 October</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 November</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 November</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 November</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 November</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 November</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 December</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 December</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 December</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 January 1976</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 January</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 January</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 January</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 February</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 February</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(14 February at 13.21 hrs. COI 60 sec 'filler' film shown on Anglia ITV - 123,500 viewers)

21 February

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of students referred</th>
<th>Number of tutors referred</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 February</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(20 February at 13.43 hrs. COI film shown on Anglia ITV - 188,500 viewers)

(21 February at 18.00 hrs. 'Jim'll fix it' shown on BBC1(TV) - no. of viewers not available)

28 February

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of students referred</th>
<th>Number of tutors referred</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28 February</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(29 February at 11.26 hrs. COI film shown on Anglia ITV - 32,500 viewers)

6 March

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of students referred</th>
<th>Number of tutors referred</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 March</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(7 March at 12.23 hrs. COI film shown on Anglia ITV - 58,500 viewers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Requests</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 March</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 March</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 March</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 April</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 April</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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</table>

17 April - Easter holiday

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Requests</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 May</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 May</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 May</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 May</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 121

Average per week 4.2

1 June-25 September 1976

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Requests</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 June-25 September 1976</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average per week 1.4

2 October-13 December 1976

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Requests</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 October-13 December 1976</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average per week 2.75

1 January-31 May 1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Requests</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 January-31 May 1977</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average per week 2.25

Comment: So far as the actual numbers of requests for referral are concerned, the greatest success rate appears to come from specific programmes: primarily, from the television programmes 'Panorama' and 'Jim'll Fix It' and the radio programmes 'You and Yours' and the popular programmes introduced by Jimmy Young. Consequently, the numbers of inquiries seem to depend to a large extent on the co-operation of producers of popular programmes.
These figures do not, however, appear to represent the true number of students genuinely taking up offer of help. For example, in one centre in Cambridgeshire, out of 9 BBC student referrals dating from 10 October 1975, all of whom were contacted, interviewed and offered help, only one was attending classes on 1 March 1976. As a comparison, in a Metropolitan Local Authority area, involving many centres and local schemes, of the BBC referrals contacted during the last three months of 1975, 56% enrolled in schemes and 46% were still attending three months later. It could be argued that the initial contacts from this Cambridgeshire centre tended to discourage students from joining the scheme and therefore the arrangements at another centre in Cambridgeshire were investigated in detail.

At the second centre, 17 students were referred through the BBC and of these, 7 were actually prepared to join the scheme. The remaining 10 were accounted for as follows:

- 1 came for interview but failed to attend subsequently;
- 1 had received tuition at the centre several years previously, had given up early in the course and had then tried private tuition, but without any success; he attended two sessions but again left the course;
- 2 enquired on behalf of their children, aged 15 and 7 years respectively;
- 1 was visited at home but failed to attend the class;
- 2 were foreigners who did not take up the invitation to receive tuition in 'English as a second language';
- 1 was a tutor wrongly classified as a student;
- 2 did not reply to letters, although in each case a letter was the requested method of contact.

Of the 7 students prepared to join the scheme, after one month:
- 5 attended classes (2 regularly, 3 spasmodically);
- 1 was disabled and wished to make suitable travelling arrangements before joining;
- 1 preferred home tuition, and this was arranged accordingly.

For purposes of comparison, of 43 students who registered at the same centre between 12 January 1971 and 27 November 1973:
- 16 did not settle and made less than 6 attendances;
- 27 attended on 8 or more occasions;
  of these 27:
  - 18 made over 15 attendances;
  of these 18:
  - 11 travelled from villages or distance parts of the town with transport difficulties and 1 was pushed between home and class in a wheelchair by a member of her family (20 minutes' walk).

In parenthesis, the drop-out rate of students who come to the schemes through personal contact rarely exceeds 5% over the period of one year.

The second agency, AIIRA, provided the Local Authority with £7,130, a financial support which was crucial in the atmosphere of retrenchment prevailing in 1975. In June 1975, when most initial training programmes had been completed, AIIRA's 'Lesson Kit for trainers of adult literacy tutors' arrived in the County. Nevertheless, on the whole, tutors found this kit "particularly useful"
and the same was true for the AIRA 'Resource Pack for volunteer tutors' published in November 1975. AIRA continued to provide financial assistance, principally for professional organising staff, until April 1978.

Thus it can be seen that both the training and recruitment of adult literacy tutors and the enrolment of adult illiterate students depended to a very large extent on the activities generated within the Local Authority.

The County had increased the number of tutors from about 180 in January 1975 to 384 by mid-June 1975 (including about 120 tutors recruited by the voluntary Cambridge Reading Project Scheme).

These tutors were located by Local Authority Areas as follows:

(Cambridgeshire is divided into six districts under the Local Government Act 1972, and four Local Authority Administrative Areas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Education Area No.</th>
<th>District No.</th>
<th>Geographic description</th>
<th>Area (acres)</th>
<th>Population (1971 census)</th>
<th>Population density per acre</th>
<th>No. of tutors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Peterborough</td>
<td>82,421</td>
<td>105,989</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>March/Wisbech</td>
<td>136,387</td>
<td>64,545</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Huntingdon/Ramsey/St.Neots</td>
<td>228,438</td>
<td>96,348</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ely/Soham/Bottisham</td>
<td>161,839</td>
<td>49,086</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rural area around Cambridge City</td>
<td>223,266</td>
<td>90,267</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cambridge City</td>
<td>10,060</td>
<td>98,519</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>842,411</strong></td>
<td><strong>504,754</strong></td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td><strong>384</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since there were considerable local variations in circumstances, it is necessary to give a brief summary of the situation and training scheme in each particular area.
Area 1 - Peterborough

Organisers in Peterborough had already identified their literacy problem as one principally concerned with the teaching of immigrants. An entirely voluntary scheme of some 30 volunteer tutors was already engaged in this work, as was the Adult Education Centre. The voluntary organisation decided to continue to specialise in dealing with the problems of immigrants, and the Adult Centre started courses for volunteer tutors for native-born English-speakers. A structured Literacy Tutors' Course of about 12 hours' duration was organised.

Area 2 - March

For about two years the Isle of Ely College of Further Education at Wisbech had been organising literacy courses for students whose standard of literacy was inadequate to cope with the demands of the ordinary Technical College courses. The lecturer in charge of this course volunteered to organise courses for voluntary tutors and arrangements were also made for help to be given to two volunteer tutors based on the Cromwell Community College, Chatteris.

Area 3 - Huntingdon

The Area Community Education Organiser started a training scheme for volunteer tutors in January 1975. Six training centres were set up at: the Ailwyn Primary School, Ramsey; Sawtry Village College; Huntingdon Technical College; St. Ives Youth Centre; St. Neots Technical College; and Gaynes Hall (a Borstal Institution) near Grafham Water.
Each centre was allocated to a professional person with a wide experience of the teaching of reading, who would eventually be responsible for voluntary tutors.

A course of 10 sessions, based on the Wolverhampton Experimental Literacy Project (ELP) was established for all tutors, on the grounds that ELP had been:

a) proven to be successful with adults;

b) based on the latest information about learning as reflected in the word-maker and sentence-maker in 'Breakthrough to Literacy';

c) based on vocabulary research in a 100-word initial sight vocabulary;

d) able to utilise the association of initial phonic teaching with the 100-word sight vocabulary;

e) able to provide the basic skills needed before reading for meaning;

f) able to ensure the availability of reading materials.

(a) A system of use of language instruction whereby students compose their own sentences of familiar words. Printed sets of letters and words are provided, but students may ask the teacher to write in words chosen by the student on blank cards. The student composes his own sentences by arranging any of the cards in his own 'word-maker' or 'sentence-maker' kit. After checking and discussion, the student finally copies the word or sentence from the 'maker'.
The 10 sessions included such topics as 'the history of reading', 'the special problems of adults', 'pre-reading problems', 'initial sight vocabulary', 'phonics', 'comprehension', 'assessment and diagnosis', 'matching student/tutor problems', 'record-keeping' and 'spelling problems'.

The BBC Adult Literacy Handbook and the ALRA Trainers' Kit were used as they became available, and additional materials were prepared in the Teachers' Centre at Huntingdon. There were frequent meetings of trainers to review and analyse progress, short specialist courses for trainers, meetings to ensure liaison with the library service, and a special evening session on 'personal relationships' supervised by a Drama Group, and exemplified through a series of kinaesthetic exercises that were devised to provide the bases for insights and discussions.

As a result of this splendid initiative, 127 tutors were trained by the end of June 1975, and they were reasonably distributed throughout the area. By 1 December 1975 there were some 25 trained tutors still without students, in addition to more than 80 tutor volunteers, as yet untrained, who were surplus to requirements.

Area 4 - Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire and Ely

The Cambridge Reading Project originated in February 1974 when two or three tutors began to help students one morning a week in St. Andrew's Church Hall in Cambridge. A public meeting was held at Homerton College of Education in July 1974 and attended by about 60 people, and a circular was sent to all WEA members; as a result, about 70 volunteers came forward to join the CRP training courses which averaged some 8-10 hours. In addition, training lecture and
discussion sessions were held and there were monthly meetings of existing tutors for an exchange of views. By October 1975 about 100 tutors were trained. All teaching was on a one-to-one basis and whilst some tutors met their students at the Parkside Community College in Cambridge, most tutors met their students at 'home'.

The main Local Authority effort in the City was at the Adult Education Centre abutting the Coleridge Secondary School. Tutor training consisted of a mixture of practical work, under the supervision of a very experienced remedial organiser, and of lectures and discussion groups, under the supervision of Dr. Margaret Peters of the Cambridge Institute of Education.

In this scheme students spent the first hour of each session with their own tutor; after a coffee break, which was a valuable time for social mixing, students could return for a final hour with their own tutor or with another tutor, thereby avoiding the student reaching a position of over-dependence on one person. Whilst the tuition was in progress, the remedial organiser was available to help any volunteer who met a difficult problem.

One of the difficulties of arranging one-to-one tuition at home is that the organiser is not always aware when student/tutor problems arise. In the system operated at the Coleridge Adult Centre, the absence of a tutor or problems of tutor/student relationships were immediately obvious to the remedial organiser; consequently, difficulties of all types, whether of human relationships or literacy skills, were dealt with without delay.

Furthermore, one of the features of this organisation was that the confidence of students was bolstered as much by belonging to a social group as by the actual reading and writing classes. Students
contributed to their own magazine, organised their own Christmas party and, indeed, one student was a member of the executive of the Members' Council of the Adult Centre. In this setting one felt that literacy tuition was firmly set within the ambience of adult education; here the components of the educational process were held in balance and in control.

Forty students and twenty tutors could meet during the evening sessions on Monday-Thursday inclusive, usually during term time only, but generally, by arrangement, an equal number of tutors and students met on any single evening. A further ten tutors were on the reserve list.

In the county area surrounding the city 40 tutors were trained at the Bottisham, Comberton, Soham and Melbourn Village Colleges, the Papworth Everard Community Primary School, the Ely Teachers' Centre and the Burwell Residential Centre.

The success achieved by the Local Authority, (none of whose officers was solely occupied on the literacy project until September 1976, when a County Adviser was established in co-operation with AIRA) in nearly doubling the number of trained tutors, would not have been possible without the gratifying response from the teaching profession for, as the sample below indicates, 40% of tutors had attended either a Teacher Training College or College of Education or a post-graduate Department of Education. Similarly, trainers of tutors were found from the remedial services of the Authority.
Tutors' characteristics

A sample was taken in June 1975, to determine the main characteristics of 120 tutors, with the following results:

Statistical analysis of tutor typologies (percentages rounded)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of forms despatched - 375</th>
<th>returned - 121 (by 12.7.1975)</th>
<th>spoilt - 1</th>
<th>N = 120</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Numbers %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Tutors by sex:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>89.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Tutors by age and numbers retired

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 21 yrs of age</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 21 yrs of age</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tutors who had retired 12

3. (a) Marital status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>married</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>79.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single (including widows/widowers not remarried)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3.(b) Household responsibility for children under 16 years of age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of tutors with no children</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 child</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>59.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 children</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 children</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 children</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. Tutors' terminal full-time education age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education age</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 to</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 and over</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not completed (still students)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5. Tutors' academic qualification (highest qualification recorded)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Number of tutors</th>
<th>% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Some GCE 'O' levels (or School Certificate)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Some GCE 'A' levels (or Higher School Certificate or Open University Credits)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) First degree, or above</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) No qualification disclosed</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Institute attended

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institute attended</th>
<th>Number of tutors</th>
<th>% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Teacher Training College or Postgraduate Department of Education</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) College of Further Education/Technical College</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) University/Polytechnic</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>111</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Where a tutor attended an University and also a postgraduate department, the tutor is recorded under both headings to indicate professional full-time training)

7. Tutors who have attended part-time classes as a student between July 1974 and June 1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancillary helper-remedial teaching</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookseller</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Service (Local Government Officers)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational adviser</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masseuse</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of religion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research workers or scientists</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretarial</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicitor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typist/clerical</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric worker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Staff administration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undisclosed occupations</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Tutors who have taught adults before enrolling for adult remedial literacy teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Tutors who have been full-time teachers (in any sector of education service)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Length of experience of tutors in teaching illiterate adults (a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of experience</th>
<th>Number of tutors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2 years</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ years</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no information</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) This question was unselective i.e. the 0-2 group includes an unspecified % with no experience; from information from organisers it seems that about half had no experience and only about a quarter had taught for more than 6 months.

12. Tutors who had attended, were currently attending or proposed to attend part-time courses on the teaching of illiterate adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>93.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Duration of course completed or proposed, by hours, and numbers of tutors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Number of tutors</th>
<th>% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5 hours</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) 6-10 hours</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-25 hours</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 25 hours</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) Note that, since many courses are of 10 hours’ duration, these figures over-estimate the duration of the average course attended.
14. Organisation arranging tutorial service (c)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Number of tutors</th>
<th>% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Authority</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary body</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) Respondents found question confusing, since they thought of themselves as volunteers, whether organisation was voluntary or LEA inspired.

15. Type of teaching situation in which tutors were involved (d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of tutors</th>
<th>% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One-to-one</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no return</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(d) Respondents found this question ambiguous, as they thought of class-work as one-to-one in the classroom.

16. Numbers of students per tutor (June 1975)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of tutors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 student per tutor</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 students per tutor</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 students per tutor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 students per tutor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Numbers of tutors on reserve lists (e) 15

(e) Respondents were unable to understand the meaning of 'reserve list', and some voluntary organisations object to the concept of 'reserve' and emphasise 'readiness to respond' rather than waiting.
18. Source of information about teaching opportunities with adult illiterates (if two or more sources were mentioned, then each has been counted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Information</th>
<th>Number of Tutors</th>
<th>% of Tutors by Total of Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal contact (friends)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal contact (organiser)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster/advertisement in shop</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National press</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local newspaper - advertisement or article appealing for help</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyslexia Association</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Institute Newsletter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers' Educational Association</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church notice board/newsletter</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library notice board/newsletter</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circular from Local Authority</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education 'Reading for Pleasure' class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Bureau</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total of Sources</strong></td>
<td><strong>128</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(f) Only national BBC radio (no local station) is available in Cambridgeshire

(g) BBC1 and 2 and ITV programmes are available in Cambridgeshire

These figures enable us to construct a picture of the 'typical' tutor who, in nine out of ten cases, was likely to be female, over the age of 21, and likely to attend a part-time course, probably of 10 hours' duration, on teaching illiterate adults. The 'typical' tutor was married (80%) and had received continuous full-time education up to or beyond the age of 18 years (70%). Of particular interest is the fact that six out of ten of the tutors had no children under the age of 16 years living at home: either they had no children or their family had grown up. Although 40% listed
themselves as being teachers or retired teachers, in fact 53.3% claimed to have been full-time teachers in some sector of the education service; thus, half the 'volunteer' tutors were, or had been, in the teaching profession. Finally, 80% had heard about the opportunities for teaching adult illiterates from purely local sources of information.

As time passed, the number of volunteers for Local Authority schemes increased and in the event, therefore, so far as the provision of tutors was concerned, the Authority was more than able to cope with the number of student referrals from the BEC (see p.59).

Tutors and training schemes

Nevertheless, it would be misleading to suggest that these training schemes, inevitably introduced in some haste, were uniformly satisfactory. Many tutors felt that the training courses only provided basic hints about what to do. Perhaps the most telling evidence came from someone who appeared to be a thoroughly trained and experienced teacher who, nonetheless, attended one training course:

I know the idea is good where anybody can help but I really think the course should be more geared to the teaching of certain rules. I know you can't really cover it in so many lessons; but I found, even though I have taught, that there are certain rules which I come across that I tell the student that I have not really thought about.

I thought: 'If you're not a teacher, if you weren't geared to looking for these things, it might be very difficult'. Perhaps somebody who is not a teacher can pick it up, I don't know. I can think of some people who could do more harm than help. There are some people with all the best intentions in the world who do not know the real problems, and I think quite a few of the tutors aren't really getting down to it and confusing the student rather than helping him. Some of the questions during meetings showed that some tutors really hadn't much idea.
And another trained teacher and tutor, speaking about another training scheme:

There is, at least, a three-week training session which I think is as much a vetting session to see if we will be reasonable tutors.

Oh well, it was obviously an organisation for amateurs. However, I thought it was quite interesting - it was full of very useful hints about, for example, books. But what we were given - it was really so thin - was an indication of how you might approach. We were given a specimen lesson; we were introduced to quite a fair range of material, none of it terribly exciting. Nor was it the most modern stuff either. We didn't really look at a book and think how you are to go about getting a person from the top of the page to the bottom of a page and what problems were they going to meet. All the different problems of things such as sister, brother, mother, father, and how you have all those different word problems in just the close relationships within the family. We had no analysis of words and how people might find difficulty in reading them. Rather just a few phrases like 'vowels', 'digraphs' and that sort of thing - which aren't terribly helpful to you when you are teaching. They just give you the feeling that you know enough to be confident.

Interviewer's question:

How about the woman who has been, perhaps, a secretary, and has had no teaching training?

I think it must be most difficult if you are fairly intelligent say; say, not just an assistant librarian, but somebody who has taken a qualifying examination. I have several acquaintances who are librarians who just don't comprehend the sort of person who does not read avidly. That is, to be able to understand the difficulties that other people have when you only meet readers! A secretary, on the other hand, is almost bound to meet some non-readers, unless she leads a very sheltered life. She meets people who can't spell, write letters and so on, so that I think she might find it easier to appreciate the nature of the problem, even if she doesn't see her way around it. I think the only positive thing that that course established was that 'you are going to have problems and when you have problems, get in touch with us and we will discuss the specific nature of your problem and we are these sort of people'. So that it really was an introduction to each other, with a sort of intellectual respectability.

And another tutor, on yet another training scheme:

I had to re-think slightly, because obviously none of the people I started teaching would ever read the sort of books I could enjoy. Even just to get them to read newspapers and take an
intelligent interest in, say, political things - in a mild way - seemed to be something. One of the most important things is the thing that was really hammered home to us during the short induction course we had of six weeks, namely, insisting that we regarded these people as people. The fact that they could not read or write did not mean that they were not real people. They confirmed my view that a tutor must have the ability to form a close relationship and must not be afraid.

The burden of all the training courses seems to have been, first, to give practical tips and suggest how to make or find resource materials and, secondly, to emphasise the need for sympathetic human relationships.

The Huntingdon Area Scheme both abounded with practical materials - alphabetical lists of spelling examples, guides for the use of the library, lists of examples of consonant digraphs, vowel digraphs and so on - and emphasised human relationships, by such means as the drama evening. Indeed, the advertisement for tutors stated:

"...volunteer tutors need not be professional people. They should be people who can make good relationships with adults...."

Given the time in which to prepare for a possible avalanche of students it is not wholly surprising that the training schemes accentuated the practical and eschewed the philosophical. Short-term goals, the satisfaction of students' expressed immediate motivations were certainly explored, but aims were not explicitly considered.

Consequently, by January 1976, the County had trained nearly 500 tutors, and these tutors were reasonably distributed through the geographical areas, but of these only about 40 had more than about 6 months experience of teaching adult illiterates.
For reasons already given, there was a surplus of tutors since the numbers of students coming through the BBC referral system, allowing for drop-out, were lower than expected. Local recruitment had increased, aided largely by the general interest in literacy created by the BBC's initiative, but the total number could be handled easily by either the Local Authority volunteer tutors or the Voluntary-Organised Scheme, as shown in the table on p.

On 1st April 1976, 97 tutors were matched with 97 students in the voluntary scheme, and in the Local Authority schemes 259 tutors were available to teach 414 students, many of whom in the Cambridge, March and Peterborough areas, were already in some form of group tuition. Though the total numbers were small, it is still remarkable that the number of "illiterate" adults under tuition more than doubled in one year from 1975 to 1976.
### Basic Statistics of Tutors and Students in Cambridgeshire concerned with Adult Literacy schemes 1976

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cambridge</th>
<th>Huntingdon</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>Peterborough</th>
<th>Total LEA only</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. No. of tutors trained from 1st January 1975 to 1st April 1976</strong></td>
<td>108</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>93</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. No. of tutors awaiting training on 1 April 1976</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. No. of active tutors on 1 April 1976</strong></td>
<td>97</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>61</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. No. of tutors referred by BBC</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. No. of tutors from own sources LEA or Vol.Org.</strong></td>
<td>111</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>94</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6. Total no. of students enrolled from 1st January 1975 to 1st April 1976, of which</strong></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) no. of students referred by BBC to 1/4/76</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) no. of students from own sources (LEA or Vol.Org.) to 1st April 1976</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>166</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7. Total no. of students receiving tuition as literacy students on 1st April 1975</strong></td>
<td>59</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total no. of students receiving tuition as literacy students on 1st April 1976</strong></td>
<td>97</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3. Tuition Structure

- **a) % of students in groups**
  - i) with single group teacher
  - ii) with supervisory group tutor and with one-to-one helpers
  
- **b) % of students being taught one-to-one and meeting in centres**

- **c) % of students being taught one-to-one and meeting at 'home'**

- 36.40  47.00  5.00  25.49  2.00
- 62.60  14.00  88.00  33.31  56.00
Further training programmes were planned to replace tutors who dropped out, and to ensure an adequate supply of tutors in the event that the Central Office of Information advertisement on the Independent Television Network in February 1976 brought forward a greater number of students. Nevertheless, by January 1976 there was a general air of depression, as organisers and tutors began to fear that the feeling of disappointment resulting from a relative lack of success in attracting students through the BBC's efforts would turn to one of disaster if further financial support were not forthcoming from the Government.

However, in response to a question in the House of Commons, the Secretary for Education indicated, on 26 February 1976, that financial resources would be provided to support the literacy campaign in 1976 and 1977. This news, together with hopes that a greater flow of students would come forward in response to the advertisement on Independent Television, and an indication from referrals that the campaign might succeed in reaching the unskilled sections of the working population, revived the morale of both organisers and tutors. Yet by June 1976 and, indeed, by June 1977, the relative paucity of BBC referrals, as well as those emerging from Independent Television and COI advertisements, seemed to have convinced organisers that students needing help with their literacy problems could well be handled by the normal services offered to particular groups of applicants within the ambit of the adult education service, and as part of the Community Education Service.
By February 1976 many tutors were themselves evaluating the progress and achievements of their students. To do this they inevitably had to consider, not only the practical, tactical goals which they had hitherto accepted as final goals, but also their overall strategies and aims. As a tutor said in February 1976:

You know, I have begun to wonder if teaching reading and writing is enough. My student needs to know a lot more, basic geography, basic knowledge and so on. I think I ought to help him cope with life and this means spreading beyond reading and writing.

Thus, it was in the atmosphere of the increasing interest amongst tutors in the field that the study of the aims and achievements of illiterate adult students and their tutors was conducted; trainers and tutors were ready to turn away from 'the what' and 'the how', to consider 'the why'.

The rest of this book, for which the earlier chapters have provided an historical, theoretical and geographic background, is therefore a report on the research project (centred in Cambridgeshire) into the adult remedial literacy schemes there.
PART II - METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER V

THE METHODS AND RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS USED TO IDENTIFY TUTORS' AND STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TO AIMS

The objectives of this research were, first, to identify the aims of students and tutors involved in adult remedial literacy schemes; secondly, to discuss the achievements of both illiterate adults and their tutors in relation to their stated aims; and, thirdly, to establish a schedule of appropriate aims (the word 'appropriate' in this context meaning in terms of the philosophy of adult education which has been postulated in the opening chapters).

Preliminary investigation of methods

To achieve these objectives it was necessary to locate a methodological framework within which the evidence that could be collected would be logically admissible; therefore various theoretical structures were examined. The first of these to be considered was the orthodox statistical approach which assumes a tendency towards a distribution of variables in the form of a normal probability curve; an example of this is the Ministry of Education assessed standards of reading ability 1948, 1952 and 1956. In the 1948 test, the sample, selected by judgement and not at random, consisted of 3419 children aged 15 (i.e. aged between 14.9 and 15.3) in schools in the areas of ten local education...
authorities and 2802 children aged 11 in the areas of four local education authorities. In the 1952 and 1956 tests the samples were chosen by random and more care was taken to ensure that the sample was representative of both secondary and primary schools, local authorities, and urban and rural areas. The major principle of these procedures was to include enough primary and secondary schools and sufficient local authority areas to establish statistical probabilities about the limits of sampling error, so that estimates of the degree of representation could be made and to ensure that enough children were included in each sample to provide the basis for normal curve analysis.

But as Jones\(^\text{44}\) records in a discussion of a BBC/National Institute of Adult Education research project funded by the Department of Education and Science:\(^\text{a}\) ".....in the early stages of the research, the whole question of adult illiteracy was so sensitive, surrounded with such inhibitions and taboos, that respect for the individual's privacy and the confidentiality of his approach to the tuition schemes had to be regarded as paramount."

The consequent difficulties of controlled sampling are obvious; indeed, seeing particular tutors depended often on the judgement of organisers and seeing particular students depended always on permission of tutors.

\(^\text{a}\) The Role of Broadcasting in Mass Remedial Adult Literacy Education 1975-1977 inclusive
Secondly, there was the possibility of isolating a unique variable which would give the key to success in acquiring literacy skills. A test administered to a given number of children at the beginning of a month and repeated at the end of the month in precisely the same controlled circumstances clearly will result in changes in one quantifiable variable, the test score, being observed. In the early stages of this investigation, such simple, normatively-based tests seemed attractive, and in January 1975 three students, two male and one female, who regarded themselves as making good progress in a scheme run by the Coleridge Adult Education Centre were interviewed:

a) to indicate criteria for success, and
b) to test the feasibility of a structured questionnaire that asked direct questions about their perceptions, and which tested their reading ages and their ability to write.

Although these students were most ready to discuss criteria for success, such was their distress at being tested in literacy skills and in being asked direct structured questions, that this particular line of enquiry was abandoned.

Moreover, the argument of the preceding chapters has been that, on philosophical grounds, our concern is not in the area bounded by specific literacy skills but in adult basic education which, though it comprehends such skills, is part of the process of "penetrating to deep levels of man's relationships, not only with others but with himself." Consequently it seemed inappropriate to attempt an analysis based on unique quantifiable variables by themselves, or in cohorts, as is the case in cluster analysis.
Again in the early stages of the investigation, many organisers and tutors suggested that "student motivation" would be the sole criterion of a successful learning activity, and, indeed, such was the insistence and frequency of this point of view that, notwithstanding the previous argument, the notion of 'motivation' (presumably measured as by degree of intensity over a time period) was a possible single analytic variable worth examining. But Jones discriminated between the motive to attend, the students' desire to learn something about themselves, and the motive to learn.

Tough lists some of the benefits that a student hopes to gain by embarking on any learning process, which are: "not only intellectual, cognitive and material; many are emotional or psychological, including pleasure, satisfaction, self-esteem, impressing others, and receiving praise." Noting the complexity of establishing motivation, Tough argues that "various events and individuals in his environment may also increase his motivation." Thus not only is 'motivation' multivariate but inconstant.

However, Tough's list of psychological benefits recalls the methodological arguments given on pages 54 and 55 for considering literacy skills within the context of adult education in general and, indeed, motivation is placed in a wider setting of the ontology of adult education by Champion who argues that human beings are part of the processes of the natural world and of the cultural world. Human endeavour attempts to make sense of both these worlds, first by making assumptions and, secondly, by deriving beliefs. Given these assumptions and beliefs, then we decide what we should "do in and about our world and our cultures" and these actions are
coloured by our view of whether that world and culture pleases us or not. Champion's view of adult education is that of a set of processes, interactive and organic, consisting of empirical reactions and subjective valuations, "no part of which is meaningful without the others". The motivation of a human being is highly complex, each action is part of an individual's solution to his perception of the human predicament. For the present, then, let us accept that on these a priori grounds, the illiterate student's motives are of such an order, and not quantifiable, and hence the methodology required for this study must be capable of dealing with subjective perceptions. For these reasons it was thought that a phenomenological approach, which allows for subjectivity, might be appropriate.

The phenomenological stance, as outlined by Ruddock, argues that "the objectivity of data assembled by the positivist statistical method is more apparent than real; that the behaviour studied by the positivists is already based on subjective processes, and that human beings are not inert mechanisms whose complexities can be unravelled by stimulus-response psychology. The primacy of the subjective is to be recognised;" we need to make "sense of all the situations we find ourselves in. Social life can only proceed when a 'common sense' is agreed. This common sense of the world guides all our conduct, which then becomes an objective social reality for children and others entering it. Reality is socially constructed."
We cannot put adult students into controlled situations as we can plants; rather we have to study a social event - a phenomenon - in which subjective perceptions are assumed, are created and are subject to mutation as the ingredients of the phenomenon interact on each other, and the situation in which the phenomenon occurs changes. Thus, the learning process in which the adult illiterate takes part consists of subjective perceptions on the part of the adult illiterate, the tutor and, when research is being carried out, the researcher as an interventionist. Each constituent reacts upon the other.

The student's success is now to be understood within the terms of his perception of self, of his life plan, of his solution to his "human predicament"; The tutor has his own personal perceptions of his role in the learning process and of the criteria of success; together student and tutor, like pieces of a kaleidoscope that move into varying patterns, form new patterns of learning. In our predicament, where the student by definition cannot be subject to the methodological approach of the physical sciences, where the rule of confidentiality rules out proper sampling procedures, and where students have memories of past educational experiences, there seemed much to be said for adopting the phenomenological stance.

However, subjectivism has its limitations, namely that the deeper level perceptions of the researcher must be such as to empathise closely with the researched, for without this very basic level of the Spanish concept of being "simpatico"*, it is doubtful

* strictly untranslatable, but the nearest meaning in English is: a meeting of minds - plus mutual understanding by communication - plus shared appreciation of each other's vision - plus a feeling of mutual generosity of regard - plus, perhaps, a mutual willingness to forgive - plus.....(often this is confused in Anglo-Saxon cultures with sexuality).
if the researcher can establish a common universe of discourse, without which the 'common sense' consensus cannot be established. (see p.203) In this instance, the researcher found no difficulty in joining in the "universe of discourse" of organisers and tutors, all normally 'middle-class', 'middle-class' here being defined as capable of articulating in an elaborated code. According to Bernstein, the elaborated code user employs a large number of subordinations, complex verbal stems and examples of the passive voice, a large proportion of adjectives compared to the total number of words, and a large proportion of uncommon adjectives, uncommon adverbs and uncommon conjunctions in comparison to a restricted code user. The restricted code, a feature of the working class, is more than a barrier to communicating ideas: Flower grasps the hub of the wheel when he writes "it is the psychological support of the framework of beliefs and attitudes that embody the social relationship between himself, his family and his peers." It may well be that the researcher perceives the tensions between student and tutor arising from their different language codes, but is he able to recognise his own impediment to ascertaining the precise subjective perceptions of the student? The barrier caused by the student's lack of articulation is raised further by the student's reaction to the researcher's own (from the student's point of view) linguistic wizardry. This does not mean that the researcher cannot 'get on' with the student. The danger is that the investigator may, in human terms, form such an excellent relationship with the student that the student grasps half-understood words from the elaborated code and translates them into his own code and, conversely, the researcher also translates. The phenomenological approach does not deal explicitly with the level of acceptable degrees of
subjectivity, particularly in studies of disadvantaged groups where the dissimilarity between the universes of discourse of the researcher and the researched is extreme. For this reason, the ethological approach was examined as a possible methodology, since its method of dealing with the 'translation' or interpretation problem of, for example, bird vocalisations, seemed appropriate to the solution of our problem of differing universes of discourse.

The ethological approach

The ornithologist, David Snow, describes the problem of explaining the behaviour of birds in tropical forests as: "collecting as many facts as one can, and by inference, by comparison between species, and by using what others have found in related fields, one builds up hypotheses that are consistent with biological theory, so far as it is understood."

The processes are, therefore, to observe, to infer, to refer, to relate, to hypothesise, to re-observe and so on or, following Tinbergen, to start with inductive descriptions of observable phenomena and then make a comprehensive approach to several problems thus identified, giving equal attention to each of them and their integration, using throughout a scientific method of study (the biological method). The ethologist accepts that "Description is never, can never be, random; it is in fact highly selective, and selection is made with reference to the problems, hypotheses and methods the investigator has in mind."
The first step, the initial observation, is of quite a different order to that applied in orthodox empirical investigations; for example, when choosing the data to be samples (and observed), statistical, quantitative sampling methods rely "on a preconceived theoretical framework".

In the ethological approach, the criteria for the choice of observable data are based on general experience and the researcher's analysis of the level of cohesiveness and integration of the theoretical approach. As Snow remarks, "without theories and hypotheses one only has a jumble of facts. But one can overindulge in facile explanations; if one's theory is wrong, one can go badly astray. The facts, if accurately observed and described, will stand for all time; the theory can at best be only provisional."

Consequently, there is an open-minded collection of data through observation, there is a process of interpretation when significant behaviour is selected and, through a process of consideration of the consistency of the elements of the gathered data, re-interpretation and generalisation follow.

So far this account of the ethological approach is nearly congruent to that propounded by Glaser and Strauss, who have developed a qualitative sampling method which is evaluated in terms of theoretical rather than statistical criteria: "Theoretical sampling is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyses his data, and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges. This process of data collection is controlled by the emerging theory, whether substantive or formal."
This approach supports the selection of the ethological methodology but if it is so similar why not use this "grounded theory" as developed by these adult educators?

As long ago as 1855, F.D. Maurice, founder of the Working Men's College, wrote about his students: "The world has been teaching him - I must add with all reverence, God has been teaching him - whatever you have been doing." The point is that all human beings have one basic feature in common: the desire to survive and to adapt to survive. Some are better at it than others; as Buchanan writes, there are those "who have the confidence and enthusiasm to mix with strangers and to expose their ignorance, who can adapt... and... the mass of people, tired, lonely and supremely unconfident of their ability to do anything to help themselves." (my italics). Champion introduces his article with the premiss: "I use the word 'education' in a broad sense, as the name of the set of processes by which we manage to keep going forward." This is another way of saying that education is a way by which the species survives and adapts.

Thus it seems that the ethological approach may describe accurately the efforts of all people, whether in advantaged or disadvantaged groups by placing their actions within the context of their attempt to adapt in order to survive. But, patently, human beings differ from animals in their subjective image of themselves, others, and their concept of God, life-force or of the 'ought'. Because this is so, the ethological approach becomes an analogical system when applied to human beings, and within it there needs to be the phenomenological concept of, for example, allowing the student to define reality in terms of his own subjectivity.
Consequently, the methodology adopted in this study is to record the subjective impressions of students and tutors and to view their concepts of success within the framework of a struggle to adapt to survive. By using phenomenological data and by following the procedural steps of the ethological methodology, it is possible to understand that, in an adult illiterate's concept of what may be necessary for his adaptation and survival, 'success' may be very different from that envisaged by a tutor operating in a different universe of discourse, faced with different conditions for survival.

The ethological approach is the key to understanding the educational behaviour of all disadvantaged groups; that is, all groups with restricted codes of discourse and communication.

The techniques used in the investigation

There remains the practical problem of how to collect the perceptions of tutors and of students (who, by definition, are unable to fill in forms) to their aims. Structured questions tend to produce structured answers, and it was precisely to avoid this that the methodological approach described above was adopted. So, after an initial period of investigation lasting six months, both tutors and students were asked to take part in a tape-recorded interview; in all cases it was emphasised that, though certain generalised questions would be asked, the student or tutor could develop a theme or make remarks or intervene if he felt that by so doing he would help one understand his problem. In the event, the most moving accounts of personal perceptions arose from interventions,
from corrections to the interviewer's statement and, sometimes, from a very frustration at trying to explain an attitude in one's own words without the prop of the structured question. These general themes or headings for the guidance of the discussion were as follows:

1. For the tutor:
   a) What made you take part in remedial adult literacy?
   b) What sort of person is your student?
   c) What made your student come to you?
   d) Occupation of student
   e) Student's ability to write and read and ability in numeracy
   f) How long have you had your student?
   g) Student's educational background
   h) Your student's confidence
   i) Your relationship with your student
   j) Student's embarrassment and motives for coming for help
   k) Your student's achievements
   l) Is there any evidence of your student reaching or experiencing a plateau of learning?
   m) Occupation of, and support by, student's spouse
   n) What are the personal qualities a good tutor should possess?
   o) What sort of satisfaction do you think a tutor experiences?
   p) What were your expectations?
   q) What are your impressions of the training course or tutors' meetings?
   r) Do you enjoy reading?
2. For the student:

a) Why did you decide to join the scheme?

b) What finally triggered you to join?

c) Where did you hear of the scheme?

d) Occupation, description of work

e) Relation with employer as regards literacy abilities

f) Any difficulties encountered because you could not read/write

g) Any achievements? What have you done with your new knowledge?

h) Any experience of a plateau, a levelling off in learning?

i) Were you embarrassed? How has this changed?

j) Will you let me have samples of your writing?

k) Will you allow me to ask your tutor about your reading progress?

l) Does your wife/husband help you?

m) Has your confidence increased?

n) Attitude to tutor (not a direct question, but encouraged to comment if student wished)

o) Student's educational history

p) Ability of family and/or siblings to read/write

q) Sources of information: TV, radio, newspapers

r) Time to study at home

s) A return to general probing of use of literacy by student
The stages in the investigation

With this theoretical approach in mind, the investigation consisted of the following steps:

a) to establish that, from a philosophical position, it is probable that adult literacy aims are substantially the aims of adult education; - the discussion in the earlier chapters which establishes the probable field of investigation;

b) to provide tutors with a list of 25 phrases (Section A of Appendix A) describing 'success' and to assess the relative importance of each on a five-point scale, thereby collecting the first level of perceptual data;

c) to analyse whether the answers to the 25-phrase form depended on the duration of tuition to the student, by means of the questionnaire in Section B of Appendix 1, and through three detailed case studies. From this, the minimum timescale for the observational period was identified.

d) to establish what criteria of success were given in two books widely used as reference texts during the most common training period of the literacy campaign, January-August 1975; thus tutors' perceptual concepts may be compared to consensual 'expert' concepts which received wide currency through publications;

e) to establish whether or not tutors would suggest further phrases to describe the criteria of success (in addition to the 25 phrases in Section A, Appendix A), thereby enlarging the quantity of perceptual data;

and, because the methodology allows for an open-ended discussion of perceptions, it was decided to:
f) use tape-recordings to question tutors in Cambridgeshire, to assess their perceived aims in closer detail;
g) use tape-recordings to question students in Cambridgeshire, to assess their perceived aims;
h) link the evidence from the above to produce a scheme of appropriate aims of adult literacy and to investigate the possibility of an ordinal arrangement of these aims.

The next two chapters describe that part of the research from (b) to (e) above, to show how, from initial data, tutors perceived objectives were identified and classified. Thus, some preliminary hypotheses were evolved to guide the search for relevant data from the tape recordings.
The 25-Phrase Questionnaire - Section A (Appendix A)

A Local Authority Organiser in Birmingham and three Organisers, respectively of the Liverpool Adult Literacy Project, the Brighton Project and the Cambridge House Project, were contacted by letter and asked their opinion of, and criteria for, student progress in adult literacy schemes. Two Local Authority Organisers in Cambridgeshire, an Organiser of the Cambridge Reading Project, two Trainers of Tutors in Cambridgeshire, and eight Tutors (two from schemes in Hertfordshire and two each from a Local Authority scheme in Cambridge, a Huntingdon Local Authority scheme and a voluntary scheme in Cambridge) gave verbal accounts of their criteria of success.

A questionnaire was derived, based on tutors' responses (see below and Appendix A for complete version). The form contained 25 phrases, each of which indicated a characteristic of achievement in behavioural terms, in the same way as the phrase "holds door open for elderly people" is one describing 'politeness'.
<table>
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<th>No. of phrase</th>
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<td>Regular attendance at classes</td>
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<td>General improvement in confidence and bearing</td>
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<td>Improvement in clarity of speech</td>
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<td>Improvement in range of spoken vocabulary</td>
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<td>Expression of expectation to succeed in reading and writing</td>
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<td>Diminution of anxiety (general)</td>
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<td>Joining more social groups</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Assumption of greater responsibility at work</td>
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<td>Better relationships with members of the family</td>
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<td>Ability to write a letter</td>
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<td>Ability to read newspapers</td>
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22 Increase in the period of concentration during tuition ........... 22
23 Diminution of anxiety with regard to literacy ...... 23
24 Getting a better job in terms of more pay ............. 24
25 Getting a better job in terms of personal satisfaction and interest (not necessarily better paid) .................. 25

During the period November 1975 to April 1976, 1421 of these questionnaires were issued to organisers in Cambridgeshire (500), Dorset (500), Hertfordshire (400) and Wales (21). The number of forms taken by each of the first three areas was based on the numbers of trained tutors ready to take students. In the event, the expected avalanche of referrals through the BBC did not materialise, so that many of the tutors did not feel ready to accept the forms without some experience of actual teaching practice; hence, only some 750 forms reached tutors. The 21 forms issued in Wales were given to a highly-specialised group of organisers who were long-standing members of the National Association for Remedial Education or who had experience, in one case of nearly twenty years' duration, of adult illiterate remedial education. Thus the response of 149 completed forms represents 19.9% of the total issued.

- 50 forms were returned from tutors in Cambridgeshire, either in Local Authority-organised schemes or in the voluntary Cambridge Reading Project scheme;
- 34 forms were returned from tutors in Dorset, all of whom were in Local Authority-organised schemes;
- 44 forms were returned from tutors in Hertfordshire, all of whom were in Local Authority-organised schemes; and
- 21 forms were returned from Specialists in Wales (Mid-Glamorgan).
Tutors were asked to use their own judgement, regardless of any experience of students' aims: that is, to express their own opinions of the importance of each criterion (a). But comments from organisers and tutors from whom forms were collected made it clear that an unknown number of forms had been completed on the basis of tutors' views of the importance of each criterion to their students (b), or from both (a) and (b) points of view, thereby introducing a non-quantifiable variable. It was extremely doubtful if any answers were given that were entirely free of considerations of the needs of, or experience with, a particular student. However, though the results of the questionnaire by itself had to be interpreted as being of limited validity, they remain a useful part of the total evidence. Since the original results could only be interpreted as being indicative, no secondary statistical analysis was attempted.

During preliminary conversations with various organisers and tutors, it was suggested that a tutor's view of his aims would change as the period in which he taught his student increased. Following Tinbergen's rule that each generalisation should be accompanied by a statement of the limitations of its validity, it seemed necessary to examine this hypothesis and establish the conditions under which the hypothesis, if true, operated. Furthermore, if the hypothesis were true, then clearly it would be necessary to arrange for a second tape-recorded interview after a lapse of time, and the time interval needed to be determined on the strength of the evidence.
Evidence of the tutors' attitudes to the aims and achievements through time

Although 68% of all respondents to the questionnaire completed the section listing the phrases by time, there was a lack of consensus of the importance by time of each facet of success, and so diverse were the replies that only the phrases that were mentioned five or more times are included.

No. of phrases quoted as being most important by time of tuition

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<tr>
<th>No. of original phrase</th>
<th>Phrases quoted as being most important by time of tuition</th>
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<td>Increase in comprehension skills .......... 16</td>
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<td>General improvement in confidence and bearing .......... 2</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Willingness to talk about his/her literacy problems .... 10</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Diminution of anxiety with regard to literacy .......... 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regular attendance at classes ............ 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Getting a better job in terms of personal satisfaction and interest (not necessarily better paid) .......... 25</td>
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From the results shown above, it can be seen that 'regular attendance at classes' received the 'vote' of 34 tutors as being the most important initial signal of achievement during the first few weeks. The relative importance of this criterion in the tutors'
estimation clearly illustrates the difficulties of teaching the true illiterate. Of course 'regular attendance at classes' is necessary if any student is to learn anything and if any tutor is to teach anything, but summoning up the courage to go to their first class is a real achievement on the part of illiterate adults according to the evidence of organisers, tutors and the students themselves, and regular attendance could be significant as their first sustained educational effort.

'Getting a better job in terms of personal satisfaction and interest (not necessarily better paid)' was noted as the second most important long-term achievement, but this depends on a multitude of factors, some economic and many quite outside the control of personal endeavour. That tutors have mentioned this criterion shows that they see their literacy tuition as going beyond the teaching of skills.

The most important result of this part of the enquiry was to show that most respondents had no experience of taking any student beyond a period of six months. The tutors often added notes to the form to say that they really were not in a position to state long-term aims, and the second hypothesis, that the length of the course would play a major part in the establishment of tutors' aims could neither be confirmed nor denied, on the basis of this evidence. Consequently, a further instrument of research was constructed, consisting of three case studies conducted over a period of 10 weeks by three teachers on the advanced education course at the Cambridge Institute of Education, under the supervision of Dr. Margaret Peters. The data is derived from each tutor's detailed analysis of each session with his/her individual student.
Case Study 1 - Tutor: Keith

In Lesson 1 Keith followed the usual practice of identifying his student's motivation, which appeared to centre around the student's work as a barman. The tutor seemed to concentrate on teaching sounds, and recognition of words likely to be appropriate in the student's work situation. By the third lesson the student confided that he was a member of a church group and that he could be a more effective member if he could read. By now the tutor was recording such phrases as "J appears to have more confidence" and there were signs that the tutor's objectives had moved from the achievement of skills to the acquisition of confidence. Moreover, the lessons were now planned to be focused on the student's interest in the church group. Yet the tutor's use of the Cloze procedure to further his student's grasp of syntactic and semantic structures still centred on 'barman-work-phrases' during Lesson 4 and, indeed, in this lesson a game was played based on bar stock sheets. This is odd because, as we have seen, the tutor had apparently already accepted that his student's main interest was in the church group; one wonders whether a tutor's reluctance to adapt his methods to suit the main motivation of a student could be a reason for student drop-out.

At the end of the fourth lesson the tutor noted "we must concentrate on the church group" but in the fifth lesson the student wrote a letter, and continued the bar list games; only in the sixth lesson was a substantial amount of work centred on the student's church interest. After reading a chorus of a hymn, the tutor noted
"I read this and was delighted". The following sessions concentrated on religious texts, the tutor noting the student's progress in skill and in confidence. A further question has now been posed: how far did confidence achievement depend on the correct identification of the student's prime motivation - the church - and how far were skill achievements linked to this confidence achievement?

To illustrate a further methodological point, the fact that the bar list exercises had not proved as important to the student as the tutor had thought could be explained by the student's inability to verbalise. As one student interviewed said: "You'll have to excuse me, I can't put things into words very easily. It's not that I'm dim; it's getting things out so that you will understand me."

It is clear that Keith's objectives changed during the ten-week period, but this phenomenon could have been an isolated case. As a check, therefore, two further case studies were investigated.

**Case Study II - Tutor: Georgina**

Georgina's student was aged about 18 years; he was taken along by a girl friend and he had no self-declared motives. During the first two weeks the tutor concentrated on writing skills, using his apparent interest in words such as 'club', 'sport' and 'cactus'. The tutor noted an increase in confidence leading to an over-estimate by the student of his own capabilities. This was illustrated in the third lesson when the student arrived with
a book on chess that was well above his ability levels. The fourth and fifth weeks were spent in trying to reach a more specific understanding of the student's interests, and in reading and dictation practice, but, in the event, no progress was made in finding an interest until the eighth week when the student started to talk "with enthusiasm" about his work in a furniture store. The tutor then began to talk to him about his work and she felt that a rapport was being established. Nevertheless, she continued to teach literacy skills not specifically linked to his work interest. At the end of ten weeks the tutor was convinced that her student needed to wear spectacles and that he should have been educated in a special school rather than in a normal comprehensive school. The tutor seemed to have thought that, since her student's ability in literacy skills was so low, there was little advantage to be gained from linking his written work with his daily work. Thus, over a period of ten weeks, the tutor's objectives seemed to have remained largely unchanged, and to have continued to be centred on basic literacy skills.

Case Study III - Tutor: Martin

Martin's student was particularly interesting, because his objectives were nearly impossible to attain. The student, having been a manual worker of low literacy skill, wished to change to a sedentary clerical job because of an injury. Martin thus tried to increase his literacy skills and by the third session managed to persuade him to write a book on keeping a tropical aquarium. The tutor noted that "the idea seemed to boost the student's confidence and provide a sense of achievement and purpose".
Nevertheless, progress in the skills was very slow, and even so far as confidence was concerned the tutor found that, by the seventh week, his student would "make some excuse and avoid reading at all". One senses that the tutor was disappointed because, although he was willing to accept slow progress in the skills, he expected definite signs of increased confidence. Indeed, by the end of ten weeks the tutor lists examples of his student's non-utilisation of any skills, implying a complete lack of confidence. Martin, however, did change his aims during the ten-week period, shifting them from the skill achievements towards confidence. Consequently, in two case studies there was definite movement in the tutor's scale of objectives, and, in one, Georgina's, apparently little change.

From the evidence of the tutors' notes it was extremely difficult to judge how far they had changed their opinions of the relative importance of each criterion of achievement. However, as a completed 25-phrase form could be converted into a histogram of a tutor's perception of specified objectives, and as all three tutors had completed one before and after the 10-week case study period, it was now possible to be more specific about changing attitudes to a list of given criteria. These are shown and discussed in the next section.
Histogram records of changing attitudes of three tutors during a 10-week period

The three tutors were given verbal explanations of the purpose of the histogram and asked to ensure that they completed it solely from their own point of view as a tutor. The first histogram was completed in October 1975 before their first meeting with their students, and the second histogram was filled-in during March 1976, a few weeks after their ten-week session. None of the tutors could remember their first histogram nor, indeed, expected to be asked to complete another. However, these three histograms are the evidence of three outstanding and experienced teachers attending an advanced education course, and, as such, cannot be regarded in the same light as evidence from 'typical' tutors. But this is one of the virtues of the methodology; provided the conditions under which a piece of evidence is gathered are stated, then that evidence may contribute towards establishing the validity of any generalisations. Consequently, it is legitimate to attempt to see if there was a common pattern, by asking two questions: how did each tutor change the order of priority of each of his/her objectives and how much did each tutor alter his/her opinion?
KEITH'S HISTOGRAMS AT BEGINNING AND END OF 10 WEEK PERIOD

1. A B
   Tutors' Ratings

   denotes start of period
   denotes end of period

   Phrase Number: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

2. A B
   Tutors' Ratings

   denotes start of period
   denotes end of period

   Phrase Number: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

MARTIN'S HISTOGRAMS AT BEGINNING AND END OF 10 WEEK PERIOD

3. A B
   Tutors' Ratings

   denotes start of period
   denotes end of period

   Phrase Number: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25
To generalise, within the limitations of the evidence, each tutor seems to have responded not only to the aims of his or her student but also according to their estimate of the character of their particular student. Keith's student, who was potentially a plodder, had been in a class for one year before Keith met him; Keith therefore responded by lowering all his aims and by accepting a more realistic view. Georgina found her student rather cocky and over-confident, and phrases 2, 10 and 11 were reduced in her scale of priorities. In Martin's case, 10 and 11, in particular, became more important to him as he judged his own student to lack confidence.

Aggregation of the differences between individual ratings over time, assuming intervals of one point, produced the following: Keith changed by 35 units, Georgina by 28 units and Martin by 37 units. Martin scored highest for it has already been seen that Martin's student's aims were the most difficult to attain by remedial literacy. Keith, the second highest scorer, found difficulty in ascertaining his student's motives. Georgina's student's aims were the most nebulous so that her aims changed least. Therefore this measure gives an indication of difference between initial tutor perceptions of aims and the strength of stated student aims. However, the figure below illustrates that these changes were more complicated than a single index figure would suggest.
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CHANGE IN TURF'S RATINGS AFTER INCREASE TURF
( - ) decrease in revision, ( + ) increase in revision.
Keith and Georgina both kept 5 criteria unchanged, whereas Martin kept 7 of his criteria stable; in fact, Martin changed his mind least and a possible explanation is that Martin finally found his student's aims least attainable.

The second question was: what was the degree of change? Keith's maximum alteration in attitude refers to phrase number 18, a change of 4 points, whereas Georgina only changed her mind twice to the degree of three points; Martin, however, changed his mind 6 times to the degree of three or four points. Thus, although Martin, whose student seemed the most difficult, changed his mind the least number of times, when he did alter his view he did it more radically, or extremely, than did the others.

Consequently, there was evidence of measurable changes in tutors' attitudes after a period of tuition, and though the measures indicated no more than the direction of changes in attitudes to individual categories or groups of categories by three selected tutors, this evidence, together with that in the previous section, suggests that quite sophisticated movements in the scale of objectives take place during periods of tuition. This additional evidence implies that some of the previous statements require qualification, for Georgina, who was thought to have altered her opinion little has, in fact, done so more frequently than Martin, and Keith, who has changed his opinion downwards across the board, has done so by only two points less than Martin. It is apparent, therefore, that relative scales of changes as derived from the histogram are important in deducing the nature of the changes in tutor attitudes. Therefore it was decided to plan a second tape-recorded interview with each tutor and student, to be obtained after an interval of at least six months.
This should produce evidence of any change in the aims of tutors or of students, and sufficient time would have elapsed to enable a student to record some achievements.

After consultation with organisers and tutors, a second set of questions or headings were chosen for discussion, as follows:

1. **For tutors:**
   a) What are your student's achievements in:
      i) reading?
      ii) writing?
      iii) any other way?
   b) What are your objectives for your student now?
   c) i) How far have they changed over time?
      ii) If they have changed, after how long a period of tuition did you alter your objectives?
      iii) What made you change your objectives?

2. **For students:**
   a) How have you got on?
   b) In what ways have you changed since joining the scheme?
      (eg. successes in reading, writing, human relationships)
   c) What are your hopes (or objectives) now?

(a) Cf. p.249
Summary

From the preliminary evidence, four hypotheses emerged for further investigation and were confirmed, namely that:

1) tutors do not immediately identify their students' motives correctly;
2) tutors' objectives shift during the course of tuition;
3) tutors regard the student's increase in confidence as the most important criterion of long-term success (see p.120 phrase 2)
4) tutors regard a change of life-style at work as the second most important criterion of a student's success (see p.120 phrase 25)

But two further major questions still remained:

a) Was the list of 25 phrases exhaustive?
b) Was it possible to produce, as a further hypothesis, a preliminary classification of tutors' objectives?

The following chapter shows how a preliminary classification of tutors' aims was reached.
CHAPTER VII

A PRELIMINARY CLASSIFICATION OF TUTORS' AIMS

Criteria as implied in popular reference books

As previously explained, the ethological approach requires a continual process of reference to associated relevant data, and the phenomenological approach points to the need to assess the subjectivity of the "consensus of common sense". Accordingly, certain publications widely used by tutors, and bearing expert opinion, were examined for evidence of a "consensus" opinion of the appropriate objectives for adult illiterates.

The two most popular texts were:

(i) 'Teaching Reading to Adults' by Tom McFarlane, edited by Donald Moyle, published by Edge Hill College Publications 1974 (previously issued as 'A Booklet for Volunteer Tutors' in 1972)

(ii) 'BBC Adult Literacy Handbook', edited by Chris Longley, published by BBC Publications May 1975. (By 1 June 1976, 49,129 copies had been sold and a fourth, 'updated' print order of 20,000 was being planned.)

In the Foreword to 'Teaching Reading to Adults', Moyle lists three basic reasons for trying to make all adults literate (p.3), namely:

"(a) that they may feel socially accepted
(b) that they may read for pleasure
(c) that they may use reading in their work or to further their understanding."
He places particular emphasis on 'enjoyment' and 'utility' and writes: "if success is to be real then the inclusion of these elements (the joy and usefulness of reading) is essential". As he recognises the danger of "skills being taught in isolation" and the "need for the skill to be placed in its real life setting", he also implies that reading and writing are within a field of knowledge which may be called 'basic education'. Though it seemed reasonable to suppose that a person who could read and write with verve and facility would experience the enjoyment of reading poetry or a classic novel, it was doubtful if a student with a low level of skills could also enjoy reading, whilst at the same time struggling over each word. Therefore, before accepting 'enjoyment', even tentatively, as one of the possible achievements, an interview was arranged with a tutor/organiser who had experience of teaching about twenty-five adult students over a period of two years.

The tutor/organiser described three students at different levels of ability:

'A' has most difficulty and has been with us for about four years. He is still quite far back and needs to be helped on.
'B', a girl, reads extremely well but her written work is atrocious; spelling poor, handwriting poor. She cannot construct sentences.
'C' is the best reader; he can read anything at all. His problem is entirely spelling. His writing is really very good indeed. He has good style but he is very slow, very unsure of himself. It is this fear that he is going to spell something stupidly.

Apparentlly 'A' needed help with both skills, reading and writing; 'B' needed help with one skill, writing; and 'C's problem was one of confidence. With these background facts in mind, the meaning of the term 'joy of reading' was considered in the context of each student's level of ability.
Interviewer:

In Tom McFarlane's book, Donald Moyle writes in the Foreword about the 'joy of reading'. Do you think any of these students have had, or will have, experience of this?

Tutor/organiser:

'A' has a sense of humour and that will, I think, give him a certain joy of reading a certain style of thing. He enjoys very young books, he has progressed on to Reader's Digest books where they have facts and questions at the end. He rather enjoyed it; it might be the joy of moving on in the latter case. But as regards the other books he has read, I think he has really enjoyed them; he has thoroughly enjoyed them, though at a very low level. Yes, I think he has experienced the emotion we may experience from reading Dickens.

Interviewer:

Is 'B' likely to find reading enjoyable?

Tutor/organiser:

'B' obviously finds it enjoyable to try and read rather trashy magazines, women's magazines, the girlie type thing, but that's her level and I think she gets enjoyment from this.

'C' enjoys anything, he really does enjoy words. I never asked him if he has read Dickens, but I know he has read a lot of newspapers and that he reads unusual magazines and so forth. He is interested in any piece of journalism; he seems to be interested in anything at all. I'm doing these 'O' level things with him and I've given him things from other books as well. He has to read passages from books, essays, sketches, whatever it might be. Yes, he enjoys them though he does not always understand all of it.

Interviewer:

You really feel he is enjoying this work?

Tutor/organiser:

Yes he does; he loves - he has said this himself - he loves meeting new words, looking them up and seeing what they mean. He likes trying to find out about them; it is something he enjoys.

'Enjoyment' clearly refers to at least two distinct feelings: first, the pleasure of making progress in skills and, secondly, the pleasure of reading and writing at the student's present level of skills.
But in the 'BBC Adult Literacy Handbook', 'enjoyment' of reading was thought possibly to be a lesser aim, for on page 75 a contributor stated:

It seems to us one of the more curious features of the current scene that similar practice is adopted by a number of different providers, and yet when they come to expose the rationale for what they are doing, they reveal quite different understandings of basic points. We ourselves hold, for example, that illiteracy is an acute result of the general working class experience of education, and that this experience cannot be changed in the educational field alone.

Remedial adult literacy programmes could therefore be regarded as one of the means of providing opportunities for the emergence of the working class from their subordinate position in society. The aim of adult literacy education and the achievements of such programmes could then be assessed in terms of class consciousness, so that individual achievement could be stated in terms of the individual's changing perceptions of class consciousness or class roles. However, after more than a year spent visiting students in their own homes and meeting them during coffee breaks, when conversations ranged over all types of subject matter, no evidence had emerged of an awareness of belonging to one homogeneous economic class. Perhaps it could be argued that the students ought to feel class conscious; but that is a different matter. Students were simply human beings, neither angels nor yahoos; indeed, the evidence points to individual perceptions, rather than those of groups.

These findings are very similar to those reported by Mezirow et al., namely that "although.....students are labelled 'poor' and 'disadvantaged' and lumped together in one category by middle-class educators and other professionals, they themselves are aware of numerous social distinctions and gradations".56 As one lorry driver said of another: "You keep on saying Tom is my friend. He isn't,
it's just that we have the same job; but he hasn't worked for the same firm for 18 years: he is just an odd job man. He's all right but I have my own friends who are like me. More typical than class consciousness were students' feelings of personal failure, of personal injustices, of personal pride of achievement and of personal responsibility.

Neither was there any evidence of explicit tutor/student class consciousness. Tutors often mentioned that, although they were obviously better than the students in the area of literacy, they could not compete with their students' knowledge in other fields (examples given were gardening, silverware, horses and smithery) nor in sheer resilience in the face of some current personal misfortunes. Speaking of one student, a tutor remarked:

Oh no, not embarrassed, good gracious, no! She's not that type of person. I think she could give one a mouthful if she felt so inclined.

This does not describe a tutor/student relationship of superior to subordinate, whether seen in personal or social class terms; again, tutor/student relationships seem to be quite unique individual phenomena and should be perceived as such.

Hence, observations over this relatively long period did not provide evidence of a notion of proletariat cohesiveness nor of an aim of acquiring literacy as a means of further proletariat political power in any Marxian sense. As a consequence this question was not investigated further and, within the ambience of this particular research project, it can neither be confirmed conclusively nor denied that illiterate individuals see literacy as one of the communication skills necessary to the achievement of political aims.
Otherwise, the aims of any literacy programme are summarised on page 4 of the ‘BBC Literacy Handbook’ as enabling individuals to:

"(a) comprehend those areas of print which are necessary to acquiring the financial means for survival;
(b) develop a sensitivity towards words and written language which will enable choices of all types to be made;
(c) use language, read, written and spoken, to communicate effectively with others and to maintain human relationships;
(d) use language as a means of emotional and intellectual growth necessary to self-fulfilment and self-esteem."

The results, in summary, of an analysis of these widely used reference texts leave the following criteria for the appropriate aims of an adult literacy scheme:

a) **the building up of confidence**
   (i) Moyle: "that they may feel socially accepted"
   (ii) The BBC Handbook: “use language, read, written and spoken, to communicate effectively with others and to maintain human relationships"
   (iii) The BBC Handbook: “use language as a means of emotional and intellectual growth necessary to self-fulfilment and self-esteem"

b) **financial or occupational survival**
   (i) Moyle: "that they may use reading in their work"
   (ii) The BBC Handbook: "comprehend those areas of print which are necessary to acquire the financial means for survival"
c) reading for pleasure
   (i) Moyle: "that they may read for pleasure"
   (ii) The BBC Handbook by implication in: "use language as
        a means of emotional and intellectual growth necessary
        to self-fulfilment and self-esteem"

d) reading and writing as an integral skill within the field
   of basic adult education
   (i) Moyle: "to further their understanding"
   (ii) The BBC Handbook: "develop a sensitivity towards words
        and written language which will enable choices of all
        types to be made"

However, these generalised aims provide no more than a further
set of hypotheses to be tested against what the tutors actually say.
Therefore the responses of 59 tutors to Section B of the questionnaire
(Appendix A) asking for additional criteria of success were considered,
both from the point of view of their intrinsic value as possible
detailed suggestions and also to eliminate a major objection to
the list of 25 phrases, namely that the respondents should have been
given a wider choice of criteria.

Additional criteria of success as suggested by tutors

To the request to give "other phrases which you think describe
achievement and which you think I should take into account", there
were 169 suggestions, all of which are listed in Appendix B. Most
of these are classified below, starting with the group headings
derived from Moyle and the BBC Handbook (The Appendix phrase number
is given in brackets).
1. the building up of confidence
   (i) acknowledgement of need: "I know I want practice and have got to work at it" (13a)
   (ii) to have confidence in tutor (37a and 37b)
   (iii) ability to join in conversation with peers (2a)
   (iv) ability to discuss topics (2b)
   (v) lessening dependence on tutor - move to self-learning (49)
   (vi) joining a class instead of one-to-one tuition (51)
   (vii) knowing that one can cope with any reading or writing work alone (9b, 12c and 26c)
   (viii) confidence to work with other students - testing spelling, etc. (36c)
   (ix) gaining confidence with other adults apart from tutors and family (38b)
   (x) more confidence in forming new friendships (7b)
   (xi) feeling "as good as anyone else" (9a)

   Already it can be seen that the tutors' aggregated suggestions may be listed in a conceptual progression, which may also be used as a sequential pedagogic approach. The student accepts a need and a willingness to work to meet that need; then the student accepts his tutor as a mediator; following this, the student develops the willingness to practice his language orally; thereafter the student lessens his dependence on his tutor; and finally, the student gains sufficient confidence to move out from an "isolate" mode of living into a fuller, sharing existence in which he sees himself as an equal member of his society. 'Confidence' as an aim, in adult literacy projects, is not a simple concept. (a) Nor is the process

(a) See further discussion of this point from the material in the transcripts of the tape-recorded interviews, Chapter X.
described above a singular feature of literacy education; on the contrary, it is an educational experience which would be recognised as a valid statement of objectives by teachers in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

Most of the next series of objectives, however, are those which pertain to adult experiences, except for the final criterion which seems to depend on an individual's total experience from birth.

2. financial or occupational survival

(i) being able to fill in a questionnaire form, etc. (including writing cheques and completing financial data) without fear (3c, 10b, 22, 24b, 25a, 26b, 53b)

(ii) ability to shop confidently and unaided (including making quality comparisons) (25c, 28c, 30a)

(iii) off-hand attitude of employer should be mitigated (5)

(iv) feeling more confident at work (59)

(v) to realise ambitions regarding career

Criterion (i) is extremely interesting, since it displays the difficulties of the concept of 'functional literacy'. Tutors may identify 'filling-in forms' as a possible student aim, but suppose the forms change? The crux is in the phrase without fear - the objective is for the student to have the confidence to approach sensibly whatever form he needs to complete. To this end, basic techniques of form-filling may be practised and achieved, but without developing the student's confidence, there will be little lasting achievement.

Aim (ii) depends on the kind of shop a student is using and the making of quality comparisons depends on many things far beyond the scope of literacy tuition (e.g. taste, knowledge of materials and
knowledge of alternatives). In the same way, (iii) can be achieved only by educating the employer. It may be accomplished by the creation of a general concern in society for the plight of illiterate adults, and thus be the result of a local or national campaign; it is not within the power of a single tutor (see p. 308). Similarly (iv) could result from the general climate created by a campaign although a tutor may help a student in this respect. Career prospects (v) depend on far more than the acquisition of any particular skill, even literacy; a classic contemporary example is that the number of skilled trade apprenticeships offered by employers varies with the trade cycle, an economic factor quite independent of levels of national literacy.

Thus tutors are able, only to a limited degree, to help the students acquire skills to operate functionally in a given society or social situation. What emerges is that tutors seem to think that they can pursue aims which enable their student to operate functionally whatever the state of society. Insofar as these aims are unattainable, the tutors' attitudes may result in student disappointment. On these grounds, the hypothesis that unrealistic tutors' aims may be a bar to student achievement will be considered later.

3. reading for pleasure

(i) taking an interest in reading and word formation (34a)
(ii) interest in words beyond present skills (18b)
(iii) reading books for pleasure (32, 48)

To enable a student to read for pleasure may be regarded as a long-term objective of literacy tuition. The small frequency of items in this category suggests the hypothesis that tutors
were mainly concerned with short-run skills; yet this is surprising, for many students were alleged to have only spelling problems and so it would seem that they could have rapidly been induced to read for pleasure.

4. **Reading and writing as an integral skill within the field of adult education**

   a) **Writing**
      
      (i) ability to write one's name (53a)
      
      (ii) ability to write legibly (1c)
      
      (iii) to use cursive handwriting instead of capitals (13c, 25b)
      
      (iv) ability to write more quickly and confidently (46)
      
      (v) going back and correcting without prompting (54c, 55a)
      
      (vi) ability to read and write (56)
      
      (vii) ability to express thoughts clearly in writing (6, 29c)
      
      (viii) ability to express ideas in writing, to undertake creative writing (52a)
   
   b) **Reading**
      
      (i) recognition of initial letters (43a)
      
      (ii) non-reversal of letters (43b)
      
      (iii) ability in word attack (1a)
      
      (iv) ability to read the menu posted in canteen and works' notice boards (42a, 42b)
      
      (v) recognition of patterns in spelling (33)
      
      (vi) ability to understand and respond to punctuation marks (44, 45)
      
      (vii) ability to generalise and see patterns (54a, 55b, 58a)
      
      (viii) new understanding of grammatical skills (27c, 38a)
      
      (ix) ability for the eye to go before the voice when reading (36a)
      
      (x) ability to read with expression and not just each word separately (36b, 58b)
(xi) ability to use dictionary (12b, 26a, 29b, 53c)

(xii) ability to find meaning in unknown words (1b, 12a)

(presumably by use either of dictionary or context)

From tutors' comments, it is noticeable that they have mentioned nearly twice as many achievements in reading skills as in writing. This feature deserves further consideration, for if students can write and spell, perhaps, by associating conventionally acceptable word patterns (such as the 'cr' in adviser with the 'er' in miser), it follows that they can read. To be able to write is to be able to read; the converse is not so.

Either further categories emerged which suggested the hypothesis that a few tutors were not mainly concerned with immediate literacy skills; these were:

5. student acceptance of responsibility for the process of achievement

(i) development of active curiosity which overcomes personal shame (47c)

(ii) voluntarily to bring forward work done at home

(11a, 18a, 30a, 30b)

(iii) buying books or aids at own suggestion (eg. 'On the Move' workbook (14)

(iv) ability to see and assess his own improvement (16a, 34b, 57b)

6. development of personal psychological harmony

(i) by being able to sleep at night (3b, 24a)

(ii) ability to admit his/her difficulty to others, besides the tutor (11c)

(iii) for the student to have a constructive attitude to his problem (47b)
(iv) persistently to attempt to work by himself (57a)
(v) to have a sense of achievement (19b, 34b)
(vi) perhaps their being able to grasp their own problem as part of a larger, common problem - to blame not themselves but the society which abandoned their problem for so long and limited their real potential (15a, 27a, 35)
(vii) to overcome aggressive feeling to society in general (20)
(viii) to attain greater tolerance and understanding of different customs, beliefs and others' problems through their reading (15b)
(ix) exhibition of greater social competence (4c)
(x) to assume role of leader/organiser in social setting (41a)

7. the development of easier familial relationships
   (i) keeping one step ahead of own children learning to read, or reading with child (3a, 23a, 24c, 28a, 43c)
   (ii) improvement in companionable domestic skill: "I shall write out the shopping list instead of my wife" (13b)

8. improved societal relationships
   (i) assumption of more respect from society (7a)
   (ii) willingness to help others as he/she has been helped (10b, 31c, 41b)
   (iii) willingness to help generally in the community (eg. youth work, voluntary social work, etc.) (40c)
   (iv) exhibition of better citizenship (4b)

9. non-vocational interest development
   (i) improvement of performance in hobbies' skills (7c, 27b)
   (ii) joining recreational classes at college (40b)
10. **linking literacy skills to other knowledge areas and personal experience**

(i) increased awareness of various aspects of literacy (47a)

(ii) eligibility to drive a car and read maps (42c)

(iii) relating what is learnt to everyday experiences

(16b, 19a, 28b)

11. **development of oral skills**

(i) ability to verbalise experiences, however simple (50)

12. **linking literacy skills to personal long-term education plans**

(i) evincing a desire for further education (e.g., 'O' levels)

(17, 23b, 31b, 40a, 52b)

(ii) developing an enquiring mind (39)

**Summary of preliminary criteria of success**

In summary, the 12 major categories of criteria for success were:

1. the building up of confidence
2. financial or occupational survival
3. reading for pleasure
4. reading and writing as an integral skill within the field of adult education
5. student acceptance of responsibility for the process of achievement
6. development of personal psychological harmony
7. the development of easier familial relationships
8. improved societal relationships
9. non-vocational interest development
10. linking literacy skills to other knowledge areas and personal experience

11. development of oral skills

12. linking literacy skills to personal long-term education plans

Because so many of the tutors' suggestions appeared to be outside the original four categories and, especially, on account of the new category - the development of personal psychological harmony - which is one of the main features of the concept of adult education, all the responses were re-categorised, to ensure that the results gained so far were not the consequence of the selection of the above particular system of classification.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of achievement</th>
<th>Number of the response</th>
<th>% of all responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Socialisation</td>
<td>2a, 2b, 6a, 7b, 20, 36c, 38b, 40b, 51</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Family sharing</td>
<td>3a, 15b, 23a, 24c, 28a, 43c</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Removal of anxiety</td>
<td>3b, 7a, 11a, 11b, 26a, 27a, 35, 47c</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Improved ability to perform as citizen</td>
<td>4b, 10b, 15b, 31c, 40c, 41a, 41b</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Improved employment conditions</td>
<td>5, 19c, 59</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Overall educational aims</td>
<td>39, 54a, 55b, 58a</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Literacy skills</td>
<td>1a, 1b, 1c, 6, 9b, 12a, 12b, 13b, 23b, 26a, 27c, 29a, 29b, 29c, 33, 34a, 36a, 36b, 38a, 40a, 43b, 44, 45, 46, 47a, 50, 52a, 53a, 54b, 54c, 55a, 55c, 58b</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Objectives described as 'functional literacy' aims</td>
<td>3c, 7c, 16b, 19a, 22, 24b, 25a, 25c, 26b, 27b, 28b, 26c, 30a, 42a, 42b, 42c, 53b, 53c</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Self-image improvements</td>
<td>9a, 10a, 11c, 12c, 13a, 14, 15a, 16a, 18a, 19b, 26c, 30b, 31a, 34b, 47b, 57a, 57b</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Achievements affecting ability to continue education</td>
<td>17, 18b, 23b, 31b, 32, 40a, 48, 49, 52b</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Tutor-student relationships</td>
<td>37a, 37b</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Tutor comments (unclassified)</td>
<td>8, 21, 55d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>100,02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although tuition in literacy skills is the predominant overall aim, tutors also saw their function as helping the student to use literacy to cope with everyday problems (15.5%) and improving the student's self-image (14.7%). What is remarkable about the rest is the relative importance allocated, first, to preparing a student to continue with his education (7.8%), secondly, to improving his ability to socialise (7.8%) and, thirdly, to improving his capacity to act as a useful member of society (6.0%).

The result of this analysis seemed sufficiently consistent with the previous categorisation as to suggest that tutors' aims are beyond those specific to literacy as a skill, and that interviews with tutors should attempt to reveal their attitudes to the aims of adult education as much as to literacy skills. However, before finally accepting this approach, an etiological methodology would require a look at some more indicatory evidence, to establish the degree of consistency with the results so far elicited.

There was the possibility that the above groupings emerged, to some extent, from giving the tutors a finite list for ordering and ranking 25 phrases (Section A, Appendix A). Perhaps a simple general question would have elicited a different response. An enquiry(a) conducted during 1976 included the question "What level of achievement would you count as success for your student?" (see Appendix C for replies).

(a) An enquiry conducted by Georgina Ingleby under the direction of Dr. Margaret Peters of the Cambridge Institute of Education
Out of 37 tutors responding to the whole questionnaire, 11 did not reply to this particular question. Of the 26 tutors who did reply, one was negative and there were 29 suggested criteria of achievement. All the criteria in response to this open question were equivalent to those listed previously and could be distributed in the groups as follows: (categorised as on p.146-7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>No. of times criteria mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. the building up of confidence</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. financial or occupational survival</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. reading for pleasure</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. reading and writing as a skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) writing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) reading</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specifically: to write from dictation (phrase 18 of 25-phrases)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specifically: to write a letter (phrase 20 of 25-phrases)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. student acceptance of responsibility for the process of achievement</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. development of personal psychological harmony</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. the development of easier familial relationships</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. improved societal relationships</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. non-vocational interest development</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. linking literacy skills to other knowledge areas and personal experience</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. development of oral skills</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. linking literacy skills to personal long-term education plans</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thus the 'open' question did not, in fact, extend the range of suggested ideas for achievement, but it did show an interesting change in the balance of criteria: over one-third of the replies were in the writing skill area and almost two-thirds were concerned with reading and writing criteria taken together. Ingleby's sample population consisted wholly of tutors who were also teachers, whereas of those who replied to the questionnaire Appendix A, only 40% were estimated to be teachers. Consequently, it appears that when the tutors are trained as school teachers, they tend to over-emphasise the importance of reading and writing, together, in the full range of achievements thought necessary for the adult illiterate student. Therefore, on the grounds that the respondents to the questionnaire Section A (Appendix A) were typical of the general population of voluntary tutors, the responses were analysed to suggest a further categorisation of aims.

In the original questionnaire sent out to tutors, the phrases nos. 8, 9, 14, 22 and 23 were positioned to encourage each tutor to consider individual phrases carefully. Phrases no. 16-21, strictly describing examples of cognitive literate improvement, were listed in a single block so that, on a histogram, the tutor could be identified whose attitude to the aims of his activities were directed to the improvement in his students' skills.

However, although this order was pragmatically devised to maximise the respondent's attention, clearly there were other logical ways of grouping these phrases signalling achievement.

The phrases could be placed in 4 categories, each category reflecting a change of behaviour which helps to answer certain questions:
When the investigation began, trainers and tutors tended to specify two aims: to teach the student the skills of reading and writing and to increase the student's confidence. Indeed, the earliest conversations with tutors suggested that 'greater confidence' were key words in their descriptions of achievement and so, although the four groupings given above provided the preliminary basis for questioning tutors and students, it seemed expedient to construct a scheme in which the comprehensive notion of 'confidence' was split to discriminate between those gains that could be ascribed to the individual personal attitude of the student and those that showed increases in confidence as reflected in the student's social communication. Consequently the phrases were re-grouped as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Phrase numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How have attitudes changed during tuition?</td>
<td>1, 5\textsuperscript{*} inclusive &amp; 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How far have attitudes changed in affecting social relationships?</td>
<td>6, 7, 10, 11, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How far has there been an improvement in skills?</td>
<td>16-21 inclusive, 8 &amp; 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How far have employment conditions improved?</td>
<td>24, 25 &amp; 14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{*} Phrase 2 has been included in this group to allow for tutor assessment during tuition, even though it is the positive counter to the negative attribute implied in phrase 12, group 2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase numbers</th>
<th>Phrase numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A, Cognitive achievements - achievements in skills</td>
<td>8, 9, 15, 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18, 19, 20, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B, Affective personal orientated achievements - confidence achievements</td>
<td>2, 10, 11, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22, 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C, Affective social orientated achievements - confidence achievements</td>
<td>3, 4, 6, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D, Enactive achievements - identifiable activities</td>
<td>1, 5, 7, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E, Socio-economic achievements - work-orientated achievements</td>
<td>14, 24, 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But did this list reflect the tutors' views? As tutor opinion was required as an indicator of the continuing research into student predispositions towards aims and objectives, there was concentration on two facets of the results: the order of phrases by rank that were awarded both an 'A' column rating in the five-point scale and were also circled as being the most important 'A' phrase within that 'A' rating and, secondly the phrases themselves which received 'A' ratings in the five point scale, 'A' to 'E'.

The following table shows the rank order, by number of circled ticks per phrase, in each geographic area. The left-hand column refers to the new groupings and the number of the phrase given on the original questionnaire is provided in the next column; for example: A3 refers to 'cognitive achievements', new phrase no.3 - previously listed as phrase no.16 in the questionnaire.

The considerable limitations of the evidence provided by the responses to Section A (Appendix A) have already been listed, but it is worth reiterating that the results may be used as indicators. For this reason it was decided to use the aggregate...
of the results from all geographical areas, on the assumption that the inherent weakness of the research instrument may be counteracted by taking all areas together, rather than by dealing solely with those from Cambridgeshire. Nevertheless, local responses are given to indicate the diversity, and to emphasise that the process of aggregation is weighted because the greatest number of results came from Cambridgeshire. (See page 118 for explanation of the different geographical groups).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Rank order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extending range of reading beyond information...</td>
<td>A1 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading information material...</td>
<td>A2 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in comprehension skills...</td>
<td>A3 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in word recognition skills...</td>
<td>A4 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to take dictation...</td>
<td>A5 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to check spelling...</td>
<td>A6 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to write a letter...</td>
<td>A7 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to read newspapers...</td>
<td>A8 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General improvement in confidence and bearing...</td>
<td>B1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to talk about his/her literacy problem...</td>
<td>B2 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of expectation to succeed in reading and writing...</td>
<td>B3 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diminution of anxiety (general)</td>
<td>B4 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in the period of concentration during tuition...</td>
<td>B5 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diminution of anxiety with regard to literacy</td>
<td>B6 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in clarity of speech...</td>
<td>C1 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in range of spoken vocabulary...</td>
<td>C2 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading to his/her children...</td>
<td>C3 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better relationships with members of the family...</td>
<td>C4 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular attendance at classes...</td>
<td>D1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement from a one-to-one learning situation to joining a group (even if individual teaching still takes place)...</td>
<td>D2 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing books from library...</td>
<td>D3 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joining more social groups...</td>
<td>D4 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumption of greater responsibility at work...</td>
<td>E1 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting a better job in terms of more pay...</td>
<td>E2 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting a better job in terms of personal satisfaction and interest (not necessarily better paid)...</td>
<td>E3 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A = Cognitive achievements  
B = Affective personal achievements  
C = Affective social achievements  
D = Enactive achievements  
E = Socio-economic achievements

TABLE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Rank order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extending range of reading beyond information...</td>
<td>A1 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading information material...</td>
<td>A2 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in comprehension skills...</td>
<td>A3 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in word recognition skills...</td>
<td>A4 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to take dictation...</td>
<td>A5 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to check spelling...</td>
<td>A6 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to write a letter...</td>
<td>A7 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to read newspapers...</td>
<td>A8 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General improvement in confidence and bearing...</td>
<td>B1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to talk about his/her literacy problem...</td>
<td>B2 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of expectation to succeed in reading and writing...</td>
<td>B3 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diminution of anxiety (general)</td>
<td>B4 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in the period of concentration during tuition...</td>
<td>B5 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diminution of anxiety with regard to literacy</td>
<td>B6 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in clarity of speech...</td>
<td>C1 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in range of spoken vocabulary...</td>
<td>C2 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading to his/her children...</td>
<td>C3 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better relationships with members of the family...</td>
<td>C4 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular attendance at classes...</td>
<td>D1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement from a one-to-one learning situation to joining a group (even if individual teaching still takes place)...</td>
<td>D2 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing books from library...</td>
<td>D3 7</td>
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<td>D4 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumption of greater responsibility at work...</td>
<td>E1 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting a better job in terms of more pay...</td>
<td>E2 24</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A = Cognitive achievements  
B = Affective personal achievements  
C = Affective social achievements  
D = Enactive achievements  
E = Socio-economic achievements
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The histogram (p.158) shows the frequency of ticks placed in the 'A' column, analysed in the new phrase order, and a histogram of the frequency of circled ticks in the 'A' column, the 'most important' phrase in the 'most important' column, is superimposed (p.159). These histograms show that when tutors are asked to grade on a five-point scale from a given list of criteria, the two most important criteria appear within the group 'cognitive achievements', but when they are asked to go further and give the most important of the most important, the two top criteria are in the 'affective personal orientated' domain (p.159). Thus, a possible inconsistency in tutors' priorities is indicated, but this ambivalence on the part of tutors' perceptions is consistent with evidence already discussed. Perhaps tutors are uncertain of the role of literacy tuition within the role of adult education? The identification of this uncertainty was an important lead into the formulation of tape-recorded interviews, because it was now seen to be important to interview in a general, conversational mode to probe these areas of uncertainty.
Moreover, the results of the questionnaire could be used to establish a tentative ordering of criteria. It has been noted that, on the basis of the first schedule of 25 phrases defining achievement, a scheme was constructed, starting with five main groups of achievements:

A. Cognitive achievements
B. Affective personal achievements
C. Affective social achievements
D. Enactive achievements
E. Socio-economic achievements

By adding the 'total' ranks in each group from the number of grade 'A' circled ticks (Table 1) and dividing by the number of phrases in each group, the overall order of importance so far as tutors were concerned was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Score (ranking item average from Table 1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Affective personal achievements</td>
<td>7.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Cognitive achievements</td>
<td>13.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Enactive achievements</td>
<td>14.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Socio-economic achievements</td>
<td>17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Affective social achievements</td>
<td>17.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, the 'total' results given in Table 2 (the 'A' grading ticks uncircled) were added in each group, and divided by the number of items in each group; the rank order derived was:
However, if the results above of the scoring of 'A' in the relative scale alone are used, the scores for Groups C and D are the same and Group A, cognitive achievements, acquires the highest ranking. Consequently, on the grounds that two of the tutors' decisions should be taken into account, both forms of grading were averaged to establish a further ranking order, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Score (average ranking from Tables 1 and 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Cognitive achievements</td>
<td>11.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Affective personal achievements</td>
<td>15.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Affective social achievements</td>
<td>17.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Enactive achievements</td>
<td>17.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Socio-economic achievements</td>
<td>17.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting that C and E are close together in all the above tables. The question arises as to why a group containing an aim such as 'reading to his/her children should approximate so closely to a group including such a disparate aim as 'getting a better job in terms of pay'.

(a) This ranking order provided the analytical basis for the findings presented in Chapters XI to XV inclusive.
A possible explanation appears to lie in the low ranking given to 'improvement in clarity of speech' and 'improvement in the range of spoken vocabulary' (see Table 1, p.155). Could it have been that, despite the emphasis on phonics as the prime reading technique, tutors ignored the interrelationship between speech and writing?

This question raises doubts as to the adequacy of the typical 'crash programme' training schemes mounted in Spring 1975 to prepare tutors for the BBC input in Autumn 1975. Since, for example, at least four different types of training schemes were mounted in Cambridgeshire alone, it may be that it was the speed of organisation and development of training programmes rather than the type of training which resulted in the tutors' response to the ordering of aims. In addition, as the questionnaire was issued in the early part of 1976, it is also probable that the responses were the first impressions of tutors after training but before any reasonably lengthy experience of actually teaching a student. This is yet a further reason for viewing the response to Appendix A as indicative. However, the subsequent research period compensated for initial tutor reaction by relating tutor and student perceptions to achievement over a period of eighteen months.

The collection and analysis of the prime data

The point has been reached when there are some kilometres of tape-recorded conversations with tutors and students conducted during the first six months of 1976 and repeated, in a shortened form but with some additional questions, in the first six months of 1977.
These tape recordings require interpretation: they are the raw data of students' and tutors' perceptions of aims or objectives and of achievements. How should this evidence be interpreted?

An ethological approach would demand, as a minimal procedure, that:

(i) the raw data (the tape recordings) be analysed to identify any emergent generalisations;

(ii) the generalisations derived from (i) be referred to indicative statements gathered from other evidence (given in this and the previous chapter) to ensure that, in the process of interpretation of raw data, relevant data had been correctly selected;

(iii) the raw data be re-examined in terms of the second level of generalisation to test for logical consistency;

(iv) any data not consistent with a generalised statement be located and specified as a limitation to such a statement.

As a concomitant of this approach, the framework of the evidence should be seen as part of the student perception of the desire to survive and adapt to survive, and the results of this study should enable predictions of student achievement to be made.

An analysis of the tapes begins with the students' perception of their education, an educational experience which, by definition, did not instil enough literate skill to last into adulthood or to prove sufficient to meet the demands made on the student in adult life.
The sample

The following evidence, presented in a way to protect both tutors and students from being identified, is based on the tape-recordings of conversations with students and tutors derived from:

(a) the profiles of 68 students as described by 49 tutors, and
(b) interviews with 35 out of the 68 students.

The remaining 33 students were not interviewed because over half had ceased to have tuition between the initial contact with the tutor and the date of arranging to see the student. Of the rest of the students not interviewed, some did not wish to be seen, some were on holiday and others had suspended their lessons for the time being.

Of the 68 students under consideration:

(a) 44 were male
(b) 24 were female
(c) their total average age was 32 years 9 months
(d) the average age of the men was 31 years 7 months
(e) the average age of the women was 34 years 8 months
(f) the range of age was from 16 years to 56 years 6 months

(with an exceptional case of one in the early sixties)
The sample was taken from two types of organisations which provided facilities for students, namely:

(a) the Local Authority - 32 students  
(b) the Voluntary Organisation - 36 students

The Local Authority organisation provided tuition in:

(a) a tutor's home - 4 students  
(b) an adult education centre - 25 students  
(c) a library - 3 students

and the Voluntary Organisation provided tuition in:

(a) a tutor's home  
(b) a room in a Community Centre provided by the Local Authority  
(c) a mixture of (a) and (b) above.

Nearly all the students made their first contact with the Voluntary Organisation in the Community Centre, but thereafter about 30 of them continued their tuition in their tutor's home. However, of these 30, some 6 to 8 also met their tutors in the Community Centre upon occasion.

There were various types of tuition schemes:

(a) The Local Authority  

The Local Authority offered alternative modes of tuition:

- home tuition solely with a particular tutor;  
- tuition solely with a particular tutor in a Local Authority-controlled building;  
- tuition with an individual tutor under the supervision of a tutor organiser, other students and tutors being present; and  
- class tuition, usually five to eight students with one class tutor.
In the event, however, the Local Authority arrangements for tuition, by place of tuition, consisted of:

(i) An adult education centre (25 students)

Here, during a period of two hours, each student would have individual help from a volunteer tutor. Pairs of volunteer tutors and their students were distributed around the room under the supervision of a tutor-organiser who taught particular students, organised and often supplied resources.

(ii) A library (3 students)

These students formed part of a group of 4 (the 4th student did not attend during the period of the research) meeting in the local library. Each student had an individual tutor, and a tutor-supervisor exercised over-all control.

(iii) Meetings at home (6 students)

Each student visited the home of his/her tutor for tuition and was taught solely by his/her particular tutor.

(b) The Voluntary Organisation

The Voluntary Organisation concentrated solely on one-to-one tuition so a student would receive tuition from his/her own tutor, whether the tuition took place at the tutor's home or in a part of a classroom in the Community Centre. Students in this scheme who met at the Centre did not meet each other for coffee or for any other reason during their tuition period. Usually, the tutor met the student in the entrance hall and together they selected a private corner of the classroom for tuition; at the end of the session, tutor and student left the building together.
Attendance patterns

As the adult education centre scheme had been the longest established, many students had attended for periods of 3, 4 and even 5 years. The average period of attendance was, at the date of interview respectively:

(a) 23 months at the education centre,
(b) 10 months in the local authority tutors' home provision, and
(c) 9 months in the voluntary-organised scheme where students usually met in the tutor's home.

The analysis of quotations

In the following chapters quotations are selected from lengthy, largely unstructured conversations with students and tutors to derive criteria of success and to establish an understanding of the meaning of those criteria. In this chapter the procedures for analysing these tape-recordings are described in some detail, for the interpretation of such material is always difficult and the inevitable element of subjectivity (which is designedly present also in the data) has to be made clear.

In particular, it will be shown that, whereas the criteria based on the answers to the questionnaires to tutors were (cf.p.161) in rank order:

(a) Affective personal achievements
(b) Cognitive achievements
(c) Enactive achievements
(d) Socio-economic achievements
(e) Affective social achievements

the perceived criteria that emerged from the tape-recorded evidence...
were, in order:

(a) Affective personal achievements
(b) Affective social achievements
(c) Socio-economic achievements
(d) Cognitive achievements
(e) Enactive achievements (cf. pp. 345-348)

Moreover, within each of those five major categories, certain sub-criteria were identified and located in rank order. Similarly, in the next chapter, students' perceptions of their educational experience and social background are deduced from quoted statements. Here the same problem can be seen, in that some statements of perception are selected as being of more importance than others.

The nature of the central problem of the investigation has already been described in previous chapters, but it is still worth recalling those facets which affected this particular investigation. These were that tutors or students could not be chosen by any random statistical method and that everyone was assured of strict confidentiality and anonymity. Indeed, it is worth noting that a contemporary research project was being conducted by the National Institute of Adult Education of a Study of Broadcasting Roles in Mass Literacy Remedial Adult Education. In a letter to Referral Officers in Local Authority areas, the BBC Further Education Officer (Adult Literacy) wrote: "All parties to the research, including the BBC, are most anxious that no student should be contacted by the Researchers without the prior permission of the student concerned having been obtained by either yourself or the class teacher or Scheme Organiser concerned." (a) Given that background, the conditions

(a) Letter dated June 1975, p.3, from the BBC Room 112
under which this study was conducted could be no less specific. Therefore, the usual procedures of associative or correlative statistical methods were inappropriate, as were multi-factorial analytic methods based on specific responses. But that was not all; it became evident very early in the pilot period of this investigation, that both students and tutors were prepared to give much more information of their perceptions if they were allowed to converse in an easy, but apparently unstructured, manner. Thus, when the fieldwork was completed, there were many tape-recordings; those of the tutors were linguistically more sophisticated than those of their students, whose statements were usually couched in a simple, halting, imprecise code.

Therefore it seemed crucial to the investigation to ensure that the recorded evidence should produce patterns of perceptions endogenous to the data on the tapes. As a cautious scientific procedure, it was decided that the exogenous hypotheses described in previous chapters should be disregarded. If the evidence of the tapes contradicted or augmented the previous descriptive studies of perceptions, then logically a contradiction would be viewed as being the equivalent to a nullified hypothesis, and should an additional piece of evidence emerge it would have to be considered.

To ensure the procedural independence of the selections of recorded data, the following steps were taken, steps 1 and 2 being carried out immediately, or as soon as possible, after the interview, with step 3 et seq. being carried out before the chapters with the quotations were written:

Step 1: Each tape was transcribed by myself, the sole interviewer.
No transcriptions were made by a secretary, who would not know the exact circumstances under which the recording was made.
Step 2: The written transcription was read and the circumstances under which it was taken were noted. For example, the presence of a spouse and/or tutor and/or student was noted. Some tutors would not be interviewed unless their husbands were present; where his presence affected the course of the interview, this was noted.

Step 3: Each written transcript was read again and checked against a play-through of the recording to refresh my memory of the tone in which the comments were made and of the gesticulations which accompanied the statements and, where necessary, these were noted on the transcript.

Step 4: Transcripts of the conversations with tutors and students during the first and the second interviews were re-read to locate corroborative statements by either tutor or student or repetitions of statements made during any of the individual interviews.

Step 5: Each written transcript of the tape-recording was then re-read, and where a statement was relevant to educational or social background, or to any form of achievement or success, this was copied onto a separate slip of paper.

Step 6: The total pile of these slips of paper was then placed in heaps by subject matter. The subject matter was entirely determined by the nature of the quotations on each slip of paper. The only imposed classification of the tapes was that specified in Step 5 above.

Step 7: Each heap was then placed in a row by reference to the subject matter of each heap: eg, a heap with statements about using a literacy skill in shopping would be placed in the same row as a heap concerned with other uses of literacy skills.
Step 8: Each row was then read through again for a possible classification and, by continuous rearrangement of associative heaps, six major rows emerged, which could be classified, as follows:

- perceptions of educational and social background
- affective personal relationship achievements
- cognitive achievements
- enactive achievements
- socio-economic achievements
- affective social achievements

There were some rows left over, containing no more than two or three slips. These slips were re-read to ensure that the problem was that the quotations were difficult to place within the six categories listed above rather than that further classifications or reclassifications of the rows were required. In the event, it was discovered that these awkward slips indicated an individual's aberration of perception from the majority of the rest of the quotations. Consequently, they were added to the six rows and included in the following chapters as examples of a highly individualised, unique perception.

Step 9: Quotations in each row were re-read and placed once more in individual heaps on the basis that the six major groups of row titles were, indeed, correct.

Step 10: The heaps within each row were placed in order according to the number of slips in each heap. Thus, when a quotation appeared several times in nearly the same words, that heap was regarded as expressing a single perception. But even
though the heaps were ordered by frequency of quotation, when a quotation appeared only twice, or even once, or two heaps had the same number of quotations, the recording itself was listened to again to see if the vocal emphasis and the place of the quotation in the context of the total conversation implied that the quotation represented a perception of major importance to the speaker, or the perception expressed was worthy of greater emphasis because of my own knowledge of further corroborative evidence. If either were the case, the perception was given a greater weighting than its numerical frequency position originally suggested, and that heap was moved upwards towards the head of the row.

Step 11: Then the chapters were written, using the quotation slips but in the order of the replies given by the tutors to the questionnaire from which the five major criteria were originally derived.

Step 12: As each chapter was written, the slips of quotations as placed on the table in rows and heaps determined the structure of that chapter and within each chapter 'groupings' of perceptions emerged which were summarised at the end of each chapter.

Step 13: Then each chapter dealing with the five major criteria was read again, to establish the relative importance of the sub-criteria within each chapter, and the effects of the total evidence given in each chapter. It then became clear that the taped evidence produced a different order of
importance and ranking of criteria from that evinced from
the replies to the questionnaire sent to tutors. It is
this final ordering of the perceptions of students and
tutors that is advanced as a conclusion in the last chapter
of this thesis.

Step 14: Quantitative descriptions

When a heap was more than about two-thirds up a row, the
term most is used as the adjective in the following chapters.
When the heap was more than about two-thirds down the row,
the adjective used is few. Quotation heaps between
approximately halfway and two-thirds up the row were
allocated the adjective many whilst those half to two-thirds
down were called some. Very few in that context describes
quoted perceptions at the end of the row. All adjectives
take into account tonal evidence and the use of other
communicative modes.

The above description of the procedure adopted contains two major
methodological issues which need further discussion. These are:
a) the justification for the statement in (10) above) "or the
perception expressed was worthy of greater emphasis because
'of my own knowledge of further corroborative evidence" and
b) that the use (in 14 above) of the adjectives 'most' and
'few' or variations of such adjectives in the following
chapters has the sufficient degree of exactitude necessary
for the formulation of conclusive generalisations.
The use of corroborative evidence

The explanation of this facet of the investigative approach lies in the ethological or, in more strictly stated terms, the comparative ethological approach which has permeated the methodology of this thesis. When an ornithologist and ethologist studies a particular bird within a particular species, that bird's behaviour is carefully observed and described. It is then interpreted both in the context of various ecological, social and behavioural influences and also in relation to the observed behaviour of other members of that species. The ornithologist compares and contrasts one particular member of a species with other members of that species and with other species displaying similar behavioural patterns. A similar process has been applied in the case of the study of the perceptions of the adults, both students and tutors, whose statements are quoted in the following chapters. Thus, in deciding that "the perception expressed was worthy of greater emphasis because of my own knowledge of further corroborative evidence" I have in mind, in general, three years of full-time work on the role of broadcasting in ameliorating adult illiteracy and, in particular, 26 visits to Local Authorities to discuss the problems of adults involved in literacy schemes. It should be stated that, in my view, this general background knowledge was an essential component in the ordering of the 'heaps' of quotations within the rows, and of the rows, and in understanding the significance of sometimes isolated snippets of evidence.

The element of subjectivity is acknowledged, but the claim is that the researcher is not simply a camera with an open shutter. Where he is himself engaged in the field of study - as is common in educational research - his professional experience will inform
his interpretation of data just as does the ethologist's ecological
knowledge. This is the justification for applying the term
"corroborative" to such knowledge. Corroborative knowledge is,
in particular, useful when dealing with students whose skill in
articulating their thoughts is very variable. One is forced to
interpret whilst, at the same time, accepting the subjectivity of
such interpretations.

The device of such adjectives as 'most' and 'few'

There were alternative ways of proceeding. First, it would have
been possible to count the number of quotes in each heap and to
have simply given the number in the text; one could have said
that 20 students said that and 16 said this and to have thereby
implied a simple weighting of 5 to 4. But to have done this would
have been to mislead the reader, because no quotation was outside
a conversational context, the environment in which the interview
took place and the emphatic tonal quality of the response or even
the explicit accompanying gesture. It has already been noted in
previous chapters that there was a variety of students, of varied
levels of articulative skill, within the relatively small total
number of people available for interview.

To say that 'most' students, for example, perceived "confidence"
as being an achievement of prime importance in their scale of
success is to interpret the following type of conversation:

Student:

Well, I feel better - you know - you know - I feel better.
Yes, I feel - well, you know - easy - yes, easy - in myself,
you know. Do you see what I mean?
It was the grin and the general context and a statement towards the end of the interview that:

Well, I'm getting on very slowly with my reading - very slowly - but it's helping me in a sort of way, in myself.

which led to a translation of the student's perception as being:

I am gaining in confidence first and foremost.

If 'most' students expressed this perception in this way, one can only truthfully write 'most', even though an exactitude, spurious though it may be, might offer a sense of well-being to the quantitative mind. 'Most' and 'few' and such adjectives are all that can be offered at this stage of the investigation into the perceptions of achievement among adults concerned in literacy schemes. The crux of any scientific venture is the awareness that someone else may add to the contribution of this grain of sand to our knowledge of adults with problems in literacy; such future endeavour will be that much better based if the present methodological problem is clearly stated.

Secondly, it would have been possible to index each quotation by means of a formula incorporating vocal qualities, emphasis in context and frequency of statement or frequency of persons making similar statements. To have done so would have led to the objections already rehearsed in the previous paragraph. In fact, the presentation of the evidence would have been less open to critical inspection by the reader because of a greater number of judgements being involved in any index system.

Thirdly, it could be argued that nothing so complex in quantitative terms was required; rather, a simple statement that so many students or tutors said this or that. But, because of the largely free conversational technique with tutors or because of the language register of students, no two people said exactly the same thing.
and it seemed highly dangerous to apply additive arithmetical procedures to non-identical items. Particularly in the conversations with students, too structured a questioning technique would have resulted in surprising responses. As an example of the ethological approach in action and the use of what Rosemary Jellis calls "a natural experiment":

Interviewer: Have you used the library?
Student: What do you mean?
Interviewer: A public library.
Student: You mean the town library? No!

So far, the answer to the question, fairly structured, is "No!"

So the interviewer could reasonably have gone on to ask the next structured question, but the student's expression was such as to indicate that he was not quite satisfied with the conversation to date, and the interviewer waited. After a pause:

Student: I've borrowed books, though!
Interviewer: Where from?
Student: Well, Mr. X has arranged for a room in the Council to have books for us.

The student was quite right; a room had been set aside in the Council building where the Librarian ran a rather less formal sub-library especially for such adults, so the answer is "Yes!", because the student had borrowed books from the library.

The problem used as an example is a simple one. Of course, it may be argued that by careful pilot questionnaires and so on, questions can be arranged to require only one specific type of reply. But there are two further problems, as shown by the pilot studies already mentioned: first, it was normally possible only to use simple questionnaires with highly verbal or literate people.
(tutors) and, secondly, the nature of the perceptions of adult illiterates was not known sufficiently well enough to devise a comprehensive questionnaire which could be applied even by verbal interview.

There remains one further comment that may assist the reader in his understanding of the following chapters, and this concerns the use of a concept of survival in a particular way.

**Survival - the underlying theme**

The way in which the perceptions of students and tutors were ascertained and ordered has been described above, and some indication of the final major ranking of criteria has been given. Similarly, before discussing the quotations in detail, it seems appropriate to indicate the belief that all the evidence points to an underlying and pervasive desire to survive. The term "survival" in this thesis does not mean such processes as obtaining enough food to live - that is not, at present, a difficulty in the United Kingdom - nor does it mean the passing on of genetic characteristics of a species or a race of mankind. It means, rather, that in modern industrial societies human beings have a problem of survival which stems from their unique ability to choose to accept themselves as they are and to continue to live. To survive, human beings need to be within certain limits of tolerable self-acknowledgement or of self-image. At one extreme, the intolerable may become so great that survival is utterly rejected; though suicide is an awesome sin to those versed in the tenets of Christianity, such action may provide the only possible relief from unbearable anguish. At the other extreme are those who live in a cloud of unctuous self-regard
and self-satisfaction, and whose self-image is one of undiluted admiration. The hypothesis throughout this text is that 'most' people exist somewhere within these limits. The adult with a knowledge of his deficiency in reading or writing or, that is, an adult who thinks he is illiterate (for, as we have seen, few in the sample were totally illiterate) seeks to ameliorate his self-view of his worthiness.

The hypothesis has therefore been propounded that the adult student who came forward in this sample was, in fact, appealing to his tutor for two reasons: for technical aid in a particular skill and for help to reburnish his self-image to enable him to cope with the stress of ordinary day-to-day life in an extremely complex and sophisticated industrial society.

It is worth reiterating that this hypothesis was ignored when selecting the quotations, ordering the quotations or assessing the quotations in the 'rows' or 'heaps'. It was only as the following chapters were written that the idea of 'survival' as defined in this chapter emerged, and the notion seemed to provide an appropriate thematic key to understanding the activities of students whose literacy skills ranged from those who could read and write fairly well to those who experienced great difficulty. If this idea of 'survival' as defined is acceptable, then there may well be the hint of a basis for the understanding of the problems of people who, for one reason or another, lack the ability to share a characteristic which is displayed by the majority of their contemporaries.

The following chapters illustrate this theme insofar as it concerns the adult who sees himself as being one of the few who bear the burden of having a literacy problem.
CHAPTER IX

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND

Educational experiences

Without exception, every student left school as soon as legally possible, well aware of his or her inability to read or write or spell correctly.

I think I had problems with it all ... by the time I was fifteen, with the whole lot: a right mess. I had trouble and a hard job to write where I lived, even my name, for a long time. And when I went to work, I had to do that, to prove to everybody that I could read and write when I could not!

I did not find difficulty in reading - only in spelling. I do not know what happened in the other subjects, History, Science or Mathematics. I was pretty good at Mathematics, Algebra - you see. I would not consider myself a brilliant student; I'm not a scholar, or anything like that! But let me put it this way; in Mathematics, I finished top of the class, in English, I finished up last. I left the day I could because I hated school.

But very few students shared this extreme view, most recollections of their schools, as a whole, were mixtures of pleasures and dislikes, and the greater the emphasis placed by one school on purely literacy skill performance, the deeper the discontent recalled.

In no way were they impressed with the way I could spell and this was a stigma in this type of school because from eleven years of age you were taught - you ARE going to be a secretary! So how could I be a secretary when you could not spell?

But where the school was more concerned with education a student recalled that:

I can remember starting off school not really bothering, you know. So long as there was a game of football going - thinking - this is it! This went right through until the last year of school; then, a schoolmaster there, gave me a bit of a talking to and pushed me a bit ---- I could read and I quite enjoyed school but I think I could have been pushed.
However, most students realised that they had a literacy problem long before their last year at school; 65 out of the 68 students had progressed from primary to secondary schools, some students had been to quite a few schools within each sector but the norm was to attend one primary school and one secondary school. One extreme case was that of a student who:

1. started at an Infants School
2. went to a Junior School - also in hospital for a period
3. was evacuated to East Anglia - another Junior School for 3 months
4. returned to the Junior School, referred to in (2)
5. was given eyesight tests and sent to school for partially sighted
6. was sent to another school for the partially sighted
7. was returned to the school for partially sighted mentioned in (5) at the age of 13 years and remained there to the age of 15 years.

His experience was encapsulated as follows:

It was the school I was at for eighteen months that I really enjoyed - it was a special school, but it was a very small school. You knew everybody and that was it, you seemed to get on with the teachers there. Most of the teachers seemed to muck in with the children. It's difficult to explain it - it was more of a home than a school!

A similar case was that of a student who said:

I think the difficulty was, that I was never at one school long enough to settle down. Each time I moved to a different system of teaching - if you don't settle into that system you have had it. Between 5 and 7 years, I went to two infants schools. Between 7 and 10 years, I went to three junior schools, where I took the first half of the eleven plus examination but left before I took the second half.

At eleven I went to a secondary school, then half-way through the second year I moved again. I missed two months, but attended for the end of term and the beginning of the next
term of my third secondary school. Then I missed school again until half-way through the third term. Again I moved to another secondary school where I stayed until I was fifteen.

There are those who consider that adult literacy is largely a problem of non-attendance at school for one reason or another. To some extent this is true, and the above cases illustrate the point, but a closer inspection of the students' perceptions and accounts of their youth suggest that non-attendance at school was the sign of a disorganised family life. One student had sought in his school the stability of a home, another had suffered from the eccentricities of her mother.

Furthermore, the problem of their reading and writing performance usually appears in their earliest school days and, more often than not, their secondary school experience is merely an account of how the problem was exacerbated. For example, one student said:

I was frightened of school from the very first day. I remember the Headmistress dragging me away from my mother. I remember so well; I can see her face now and particularly a pair of blue sandals that she wore. I was five, but it is so outstanding in my memory! Being dragged away from my mother and just not liking school. Well, as I got older, I thought - well, it's obviously because I'm a dunce and can't learn.

Another student could vividly recall her youth and when asked:

Were you getting along quite well at your infants' school?

replied:

All I can remember is that one day my mother complained about the fact that I wasn't making the progress that I should do - this was to the teacher and not to me. I had not worried about it at all in fact. The amount of English we were doing was a very small amount anyhow. That was at the infants' school, I think. It was at the junior school that I realised that my friends were getting on with it and I wasn't seeming too good at it. Because of the fact that I found it hard I lost interest and then when I went to a Secondary Modern I found it a bit more necessary to try and do something with it: but it never developed. There was always a corner that I could not get over. I would get so far with - personally, talking about schools now I think I went to the wrong school. I should have been at a special school - to go into a normal school was mistaken.
But some students did not recall any problems emerging at primary school level. One tutor, speaking about her student, said:

According to him, he remembers working at a primary school and learning to read up to the age of eight or nine. He remembers what he calls lessons. He thought - he felt - that he was all right at primary school and it was a shock to the family when, as he describes it, someone came to the door and his parents signed a form and he went to an E.S.N. school.

Nevertheless, the bulk of the evidence from the student's perceptions suggests that they were aware of their problem before they were eight or nine years old. The emergence and development of the problem was described by one student as follows:

When I was eight I had sunstroke and I was away for twelve months. I can remember that I tried to read then but I could not. The teacher said I should not worry because I could go in the garden and that is where I spent my time - and that was when I was ten or eleven. At eleven, I moved away from X to S - (about 20 miles away in the same local authority area) - they did nothing at all. They put the remainder of you in a lower class; they put them all together - but you came to woodwork or metal work it was very interesting because you could make all these things. You had no paperwork at all; the others made plans of it. It would be very useful now to make plans. I could make anything; I did not do no plan at all. You did a lot of gardening - all in school time. I ought to have learnt but I could not grasp it because I had bypassed the important part before I was nine.

He had attended two schools, one primary and one secondary and he should have been able to read before his illness.

The experiences of the students of their secondary schools seems to depend on the student's generation. Those who completed their school before 1939 seem to have attended senior department of the same school and to have jogged along at the tail end of their class. A student who left school in 1929 simply did not differentiate between secondary and primary school, but her perception was:

In my generation, I can understand; I can see my teacher now 'No, not you, Jane. On to the next one!' - because I spent a lot of time at home, no one took the trouble to teach me.
The postwar Secondary Modern schools created by the Butler Act of 1944 tried to raise the standards of the most disadvantaged children by creating special classes, or remedial classes. Some adults experienced this system:

My brother could not read, he was in the Q class in our school, which was very low; it was the dunces' class. He joined (the Services), he now has G.C.E. 'O' and 'A' levels in English, Mathematics and History - actually just passed 'A' level English! (Left school some 10 years ago.)

Another student described such a class:

I was in the special class, because there was a class on its own - about a dozen of us. We went into other lessons but when it comes to lessons - we went into woodwork, gym, arithmetic, science, history ... the backward children went into another school (probably class), like at 11 o'clock in the morning or 2 o'clock in the afternoon. ("Did you think of yourself as a backward child?") Well, yes, I did. (pause) Well, NO, I would not say I was backward but I was forward in other things!

On the other hand, some students recalled their 'special' or 'backward' class as having helped them. For example, the following evidence given by one student says much for the sensitivity of his teachers in the special class:

I spent two years of my schooling spent in a class of people who were then called backward. Two years of it, right! I thought this was very good, I picked up, which gave me a lot more interest in life, not just reading, and through those two years and then after that, because there was only one teacher, you see! We were flung out into the main stream and that is when ... (long pause). Some subjects I got along alright with; other subjects like reading, I was just at the bottom of the class all the time. There is no way that you could do things like exams and things like that. We were very fortunate because it was a smallish class and three of us, that were down, used to have exam papers read to us so that one could answer them. It would still have been better for us to go to a school where we could all have been taught together instead of being chucked in with a lot who were better. I mean I did just as well in science and subjects in which they did not do so well. The only 'first' I ever got was in science but I came third in technical drawing.
Most schools persevered with considerable obstinacy to help their pupils, but quite often the transition from a special class to a normal class was traumatic. The same student quoted above continued:

Basically what happened was that I was so bad - even compared to the three that came up with me - that I used to have two periods a week, when I went to the third year, going back to my old class doing reading there. Then, the fourth year, they decided that we were going to be flung out into the big wide world. At that period, they decided to try and drum the alphabet into us. Which even - well, now, I can do; but then, it was all in bits. They decided to teach us that for one period a week and that was in the fourth year. Again, if I had had a special (school), if I had been in a school for it, it would not have happened - the backwards and forwards business.

A more recent system was to provide special remedial lessons in literacy skills. Speaking of the early 1970 period a tutor described his experience as:

I retired - they had been advertising for somebody to take remedial work with a third year - I rang up and told them I fancied the job and he said "Come in! Start today!" I went in to see them a few days before to talk this over. I was given the reading ages of 22 pupils (13 to 14 years), 5 Italians, 1 Pole, 1 Ukrainian, several Pakistanis, some native English. Of the English children the best performer had a reading age of 9.3 years, the worst a reading age of 5.3 years. I found this class had never had an exam - appalling - nobody was interested! They had been advertising for somebody to take this class and nobody had applied - no applications!

More recently, the remedial services have made even greater efforts to raise standards and more effort has been concentrated in the primary sector, but whatever the educational organisation there will always be poor readers or writers. Schools are concerned with the education of the whole person - and whilst no school teacher would lightly take the pressure from a pupil to read, there are sometimes overwhelming social or psychological reasons for relaxing the concentration on literacy skills. One such example is contained
in the evidence given by a student:

I started school at five; well, I could not do nothing at all - then I had to go into hospital, I did not get much school. I started back at school when I was coming up to six years old. When I was six, my writing just picked up. A teacher used to come in from another class when he used to have free time. He would help me. He used to help me a lot. Every teacher with a free lesson used to help me. When I was nine years old, the writing and the spelling got better and better all the time. And when I was eleven I started at the X - Y School and I started learning my lessons better, just keeping my nose clean, not bothering anybody else in lesson time and everybody used to - the Headmaster (I was in the fifth year) would say "Tom, I have got some parcels coming in a lorry. Do you think you could go down and deliver them in the classroom?" - The Headmaster only put me on that because it used to help me with my reading. "We have a job for you to help you read (titles of books). Any mistakes or anything you can't read, go to Mrs - and she will help you".

By remarkable patience and individual attention the school kept him out of court whilst he was there, but social pressures and personal psychological ineptitudes in the end triumphed and within a year of leaving he had begun what appears to be a criminal career. This is an extreme case, but the evidence of students did suggest that often an unspoken pact was reached between pupil and teacher, the principal clause being "you leave me alone and I'll let you get on teaching the other thirty or so pupils". As one student described it:

So we sort of - I was a bit of a maniac really. I was one of those boys that - not really liked school - I used to like boxing. - Well, I think I must have been lazy - I was out playing football all the time - but I don't blame them really because it's up to the individual really. - I used to go to school regularly. My mother and father used to make me go to school. ("Did you enjoy school?") I think so, as far as I can remember it.

Another student described how the contract worked ("Did you enjoy school?"):

No, I did not (sharply said) - I did not enjoy it, I used to be behind the class, because some of the words I can not understand, you see. I cannot sound them. We did not have much extra teaching because we went up with the class. We
got behind. Sports, woodwork, gardening were alright. I was
top once in gardening. I won three or four prizes at school
for gardening. I have not missed (being away from) school at
all.

To be charitable, it has to be added that the school kept him
sane and encouraged his out-of-class interests. Several students
described school as reasonably happy experiences and many identified
lessons or subjects which they liked. In all cases, the less the
demands made on their literacy skills, the better they liked it.
Thus, practical subjects such as woodwork and games figures high
in their scales of preference or subjects capable of being presented
and understood diagrammatically or visually, such as geography or
history were favoured. The men mentioned sport and practical
subjects, though one student disliked metalwork because he continually
had to draw plans. The women chose domestic crafts, needlework,
cookery and dancing as their most enjoyable subjects.

The most likeable teachers were usually in charge of the most
likeable subjects; nevertheless, certain teachers with charisma were
mentioned regardless of subject. Some students expressed clearly
their prejudices:

I never got on well with female teachers. Mr. X was very
disciplining, I did more for him than I had ever done.

In general one suspects that though most students said they
hated school, the following view was not that unique:

I did not have very happy school years, I hated it. I did
not like work, I wanted to go back to school - but I knew
I could not!

Indeed, nearly all the students were not referring simply to school,
the teachers or the curriculum. Rather they were describing the
deeper relations of youth, their relations with their peers in school,
their parents' view of the school and their school progress, their
perception of themselves as failures.
When all the children were put together - some got it, some did not - I did not!

These are perceptions of failure: first, by those whose sensitivity centres on literacy and, secondly, by those who found school a thwarting experience even though they are effectively literate for most purposes. In both cases the sense of failure may originate from over expectation on the parents' part or from social conditions outside the control of the school. Nevertheless the students' perceptions of that social background are recalled largely in the indirect terms of their accounts of their schools and much of our knowledge of their social background comes from the students' accounts of their parents' relationships with the schools, or their own relationship with other children in the schools.

Perceptions of social background

In nearly every case the homes of the students' parents lacked books; there were magazines perhaps, but certainly not anything approaching domestic libraries. Yet the brothers and sisters of students often had jobs requiring literate abilities and one wonders how they managed. The most plausible explanation is that they were taught to read in their primary schools (there are, indeed, some exceptional primary schools who rarely produce non-readers) and that they continued to improve throughout their secondary and higher education.

Most student parents tended to leave formal education to the schools; some parents visited the schools when something attracted their notice. Such an event was graphically described by one student who, on discovering her son's inadequacies, visited the school:
One day (her son, aged about eight) left me a note - it was at the back of the clock - it was two words that I could understand, and that was the number! I was appalled by it!

I went to school, I could not even get past the Secretary and no one wanted to know! (Eventually she saw the teachers)

They said "Oh! I can assure you Mrs X, it comes, it comes."

Putting it straight up, that's a load of xxxxxxx, it doesn't come. It only comes to the very few. It doesn't come to people unless they are taught.

More typical is the experience of Jill:

I don't think my mother pushed me; we are not a shoving lot.

We like gentle persuasion.

Conditions have not changed; Jill describes her present relationships with her child's school:

I know from my own child - we have been round there and talked until we are blue in the face but we don't get anywhere. I don't go any more, I send my husband and he is getting somewhere, at last, because we are not happy about her - I have a pen friend and I deliberately asked her about her children (in Scotland) and she has the same problems with her!

Asked "What did your parents say about you making no progress at school?", a student replied:

My mother went after them, and wanted to know the reason why and what not. But she got no satisfaction.

Thus the students' homes ranged from the caring to the totally indifferent; one student described her home background in the phrase:

Mother? If you can call her that!

The professional/managerial home background was the exception as were, though not quite so much, the social misfit families.

Normally, the family in which the students were raised consisted of a tolerant father and a slightly worried mother who together provided, on the whole, a happy background. Most parents could write to some degree but the mother usually wrote the notes. Sometimes the father could neither read nor write. Most parents seemed to have regarded their children's incapacity as somewhat of a nuisance.
which was the fault of the schools and which, anyway, was outside their control. And there are indeed aspects of school life where the social background of the child affects his relationships with his peers and which are very largely controlled by the example of the teaching staff.

One such experience of the pain a child may experience from the thoughtless remarks of an incompetent teacher is clearly illustrated in the following account:

Mum and Dad had no problems, my brothers and sisters were younger and never felt the move such as I did. They never spoke real Northern as I did. When we moved here, instead of the teachers saying "Sorry Clare, you don't pronounce it like that", it was a smack on the ear. To me this was dreadful. One teacher used to say: "If you can't speak, we will not have foreigners in this classroom". We were called foreigners! I used to go crying and come home crying - to me it was hell. School was hell. When I got home I used to say to my mother "I've been worried again and called 'pig'" (parents involved in animal husbandry).

In answer to the question: "Were you good at games?" one student described the confusion caused by two teachers discussing her in her presence:

Oh yes, I was alright there - I was; I felt very inferior because I was such a little girl, I was so thin. I remember the teacher coming round, they were doing a play and in this play there was a poor weaking of a little girl wanted. I heard her say something to the other teacher. One looked at the other, and pointed to me! I thought I would like that part, but then, it was only about half a dozen lines. I could not read it - so as it happened I was in the danger thing. As for the other girls, they all had boyfriends and were interested in make up and that sort of thing and I

Most of the men who could join in games quite liked school. One athletic student said:

Well, I liked school but I never learnt a lot but some men, usually those from other areas or undersized as children, found their peers unsympathetic, and there was little that teachers could do to help in such situations. As one student
recalled:

Originally I started off, and the family in London and I was just - just went to the infants for a couple of weeks before we went. Then we moved to a village and that was a completely different world. Quite honestly, it frightened me to death. I realised that I was only a little chap with a broad cockney accent and they used to take the biggest rise out of me going. This is going back some twenty five years - you know. They had not been out of the village, half of them. I got to the point where I would not go to school if I did not have to.

Most students experienced not only the normal difficulties of growing up with their fellows at school, but also some form of a feeling of inferiority as they were unable to compete in the literacy discourse essential to the classroom. Marked as slow, dunces or whatever, they developed ways of getting on with their peers, by trying hard at games, or by leading or subscribing to the school's awkward element, or by simply agreeing to bother nobody provided they were left alone. To nearly all, their lot at school was, like the policeman's, not a happy one.

The students present homes ranged from the executive estate property to ordinary council houses. Without exception, the homes visited were extremely ship-shape and tidy. And without exception, where the students had young children they were determined that their children should be able to read and write, and one would notice a couple of children's books lying around.

The total impression was of upwardly socially mobile families. Male students were encouraged by their wives, or by daughters who were secretaries.

I said "I'm not going now" - that was a Monday! "No, you are not getting me there!" So my daughters pushed me out of the house, more or less, and we went. When I got there it was all right.

So far as the female students were concerned, the husband was usually encouraging but not pressing and the wife took the initiative either
to keep up with her husband or to start an independent career. There was no doubt that the increasing movement of wives to work, the increasing opportunities for women at work and the breakdown of marriages all combined to increase the pressure on the women to improve their literacy skills. One was struck by the large proportion of women over forty, among those interviewed, who were facing the need to fend for themselves after the breakdown of their marriage. One tutor described her student as:

- a lady in her mid-forties. How on earth she did it I shall never know! But she conducted her own divorce proceedings - she can read, but very slowly - she can't even write the cheques.

Nearly seven out of ten students could decode three letter words, or four letter words; four out of ten could encode simple sentences in script. Only one out of ten could write little more than their name; about a half ranged from printing words to printing simple sentences. In eight out of ten cases, their knowledge was highly eccentric in that they could decode and encode complex words here and there and be quite stymied with simple words. Of those who could write, a large proportion made spelling mistakes which were, according to their form of pronunciation, perfectly reasonable and the very variation in skills within each individual suggests that the schools attempted and succeeded in drilling in some words. What they failed to do was to establish patterns in the students' minds.

**Emerging patterns**

From this general survey, certain patterns emerge, namely that:

a) our sample consists of students who failed and knew that early in their primary school life, at about the age of eight or nine.
Moreover, they knew they were oddities; the other 99% seemed to get along!

b) nearly all of the students lacked even the most basic home literary provision;

c) many of the students knew of the frustration of their parents with the school; a few actually witnessed a parent/teacher row;

d) the form of remedial tuition in the secondary schools, whilst no doubt successful with some children, had little effect on our student sample. If anything, the further efforts in the secondary school merely confirmed their sense of failure in that respect, but,

e) the schools, particularly the secondary schools, did give them enough confidence and sometimes other skills to cope with those aspects of life where literacy is not required. If the schools are to blame to some extent for the lack of literacy skills, they nevertheless deserve some credit for their general educative effort;

f) most of the schools, primary and secondary, attempted some form of remedial work; therefore, if the students did not learn then, it would be highly optimistic to expect marked results in less than three to four years in adult tuition, except in the cases where social circumstances led to non-attendance. A classic case of this is that of the student who said:

Every time they wanted to send us to school, they moved the caravan. We kept moving about. Nobody said anything to them about attending school. Isn't it marvellous? You would not get away with it now, would you? I would not want my children to get away with it!
Consequently, during their school life the students began to
develop alternate methods for coping and various systems for
disguising their inadequacies. Essential words were usually learnt
by rote.

I never told the driving instructor I could not read! I asked
him what questions what I got to be asked. I got my Mum to
read them to me, then I 'read' to her. When he came to do it
that was it. ("Good memory, then?") Yes.

Others developed their own form of shorthand. Similarly, evasion
techniques were developed starting from avoiding English lessons,
behaving correctly if left alone and so on.

("How did you get by?"") It's a knack - I just know it or I
say I'll find out. I don't know how I do it but I've been
doing it for nineteen years and getting away with it. I hope
you don't think I've been cheating anybody! Some of my closest
friends still don't know.

Most of the students were eminently sensible and realistic about
their problem, as the evidence of the following three students
suggests:

(a) I say you don't have to read a book to use a shovel - you
see. You don't read a book to ride a bike.

(b) I'm good at my job!

(c) My employer knew - he could not care less!

Nonetheless, to others, their lack of ability can affect their social
lives cruelly. One student described his experience when he took his
driving test:

I was terrified when I took my test because I had to memorise
everything - it's always with you, sometimes you notice it more
than other times.

Thus, the students who came forward had learned various

...
privileged, handicapped by lack of a particular skill but unbowed. How they came to be so is to describe the human condition, and no single simple cause seems to be identifiable. What is clear is that very few indeed are scholarly, most want to better themselves, very few indeed come from the socially multidisadvantaged where the weight of daily problems gradually saps hope and effort.

These students entered into a learning arrangement with a tutor; what were these relationships and how did they develop? Were they conducive to student achievement?
CHAP T E R  X

T Ù T Ö R - S T ÜD E N T  R ÈL AT È ON  S H I P S

The tutors' views

It is generally agreed that the performance of children usually rises to fulfil the expectations of their teachers. Apparently this is also true of adults. A Senior Tutor in Adult Literacy Education in Mid-Glamorgan, Wales, wrote:

Sometimes they (volunteer tutors) become so involved with their student that they will not accept that their student falls short of the norm. I've a feeling that this kind of faith rubs off onto the student and works to his advantage.

However, this can only occur if the tutor's expectations are reasonably founded. Analysis of the evidence on student/tutor relationships summarised, mainly through key quotations, in this Chapter reveals some of the pitfalls in the mutual adjustment process.

Tutors were asked to comment on their expectation of the type of student they thought they might have assigned to them and their own personal view of the characteristics of a "good" tutor in the field of adult literacy.

The type of student expected

In an ideal world, it would have been possible to question tutors before they had met their students but in the event, tutors could only be contacted for interview after they had taught their student
for some time. Therefore, their evidence must be to some degree vitiated by:

a) the stereotype illiterate adult in the media, television programmes, radio series and newspaper articles, and booklets which tutors had already noted,

b) the descriptions of typical students given in training schemes, and

c) their own experience of students to date.

Nevertheless, most tutors attempted to cast their minds back and quite often their original expectations were described implicitly by noting what surprised them later. In these terms, a tutor organiser said:

The most amazing thing about them is how nice they all are. How polite, not forced politeness, a natural politeness.

The suggestion is of an expectation of uncouthness assumed to derive, no doubt, from an inability to read.

Another tutor revealed her preconceptions in a similar vein:

I was surprised to find such an age range and the fact that most of them were male.

Here, the tutor seems to have expected that the students coming forward would be representative of the male/female balance in the population at large and that presumably the demand for literacy would be associated with some form of age group motivation, perhaps, for example, recent school leavers seeking to qualify themselves for better employment.

Despite media assertions that most students were of average intelligence but fortuitously lacking in a particular skill, the greatest proportion of tutors expected a slow, perhaps slow-witted, person.
I expected, quite honestly, to be confronted with a load of halfwits; I really did. Not at all the type of people who come, I thought you would have to be a halfwit not to be able to read the front page of the Daily Mail.

Yes, I was expecting to find somebody less competent, possibly suffering from dyslexia. I was expecting less intelligent people; I did not know whether they were mentally retarded or not.

I was prepared for anything so I have not been surprised. I expected them to be worse than they are. I have been surprised at how intelligent they are because you almost began to think that perhaps these people are idiots not to have learnt!

I thought I might get someone who would find it slow and difficult - but I have not had to deal with anyone right from the beginning.

I was surprised because I expected someone slower, but there is hardly any need to revise. He remembers!

I expected a man to begin with - not a woman. I was very surprised at her intelligence.

Tutors were taken aback at both the normality of their students and, in many cases, their prior skill in literacy. Their evidence suggests that many of them had in mind a poor soul who would not really go very far but who would be able to grasp, within limitations, some of the basic skills. The impression is of an act of kindness on a par with the deed of replacing fledglings in a nest. If this is so, then it is reasonable to suppose that many tutors would have a shattering experience, and, indeed, this was the case.

She is very aware; when she knows what is required, she will do it. She is a manipulator and a survivor. She does not do what her teacher says but rather what she (herself) wants.

One tutor had an unnerving experience:

I did not expect this type. I think it is a very difficult situation. I am not a teacher and I have only experience of my own children. I would never, ever contemplate teaching a child now because I feel I could so do much damage. It is his misfortune. I would teach my own children but I don't think I would contemplate teaching anybody else's children.
One of the influences on tutor expectation was the tutor's conception of the adequacy of the school system. Quite a few tutors did not expect older people because they assumed that illiterate adults resulted from what they considered to be the contemporary phenomenon of inadequate teaching.

I was surprised at that (the student's age) because if this had happened to a twenty-year old, I would have said it was the modern way of teaching where they let their imagination go and they are more concerned with creative writing.

There are a lot of people getting through the loopholes, I expected younger people and

There are very anti-teacher public feelings at the moment. I feel sure that the pendulum is swinging very fast indeed - one dare talk about grammar again. It's no longer a dirty word. I would put a great deal on the non-reading problems - they should sit down every day and read and read; it's boring and tedious for the teacher and that is where the trouble lies! They are not prepared to do it.

Other tutors displayed the same lack of faith in the school system. Two major points arise from their evidence. First, that the expectations of the literacy tutors were much affected by the general climate of opinion, for this was the period when the so-called "Great Education Debate" was inaugurated. Second, the tutors felt that the students had been let down by the schoolteachers, so that their task was a rather simple one of rectifying the omissions. Consequently, the tutors' expectation of student potential achievement would be optimistic rather than realistic. On the one hand, in many cases a preconceived underestimate of general ability; on the other, an overestimate of the ease of remedial tuition with adults.

But as tutors acquired experience of teaching a student, realism filtered through:
I have heard the comment that students are above average but I am not sure whether this is so, as a generalisation. I think I was prepared for either of the students I had. But they constitute, between them, an enormous range of ability.

However, it must be recorded that although the majority of tutors underwent a major educational experience, the students often paid a high price. One tutor, in a period of six months remarked, as follows, about four students who had passed through her hands:

1st student - Then suddenly he said he had a lot of work to do, and I lost him!

2nd student - After a couple of months, another young man came, for a couple of weeks or so, from round the corner, which is a notorious slum area. But I've never heard any more from him!

3rd student - Then I had a young woman who came for some weeks and then stopped!

4th student - Then something happened, she was ill and so on, and I've not seen her for months and months....

The teacher was an experienced teacher with specific experience of teaching literacy skills in secondary schools. The hypothesis is that she could be expected to have a more realistic assessment of the adult illiterate than a non-specialist volunteer. Thus it may appear that the realistic expectations of experienced teachers who become tutors of adults may be a bar to achievement. This point is worth some further development, for the tutor in question said:

I think that I have got on well with all the students; the second one, of course, I never really saw, the fourth did actually come. The first one was very enthusiastic, a sweet girl; the third one never said why she left. The fourth one may have dropped out for a time.

Thus, the tutor felt that she was getting along well with the students, and it has been argued that because she was a teacher her expectations of her students' potential ability would be accurate. But, in fact, the fourth student's evidence clearly shows that her tutor's
expectations were too demanding:

I had about half a dozen times with my tutor. She goes a little bit too fast for me - she thinks I'm better than I am. She is so nice and so patient. It's the endings of words, I could not hear any difference between one and the other. They were spelt differently but, to me, they were the same so how do I know. She said "Well, you do know or you don't". So I said "Well, I just don't!" There is no quick way is there? It's a long job. Quite honestly, when I have cooked for seven and put my children to bed - quite honestly, I do as a rule, feel very tired.

And there lies the kernel of the problem; most of the tutors specifically thought of various degrees of literacy skills when they contemplated taking on their adult students. Very few, whether trained teachers or not, in describing expectations, considered the possibility of a human being with problems, only one of which was literacy. This stemmed largely from the concentration, in the early stages of the adult literacy campaign, on questions of literacy skills. The achievement of most of the tutors was their willingness to learn, and learn quickly, that they were dealing with a human problem and thus expectations were rapidly revised. One of the tutors rather movingly described this process of reassessment.

No, I did not know what to expect or what type of pupil I would have. It boils down to - that you get the pupil who lives near to you. I phoned her up and she came to see me. We both admitted that we did not know where to go from there. We talked it over, and the next week, we started on her problem. It would have worried me to think about the sort of pupil I would have. When I was told it was a spelling problem, I knew where to start. You are given a resume of their attempts at the test and what goes on in the discussion (with the organiser). You are not completely in the dark, but as I say, I have become very friendly with my pupil and right from the beginning! She is a great talker so that any one hour lesson is never one hour. She comes about seven thirty and goes about eleven. We talk, then we work, then have coffee and so we make an evening of it; which is a bit trying sometimes, but it is better to be on a

(a) Compare p.62
good basis. I don't say I could be like this with all pupils! The only problems are odd words repeatedly wrong - it's a bit frustrating. It takes a long time, I wonder why she spells people correctly? She comes twice a week, she writes to me once a week; if she is away she sends it by post, if she is here, she brings it. It's good practice for her, getting pen to paper.

Thus, from a variety of sources, experience of school or of life, from the media, from training schemes, from talking to other tutors, each tutor had an idea, though sometimes extremely nebulous, of who would be their student. Sometimes this was extreme:

I was very surprised at the second one - an illiterate man! My guess of the typical would be the woman of fifty, eight children, a gaudy dresser.

This Dickensian picture of an illiterate has an element of the grande dame approach about it and, indeed, this tutor after some experience remarked:

Some of their tutors do not realise that some people just won't make that much progress. You can't expect miracles; some tutors try too hard and kill enthusiasm.

Consequently, tutor expectations and attitudes varied enormously and it is highly probable that those students who gave up after a short period of tuition did so, not because they had reached a limited objective like learning the Highway Code, but because they could no longer stand their tutor's attitude. How would a student whose tutor described her as "fifty, eight children and gaudy dresser" deal with the situation, other than by quitting? The illustrations of expectations given above clearly show that many tutors were ill-prepared and some lack of achievement must be ascribed to this cause. But fortunately, preconceptions were jettisoned after the early meetings.
As it seemed that tutors' attitudes to their students could be largely influenced by their notions of what were the characteristics of a "good" tutor, tutors were asked for their views.

Tutors' views of what were the characteristics of "good" tutors

In the previous section, the evidence relied on tutors' memories; this part deals with their judgement and, to quote La Rochefoucauld's maxim: "Everyone complains of his memory but no one complains of his judgement".

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the tutors' opinions was the remarkable level of agreement. Asked what are the personal qualities of a good tutor, an organiser replied:

Generosity in the widest sense of the word. Understanding and sympathy and the ability to be tough when the occasion arises. A modicum of intelligence - it does not need a lot. (a) A wealth of common-sense.

A tutor who had taught adults for a year, expressed the humility that is the characteristic of the inspired adult tutor:

Somebody with not too fixed ideas on what somebody should be able to do. Adaptability, yes definitely. I just accept that they cannot read or that they are not very good at it. You just have to have immense patience - and try to help rather than sort of think, well, they should be able to read - they must be able to read and I must make them!

Other tutors underlined a basic minimum skill in teaching reading, though again, as the next quotation shows, human qualities were those most desired.

(a) See p.107 for the use of the concept of 'simpatico' which this witness reinforces from her practical experience
Some understanding of reading. I do not think that one can proceed without some minimal understanding of reading. A sympathy for people - some people seem to have this ability to establish an empathy with people. Perhaps it is just that they listen. In a reading situation, it is very difficult not to tell them everything and not to do everything. Sometimes, it is more difficult just to be calm. I think you can tell people who are like this. Personality types - with calmness and patience. I think the commitment has to be fairly deep because you can come up against disappointments. So, the sort of person who can weather disappointment; this is important.

Another tutor enlarged on the opportunities given to tutors of adults, whilst at the same time re-iterating the demanding nature of the work.

The first is that they (tutors) like people - they have to like people. They have to be well educated themselves - broadly educated, not school educated. It is often tiny seeds from your experience which will give you the key to the student you are working with. Kindness plus patience. The students are very demanding; in fact, you have to sit there and wait for them to find it out. Things which were obvious to you and easy to you and to which you do not even give a second thought are very new to them. And this is something you have to work at.

The criterion 'empathy' would be expected, as would be that of 'adaptability' which was also mentioned frequently. What was perhaps surprising was the continual recurrence of the word 'patience'. Training courses which did not include some practical sessions were particularly prone to dwell on literacy techniques although lecturers often took some trouble to describe how patient a tutor needed to be. Nevertheless, the impression remains that many tutors never realised quite how much patience was required and the insistence of tutors on this quality as the most desirable of virtues surely suggests that practice concentrated their minds.
Above all else patience - ABOVE ALL ELSE. I found it quite incredible that with someone who appears to be quite bright, just to give an example, I spent two hours trying to teach him four lines. And we did read for two solid hours these four lines. At the end of it, I was not sure that he was any better equipped to read than when we started. I tried to teach him, as it was important to him to learn it off by heart. Funnily enough, when I walked in this time, I said "Right, out with your book and let's look at those four lines!" He could read them, and that's amazing!

Indeed, patience as a desirable personality trait was directly mentioned by nearly 70% of the tutors. Adaptability came second, being mentioned by just over 40% of the tutors, and "a sense of humour" was frequently mentioned.

The qualities of a good tutor in adult education were summarised by a tutor organiser who said:

I would like them to be sensitive most of all; that is most important - then they should be bright and cheerful. This encourages students to come and stay. (How often discussions concerning adult education ignore the ability of adults to stay away!) They should know how to spell themselves and have a real interest in words and reading and then they should be able to put that over and teach it.

The tutor organisers expected the tutors to impart knowledge and enthusiasm simultaneously while never seeming to impose authority; the tutors themselves accepted these objectives but recognised the demands made on them in respect of patience and adaptability, and the evidence suggests that many tutor organisers did not appreciate the extent of these demands on part-time volunteer tutors.

Consequently the appreciation of the services of volunteer tutors tended to become the more optimistic as the witness was further up the organisational scale. This is patently a daunting assertion, for it implies first, that tutors were, on the whole, ill prepared to meet the demands of their students and, secondly, that to prepare volunteers properly, a lengthy training course
with an extensive module of practical work was necessary and, thirdly, that volunteers needed to be chosen whose daily work demands were not so strenuous as to make them somewhat impatient when taking their student at the end of the day. The evidence suggests that all these three propositions are true, and the following passage illustrates the case for saying so. It comes from a young, thoughtful and enthusiastic tutor who said he joined the scheme because:

"It's mainly to try and give people an interest in some of the things that I enjoy."

He said:

One of the most important things is - the thing brought home to us on the short induction course we had - four weeks which was to my mind a bit of a waste of time, but perhaps to other people useful. An insistence that we regard these people as real people; the ability not to be afraid to establish a quite close relationship. The ability for a fairly deep concentration so you can see where their mistakes were being made, and to get right to the point of the problem and to start working on it. Because the student is not terribly aware of what is causing the difficulty, you have to be very sensitive and adaptable to see if they are making a similar kind of mistake and you can pin point it. But it may be that that is not causing the problem so you have to rethink it. And there are whole lessons where you are trying to get as close as you can to the mistakes which are coming up.

Interviewer:

Do you find the work demanding?

Tutor:

Yes, I do. I really notice it if I have had a bad day at work and I am feeling tired. Then I am not performing nearly as well. It does take a lot out of you. I do not want to overplay that too much and make it sound as though I am going on - it is just that you have to be on the ball all the time.

Interviewer:

A good tutor has to have?

Tutor:

Adaptability and patience - and - sympathy!
Thus, it is argued that the whole basis of a scheme which assumed the availability of an army of effective practitioners, as distinct from well-intentioned volunteers, was based on a false premise. The evidence is that, fortunately for this scheme, not too many students came forward so that the cohort of volunteer tutors who were used usually possessed the necessary qualities to become adult tutors. There is no doubt that further extensions of the literacy scheme on the original basis would have run up against the law of diminishing returns as far as suitable tutors were concerned.

Consequently, the present study of criteria for success is based on an experience which fortuitously engaged those tutors whose enthusiasm was sufficient to sustain them in the face of demanding work. That this enthusiasm was usually present is shown by their replies to the next question: What made you take part in the adult literacy scheme? The answers to this question were usually that:

a) the tutors were already teachers and therefore had an opportunity to extend their service to a wider population,
b) the tutors felt a sense of social duty, or
c) the tutors enjoyed literacy and wished to share in that enjoyment.

The following quotations are illustrative as typical answers within each of the above categories.

(a) I have a gift for teaching and thought I should make some return to society by helping adults

As an aside the tutor also remarked:

I thought teaching adults would have a feedback which would help with teaching in schools.
As this was frequently mentioned by teachers in schools, it does appear that teachers welcomed the training schemes as a form of revision or voluntary attendance at an "inservice" course.

(b) I heard of it from a Workers' Educational Association tutor who was appealing for tutors. In fact my father ran a Norfolk farm and he used to lend the barn to agricultural labourers who were learning to read and write in the 1890's.

(c) I was shocked at the thought of not being able to read because it is the first thing I do. When I have got five minutes, I read. You know, anything. I thought it must be terrible not to be able to read at all and so I phoned the organiser!

To gain a deeper insight into the tutors' attitudes, tutors were asked: What are the benefits you have gained from joining the scheme?

Tutors' views of the benefits accruing to themselves

Many tutors found teaching an adult particularly rewarding:

He is so keen - a child does not know why he is reading - an adult knows!

Other tutors felt a sense of satisfaction from a feeling of participation in the student's progress:

The student's progress. After a student's set back, seeing him come back with confidence. As a matter of fact, he said last Monday that he had been offered another job.

It comes from visible progress both in personality and literacy skills. I doubt if one would get any satisfaction from teaching a student who did not make progress!

To other tutors, the opportunity to teach adults was a means to escape from the routine of housewifery:

I really enjoy it because I get away from the routine. I used to teach adult immigrants. It's their enthusiasm which helps you to carry on.
But other tutors considered that their satisfaction derived from the specific increase in the student's literacy skills, often because they described themselves as voracious readers, and others emphasised increases in confidence:

Personally, I get a very great deal of satisfaction - it's so important to be able to read and write.

Watching him make progress, particularly in confidence.

A general assessment of tutors' attitudes

The majority of tutors gained from indulging in an act of service and it is surely right and proper that they should derive satisfaction from the progress of their students. Nevertheless, "virtue itself turns to vice, being misapplied", and some tutors were guilty of believing that students should always display courtesy and gratitude. For example, a young unqualified and somewhat naive tutor said:

Satisfaction to the tutor? I think a person bothering to come or hand in written work, or being prepared to make alternative arrangements for a lesson. It is rather depressing when you say to a student "I cannot make it on Thursday, can you make it on Wednesday?" And they say "Oh, no! I'd better leave it for a week! Can you come in a fortnight?" That is depressing. Whereas, if something goes wrong and they immediately ring up and say "Could I come another night instead?" then you know they want to come and learn which is, to me, the most rewarding thing.

Moreover, as most tutors were women, there were examples of the exercise of maternalism or child substitution. Sometimes good tutors overstepped the mark, for example in one case:

Tutor: I have had things like a letter arriving from the Court asking if he would do jury service and I decided that that was out of the question. Apart from any reading difficulties of any documents he might be required to see, I did not think that he would be able to concentrate a whole day. He is not used to lengthy conversation and I do not think that he would be able to manage it. He was worried; the first time in fact
that he was worried about being embarrassed by his difficulty in reading. He told me quite early on that the people he worked with knew because I asked him if I could phone him at work and he said "Oh, there is no problem about that!"

Student:

Oh yes! I want to get more independent than I am already. One likes to be independent so it is necessary to have another tutor (present tutor leaving area). It may be hard for me to find some as good - yes, she was very dedicated.

Similarly, as just over 40% of the tutors were school-teachers, or had been so, "the school" attitude sometimes emerged. One tutor, after several attempts to persuade the student to pronounce ch, finally burst forth: "ch, ch, ch - as in choo-choo." The expression on the face of that burly lorry-driver's mate defies description.

Through the answers to the above questions, it is possible to identify three main periods in the development of student-tutor relationships as seen by the tutors, namely:

a) the induction period
b) the reactive period
c) the professional period

a) The induction period

This period includes the decision to offer their services, the training period and the build up of expectations. The relatively short time scale allowed to prepare the tutor force before the expected results of the BBC information broadcasts scheduled for October 1975 inevitably led to rather rushed training schemes. Furthermore, the decision to engage volunteers suggests that training demands on their time should rarely exceed ten or twelve
hours. Consequently, as shown above, tutor expectations ranged from the realistic to the bizarre and in the light of some of the expectations recorded, it is surprising that some student-tutor relationships lasted beyond one meeting. Indeed, some did not. Nevertheless, most tutors persevered and most pairs entered the reactive period, though this happened more often where tutors were paired in a room supervised by a tutor-organiser than in the case of pairs operating in domestic establishments.

b) The reactive period

It was in this period, usually within the first six weeks, that most pairs decided to continue together either to learn the literacy skills or to become friends or to part. To many tutors this was a period of sheer trauma:

I lost my first student after six lessons and rather lost my nerve. In his case he had a wife who had been to a grammar school before she was married and had been a secretary to a solicitor. I said "Surely she would be a better help." It was very difficult to arrange a time for him to come because he had so many occupations and he just did not realise how much time he would have to give up.

Some tutors were able to share common experiences with their students and built up a relationship on this basis:

I came into teaching late in life; I had considerable industrial experience. We can talk about common experiences; we also discuss measurements as used in industry which has probably made a difference; but, of course, personalities come into it.

In many cases, during this reactive period, students experienced a plateau of learning and on reaching this, many students left or changed their relation with the tutor to one of friendship in which literacy tuition was a minor by-product. Sometimes the plateau of
learning was associated with what one tutor called "the circumstances of life", but whatever the cause, this period of 'no progress' was a testing one for both student and tutor.

Indeed, for most tutors, the ability to get through the reactive period depended on progress and yet many tutors, as we have shown in earlier chapters, had no notion of the criteria for student achievement and therefore no yardstick by which to measure progress. Those tutors who were solely concerned with literacy skill achievement were particularly at a disadvantage, but it is clear that many were, in fact, actually making tremendous progress in building up the students' confidence. Yet they often seemed, during the interviews, to fall back on the diffident phrase "Well, I suppose he is more confident". Thus, it could be argued that at least some failures during the 'reactive' period were due to the tutors' lack of awareness of the criteria of achievement.

But fortunately, most tutors struggled on and showed a willingness to abandon teaching strategies that clearly were not working and to adopt fresh ones. This characteristic cannot be over appreciated, for, in practice, the range of the students' skill abilities made it extremely difficult for training schemes to generalise. In one case the student:

enjoys reading and enjoys writing. You see she writes a lot for me. As it was a spelling problem ....

But, unfortunately, that was only part of the problem. An impending divorce suit and other problems emerged and the tutor's role altered swiftly to that of confessor rather than pedagogue.

Where the tutor was experienced, the 'reactive period' was not one of high drama but one of cool assessment. One such tutor was
able to see her student realistically and in the round:

Candidly, my personal view is that I have not made much progress with him. I think I have been more of a psychological prop to him than anything else. I think I've given him confidence because he felt, at school, that he had been written off as dim-witted - which he obviously is not - and, more than anything, I have given him a certain amount of self-confidence. He has made a certain amount of reading progress, I reckon his reading age is 10 or 11 by my rather simple test. I think it was 7 or 8 when he started. I find he regresses enormously if there is any period when I do not see him.

The sheer degree of adaptability of some tutors during this period was quite astonishing:

But massaging his feet did make a difference, although I only did this for a few times. The first difference I noticed was the words they get on 'On the Move' programmes, because he was watching these. He did not remember anything of it, but he watched them and liked the programmes. He enjoyed them and thought they helped him. So I said: "Write down the word in your notebook." Not only did he do that but he found three more words which rhymed with it. This is only since I've been doing his feet, he could not have done it before - removes tension, you know!

c) The professional period

Thus, by practical experience tutors moved into the third stage of their relationships with their students, the professional period. The characteristic of this period, which may be one of years rather than months, is a maturity of relationship, based on equality and a common determination to succeed. The tutor now had a grasp of the technicalities of using linguistic methods and resource materials and a clearer understanding of the aims of adult education. One tutor described how her student reached a plateau learning period at the end of about six months tuition. She said that she simply gave a tremendous amount of praise for each correct word during the lesson, and at the end of the lesson she also switched to games such
as 'Scrabble'. Gradually, six weeks later, the student responded and asked to write a story with her help. There was a professional flavour in this account which comes from an elderly tutor originally trained as a 'Froebel' teacher.

However good the tutor, unless the student played his part, there would be little achievement; thus, the students' expectations and experiences are the subject of the next section.

**Students' views of tutor-student relationships**

The students that were seen were those whose tutors agreed could be interviewed. This in itself implied that the tutor was confident that a sufficiently close relationship had been established to allow for the intervention of a third person. In view of this limitation, it is likely that those students not interviewed experienced greater difficulties, and thus the picture that emerges probably represents the more successful aspects of the literacy schemes. Furthermore, most of the students in the sample were grateful to their tutors and uncommonly polite. In addition, most students, by definition, were unaware of the pedagogical niceties of teaching literacy and quite ready to accept any programme of tuition. Thus, the hardest evidence of their satisfaction with their relationship must lie in their continued attendance and there is a strident statistic in that, between establishing original contact with the tutors and making arrangements for tuition, one quarter of the students had opted out. But after this early winnowing process, it appeared that those students who continued attended regularly for long periods. This
is particularly true of those students paired with tutors and receiving tuition under the supervision of an organiser/tutor. In these terms, students, like the tutors, experienced the same three broad periods in the establishment of their relationship: the induction period, the reactive period and the professional period.

The introduction of an illiterate student to a scheme usually occurred through the visual media, his wife, his doctor, his children's schoolteacher, or social service officials. Written material, by definition, rarely directly attracted the illiterate student but those students who could read enough would have seen a newspaper advertisement of the type that, if you need help with reading or spelling, contact a telephone number. This fact is of major importance, for at times the visual media struck a highly optimistic note about the difficulties. Similarly, friends or relations persuading students to join would be encouraging to a degree which rather under-estimated the amount of sheer hard labour involved in their studies. The newspaper advertisements emphasised the word 'help', and the response was often to an offer of help as such. Consequently, many students expected a quick conversion course, of no greater difficulty than learning to drive a car. Many thought it would be rather like school, but this time things would be different; they would learn because they had their own special individual tutor.

They shaved, washed, put on their best clothes, and presented themselves. While many recalled their first meeting as evoking a sense of trepidation laced with bravado, most of those interviewed argued that it was like joining any new club or society. Nearly all
students were seen by the local organiser for the initial meeting; thereafter, those students studying in domestic establishments were put solely in the hands of their individual tutor, but those with a tutor in a class under the supervision of the tutor/organiser continued the initial relationship with the tutor/organiser. For this reason, there was a clear dichotomy in the two types of provision: in the first, the relationship of the students was a developing one between two adults; in the second, the relationship of the student was a three cornered one between himself, his tutor and his tutor/organisers. One of the most interesting facets of this latter type of relationship was that, without exception, the student regarded the tutor/organiser as equivalent to or more important than his paired tutor. This had two effects: first, a disagreement with the paired tutor could be solved by appeal to the tutor/organiser, and, secondly, the emotional involvement was less because the tutor/organiser, who was always there, dealt indirectly with the student, and the paired tutor, who would often be away or be switched to another student, was never always there. As a consequence of these relationships, it was very rare to hear any student refer to his 'home' tutor in less than superlatives, whereas the paired tutor would be criticised, though it was made clear that this criticism did not apply to the tutor/organiser. Therefore, the students' evidence tended to be biased according to the type of tuition he was receiving, and often the self criticism of the 'home' tutor was the more valuable evidence of the student's point of view than that of the student; thus a 'home' student's evidence was often interpreted after comparison with his tutor's comments and the evidence of each group is given separately in the following sections.
The 'home' based students

a) The induction period

Usually the decision to join a scheme was taken after a long gestation period:

Really it has been a build up over a number of years. You know I have always been conscious that I was unable to spell. My reading was reasonable - I had often said to my wife, I must go and see if I could find a private tutor or somebody.

Nevertheless, the actual decision to join was the result of personal support from an interested friend or relation:

She (his wife) read it out of the paper and asked if I would be interested. She phoned up Mrs A, who came on Monday morning. She gave me some little tests and said she would get me a tutor. Mr B (the prospective tutor) phoned up on Monday afternoon, but I did not have the car, because my wife was using it for her work, so I walked over to Mr B and I have been with him ever since.

Thus, most students met their tutor in a state of some excitement and anticipation; Mr B's student, for example, had just walked eight miles on an afternoon when he usually slept to prepare for the night shift. Most tutors remarked on their student's initial nervousness; "he perspired", "he shook like a leaf" were phrases that recurred, and the situation was one of heightened tension and each individual tutor was expected to cope. It appeared that some tutors at this stage had doubts about their ability to deal with particular students; similarly, some students hinted that they too wondered if they had reached the right person. But though students were assured of their rights to change tutors, it seems that most were so relieved to find a tutor at all that the idea of changing tutors seemed to be a polite formula. Indeed, most students weathered the original two meetings; after that there appears to have been on the part of the students a process of reassessment, that is, a reactive period.
b) The reactive period

During the reactive period, students assessed what the tutors required of them and their ability and willingness to meet those requirements. It was in this period that students took the decision to disengage, sometimes because they found the tutor's personality incompatible, more often because they found the level of work too demanding, and frequently because the tutor was unable to handle the psychological rebound from the first flush of enthusiasm. Sometimes the student sensed that the tutor herself was disappointed.

The students' processes of disengagement tended to be ritualised; excuses were offered which students felt would be least offensive to tutors. Perhaps the saddest thing of all was that many of the students who disengaged identified their tutor with the whole literacy scheme. Few sought other tutors.

The inadequacies of tutors working by themselves emerged too often to inspire confidence in this system. For example, though many agreed that tuition should be student-interest-centred or student-work-centred, many tutors had little idea of the students' work.

I was not certain about what he did. I think he was a driver of some sort.

Yet all the students who were interviewed talked freely about their work.

Whenever the tutor was unaware that the student was reacting as much to her as she was to him, the student usually left. Nevertheless, about four in ten tutors and students settled down, established good relationships and modes of tuition, adjusted to their roles and passed on to the 'professional' period. Some students never reached this stage but settled for friendship.
c) The professional period

Usually this occurred after six months; it was characterised by a quiet routine of tuition. At its best the student gained a sense of independence and used his newly acquired skills in the course of his daily life. Students who felt that they had reached this stage were quite prepared to change tutors if their first tutor left the area. But more often than not, students used their newly acquired skills with their tutor; it appeared that the one-to-one system, through isolation, emphasised the feeling of well being with, and loyalty to, a particular tutor. One student expressed her desire for a personal tutor and extreme privacy very forcibly:

You put me in a class of five other people who cannot spell and I would not be here today. I would curl up. I don't know why I feel it. There are only certain people I could accept as a tutor - fortunately we have made friends.

But is this the best type of tuition to help such a student? As an initial introduction to a scheme it may, perhaps, have some merit but in the long run the student may not have broken out of her isolation. On the other hand, when this relationship is successful and the tuition is appropriate, this system succeeds and succeeds brilliantly.

It is, perhaps, these outstanding successes that have led to too optimistic a view of this type of system as a whole. The winnowing effect on student numbers of the inductive and reactive periods must always be kept in mind. Strong motivation in the student and compatibility between the student and the tutor appeared to be essential factors in such successes. One student described reading to his two-and-a-half year old girl:
I read it, then she asks me questions and answers them and looks at the pictures and that. I am pleased with myself. That I can read and talk to her. At work I had to fill in forms - I always had to ask somebody and I felt embarrassed about it. Now I am beginning. I don't have to ask anybody. I feel I can do it now. And I get it correct now.

But even this student who got on so well with his tutor and who was obviously making distinct progress, had to seek support from a third person:

At about the end of six months I had a little difficulty - then I saw this thing on telly (On the Move) - a student talking about his experience - and that put me back onto it again.

The paired students under tutor/organiser supervision

a) The induction period

As in the case of the 'home' based students, the majority of these students took some time in making up their minds to join. Usually they joined this organisation because they had no idea of alternatives; but a few had tried 'home' based tutors and opted for classes and a few had deliberately chosen either the class or the 'home' based system. A typical experience of joining is as follows:

Well a couple of years or so, I thought it was about time I did something for my reading and writing. But I never got round to it. Her mentioning it (girl friend) - she made the final arrangement with the (Principal of the Adult Education Centre), I had notification of when the first course was on and I did not come the first week. So she (girl friend) came round and got me out of the house. I was, I was shoved in. Yes literally, shoved in the door.

The Principal then took him up to the classroom and introduced him to the tutor/organiser who after a brief chat introduced him to a tutor. The tutor talked about matters which interested him and started the tuition. In an hour he was enjoying the coffee break and had met "fellow sufferers".
b) The reactive period

This period seems fairly easy for the student as tutors are switched by the organiser if a tension is being built up. On one occasion a student was halted at the door by the tutor/organiser and given a new tutor; all this occurred in a period of some forty seconds.

Asked in the coffee break what happened, the student replied:

I could not stand that man - spoke to me as if I was in school - the new tutor is all right and knows what she is doing.

Nevertheless, whatever the system, students may fail:

Interviewer: (to student who had been a member of the class for four years)

How many people dropped out?

Student:

Yes, I know several who have dropped out

Interviewer:

Why?

Student:

Not interested. Impatience. They thought that in a matter of months, they thought it was going to be over. Well that is my impression. It's the trouble, the routine of coming. Now I can read the paper and that sort of thing. You have to wash and change and make yourself have to except (give up) looking at the telly. Come in by seven o'clock! Well, there is a push to do that. Two nights? Exactly!

c) The professional period

In this context, this tends to come fairly early in most students' experience; perhaps the main reason is that students meet, from the very beginning, fellow students. The early tensions, thought to be a singular personal experience, become relieved when shared.
The understanding that there is not one single tutor places the system on a more professional basis from the point of view of the student; at the same time there is the tutor/organiser providing continual support.

But this argument is often rejected by the supporters of single, personal tutor systems; they assert that one tutor is the essential personal help. But some students did not find it so:

They stipulated that it was seven to nine but it was a question of how long a tutor would give you. So therefore my tutor would arrive at seven and say at eight o'clock "Well, I must go!" So you only got three quarters of an hour. No coffee at all - no break. I found it very impersonal. You each had a tutor which was nice, I suppose, in a way. Because you got the individual attention. But that was the only person you spoke to the whole time you were there!

Thus two points emerge:

a) Whatever the system, good tutor/student relationships are extremely important factors in establishing achievement, but the evidence suggests that these will be strengthened if there are opportunities for the development of good student-student relationships.

b) Tutors have to be thoroughly prepared and trained to be able to develop these relationships to the 'professional level'.

The term 'professional level' implies that tutors will have clear criteria of the aims and objectives of the exercise, for without those aims they are likely to behave somewhat like a rocket without a guidance system. In the following chapters, the achievements of students will be examined to identify the appropriate criteria of success.
Assessment of the evidence collected

As stated in Chapter VIII, during the period October 1975 to May 1976, forty-nine tutors and thirty-five students were interviewed for the first time. During the period February to May 1977, these tutors and students were traced and, whenever possible, interviewed for a second time.

Of the 49 tutors previously interviewed:

(a) 26 had been teaching their students individually at home, and
(b) 23 had been teaching their students individually but were in a group under the supervision of a tutor/organiser.

Of the 26 in group (a) above, by 1977:

(i) 4 tutors had moved away from the area
(ii) 1 had died
(iii) 1 had become an organiser/interviewer
(iv) 1 refused to co-operate further and refused to give any information

All the rest of these tutors commented on their students' progress or otherwise, so that 19 recordings of second interviews were available.

The tutors in group (b) proved to be difficult to match against individual students because of the practice of using them as aides who, as a matter of policy, did not remain with any one student for a long period. However, because the students were in groups, the tutor/organiser continuously monitored the students' progress and consequently the achievements of each of those students still in these schemes were described by three tutor/organisers and by two tutor-aides who, for special reasons, had been allocated a particular student.
Of the 35 students previously interviewed:

(a) 16 were receiving tuition at home, and

(b) 19 were receiving tuition in groups under the supervision of a tutor/organiser

Of the 16 in (a) above, by 1977:

(i) 1 had joined a local authority-organised group

(ii) 1 was untraceable

(iii) 6 were interviewed for a second time

(iv) 8 had ceased to have tuition for one reason or another

Of the 19 students in (b) above, by 1977:

(i) 2 had ceased to have tuition for one reason or another

(ii) 4 were on holiday or had moved to another centre, or did not turn up on the date arranged for interview

(iii) 13 were interviewed for a second time

Thus, most of the tutors who were re-interviewed had had a student who had been taught at home, and most students who were re-interviewed had been taught as part of a group. But since the tutor/organisers of the groups were the more experienced, on the whole, their evidence could be regarded as carrying more weight.

Moreover, as the remarks of the sample of students from the home tuition pairs agreed with the comments of the other students being taught in groups, their aggregated perceptions of achievement could be said to provide a legitimate basis for acceptable argument.

In the course of the first interviews, students and tutors talked about their background, their achievements and their aims. The second interviews were concerned solely with their perceptions of aims and achievements but had the advantage of perspective. Recordings from all sets of interviews were used as the raw data
for analysis and interpretation. Some tutors who had taken on new students since the first series of interviews were asked to comment on the progress of their new students as well, so that the tutors' descriptions now contained data based on their combined experience of about 100 students and their evidence was, therefore, more authoritative on two counts: namely, that the number of students was greater and that the tutors' experience was longer.

Nevertheless, there were more recordings of comments from tutors than from students and it could be argued that tutors would tend to perceive their activities in a favourable light and that the evidence would, therefore, be skewed to give a 'halo' effect. In fact, this was not the case. Tutors were extremely self-questioning, and concerned to reach a true appreciation of what they had achieved. One tutor who was not a trained teacher, in a covering letter containing samples of her student's written work, wrote:

Jack does not think tuition has helped his work very much, but he can now fill in his own timesheet.

He is now able to use a telephone and his home life, he thinks, has improved. He now says that he will have a real go and work hard at it.

As he has had two lapses of nine months each, one cannot say what the effect of continual study might have had. Also, he did no homework. He gets very tired and it all seems very difficult for him.

This passage illustrates the realism of the tutors' assessments in general; it rings true.

Another reason for being impressed by the tutors' integrity arose from their general demand that the evidence should be published.

One of the surprises was the frequency of the following typical conversation:
Interviewer:

Well, thank you for all your help.

Tutor:

What are you going to do now?

Interviewer:

Write it up.

Tutor:

Good. One thing! No whitewash and make sure it is published.

Interviewer:

Yes, I'll do that.

Tutor:

I am so fed up with each educational experiment being a total success. It is not so! Some parts are successful, other parts are complete failures. If only people would say so, we would all learn something useful and be in a better position next time. So you do that and I will not have wasted my time!

There was yet a further reason for accepting the accuracy of the tutors' evidence. Several students provided samples of their written work and this was shown to two independent panels of adjudicators. The comments of the adjudicators about the written work of particular students was, without exception, similar to that of the comment of the tutor or tutor/organiser.

Together, these different strands of evidence confirmed, in general, the interviewer's impression of the integrity and the honesty of the tutors' approach to the evaluation of their students' progress; and thus the accuracy, in aggregate, of both tutors' and students' perceptions of the progress made was deemed to be methodologically acceptable.
Chapter XI

Affective Personal Achievements

The pervasiveness of 'confidence' as a criterion of success

In Chapter VII, five major criteria of achievements were described and finally ranked as:

1. Affective personal achievements
2. Cognitive achievements
3. Enactive achievements
4. Socio-economic achievements
5. Affective social achievements

However, in the interviews these terms were not used. Tutors and students used the currency of ordinary language, but, on occasion, they would be asked to place in order their perceptions. Starting with the original data, as the ethological approach demands, one tutor who had emphasised teaching the skills of reading and writing, after the experience of a year, replied quite firmly to a series of structured questions, as follows:

Interviewer:

So really, putting it in order, what she gained was (a) confidence?

Tutor:

Yes

Interviewer:

(b) increase in spelling ability?

Tutor:

Yes
Interviewer:

And it is really that order, is it?

Tutor:

Yes, I think so. I think this personal confidence thing is above everything else, really. I would say that that applied generally, not only to her. With anyone, really.

And a student who had regularly attended, week by week, looking back, answered the question:

Interviewer:

Now, if you took your reading and your writing and your feeling at ease with yourself, which would you put at the top?

Student:

Well, the feeling better actually, (with an apologetic glance at the tutor) and the next one the writing, and then the reading last.

Another tutor, who had also previously viewed her task as one of teaching skills, replied to the query "So, putting his achievements in order...?":

Tutor:

Confidence - number one! Sociability - number two! Enjoyment and pleasure - number three. Then the skills - that he can read being the most important of the skills.

The primacy of confidence in the scale of achievements emerged just as clearly in the description of a tutor responsible for matching students with other volunteer tutors:

Tutor:

Yes, it has taken quite a lot of confidence - has it not? - to come forward at all. And then, they are very nervous when I interview them. On the whole, extremely nervous. Then, you do see them more - entering the room with more confidence each time I go. I go once every three weeks to see how they are getting on.

Interviewer:

So is that the basic thing?
Tutor:
Yes

Interviewer:
After that comes the literacy skill improvements?
Tutor:
Yes.

Most students also seem to realise in perspective that they gained something more than, and other than, skills:

Interviewer:
What do you think you got out of it?
Student:
Well, I think confidence really. It makes a difference; I am not shy in company now.

Interviewer:
Would I be right if I put it in this order: confidence, spelling, grammar?
Student:
Oh yes! Definitely the confidence first.

And that student's evidence was confirmed by her tutor who, in explaining why both tutor and student had decided to bring the tuition to an end, said:

She gained in confidence and ability. We thought that was enough. Beyond that there is nothing that I can really add. She has all her work. So she can show it to you when you see her.

Another tutor reported:

My student is now taking a newspaper to work - 'The Sun'; writing Christmas cards and reading the Literacy Project Magazine. I am very pleased with her progress. Those things measure it, in my mind. She is very much more confident.
Whilst the term 'confidence' was used by most tutors, particularly in the second interviews, as the best description of their students' most important achievement, the statement above illustrates that 'confidence' was not usually an isolatable achievement. It was the bedrock of all other achievements; it infused and inspired the other achievements. Though the greater the confidence, the more likely that the students would make greater progress in all the other aspects of achievement, it was also true that the student could gain in confidence but make no perceptible progress in the skills. Thus, some students made progress only in confidence.

The very pervasiveness of the concept of 'confidence' as a mark of progress, makes it necessary to analyse the constituents of the notion further and to place 'confidence' within the context of a series of criteria which, together, may be grouped under the phrase 'affective personal achievement'. Nonetheless, it is also clear that the affective personal achievements will be key factors in the progress in the other achievements. Conversely, lack of progress in the other achievements may be due to, and be evidence of, a fundamental lack of progress in confidence. To take an analogy from car driving, one may have the confidence to know that one may be able to drive a car, but without knowing about the gear system (cognitive progress), without practice (enactive achievement), without the funds or the persuasive power to obtain an instructor (socio-economic achievement), and without the ability to get along with a particular instructor or examiner (affective social achievement), one will never have the confidence actually to obtain a licence to drive a car, or the confidence to drive a car well.
Thus, the following analysis of confidence, and the discussion of what is meant by progress in confidence, deals with those factors of personality and of behaviour which indicate a basic individual attitude to the ability to survive in the environment in which the student is required to operate.

Confidence as evidenced by 'bearing'

One indicator of such behaviour was the evidence of a tutor who said "... entering a room with more confidence ...." meaning that the student’s bearing was now that of a person entering an environment which was becoming less alien to him; that the familiarity of environment increased his belief in a successful outcome and this was exemplified by a physical expressiveness. It could be assumed that because the environment was controlled by the scheme concerned with literacy skills, the student’s bearing displayed a more positive attitude to his particular tutor and thereby towards the problem of literacy. But where, for teaching purposes, the student was a member of a social group, changes in his bearing might equally result from the mobility of his relationships within that group. One student’s bearing bore a marked relationship to the progress of his emotional attitude to one of the female members of the student group. Hence, an individual student’s bearing depended just as much on the tutor/organiser's ability to manage the group relationships as upon a particular tutor's ability to teach a skill.
Confidence as a 'feeling of being at ease within oneself'

Some students were unsure of the meaning of the word 'confidence' in its most basic sense and the phrase 'feeling more at ease within yourself' was offered to them for comment. Clumsy though it was, the phrase (already illustrated in use in a quotation on p.228) seemed to describe the students' perception; though they selected several levels of such inner ease. One student thought of it in terms of his skill performance:

And I feel easier in my own mind. I can now work out all the big words by working it out in the sentence. So that I knew what it is now.

Another student saw the phrase through his social activities:

Interviewer:

We met two years ago. Looking back, has it been worth it?

Student:

Oh yes, definitely. The lessons I had were definitely worth it. I am a lot more confident now.... Yes, much more confidence. I am now doing things that I would not have attempted to do before. I go along to help at my son's club during the evenings.

One student replies to the question by first describing his work in minute detail, the point being that he had to make notes of the performance of his machine. He continued:

Oh - confidence: yes, confidence in my own ability really. A bit of skill in reading and writing. The most valuable (thing) is that I have not to rely on somebody else. It is my own confidence that I can struggle and get by. I will not say perfect. But I can get along without having to run off to somebody to put me right. I try and get by on my own now. Before I used to have to ask somebody.

Yet another student realised the implication of the question and his basic attitude:
Interviewer:

Do you feel easier in yourself?

Student:

Oh yes. You (I) feel much easier when I go out and about...

Interviewer:

Do you think the ease within yourself is as important as the skill of reading and writing?

Student:

Yes, that is important, very important, because if you get easier in your mind then you can do things. When you go out with others, you can still do part of it (reading and writing). And you do not feel as though you have to stand in the background all the time.

The recognition of the importance of this achievement of helping students to feel 'more at ease within themselves' was far more explicit in the second interviews with tutors. A tutor who most clearly thought of herself as teaching reading and writing to adults, in the first interview, reassessed the priorities in the second interview:

Tutor:

His confidence has improved. I have at times said to him that I feel that what I can teach him is going to be very limited and there is very little more that I can teach him. This is because the same old spelling mistakes are made time after time and he does not remember the rules. Then he told me that the greatest thing in his week was coming here....

He writes screeds about things with countless mistakes.......

Interviewer:

Have your ideas about teaching adult literacy changed?

Tutor:

Yes, I feel that it is a very, very, complicated business. It is becoming more so and I think it is a much slower process than I ever thought it.
After that conversation, the student was interviewed in his tutor's presence and as the student's real gratitude for 'ease within my mind' emerged, the tutor's optimism seemed to return. At the end of the session, she remarked "Well, I suppose I'm not doing a bad job after all, but it's not only about reading and writing is it? There is more to it and I think it's worth it!"

Thus, from all the tutors, though more so from those teaching in their homes, the stated recognition of the primacy of 'feeling at ease within myself' as a constituent of confidence only emerged strongly in the second interviews, and the importance of 'confidence' overall increased. As these criteria were recognised, so the 'training' as distinct from the 'education' element in the total adult education process tended to diminish in importance and the skills occupied a place lower down the scale of criteria.

Confidence to make personal reassessments

In a curious way, the students seemed to recognise both the importance of building up their confidence and also the fact that their improvement in skills would be a time consuming process in which only small advances would be made. A typical response is that of the student who, asked "If I were to take on a new student myself and I told him that this was an easy six weeks job, what would you say?", replied:

NO, NO, IT IS NOT! It's very difficult - it's very, very difficult to bring yourself. You learn things as you go through life and you take on responsibilities. You can do all those things. When it comes to this, it is a very difficult thing to put yourself in somebody's hands and say
to yourself "You are going back to school again". To go back to being someone of nine years old is a very hard thing to do. You have to bring yourself down the scale again.

Thus, the average illiterate who persisted, and did not give up as soon as he had gone beyond the stage of catching up to the level of skill which he had attained at school, was prepared to reconsider his personal attitudes, particularly to the problem of learning as an adult. The best example of this came from one of two students who said that they now lost their temper with people less frequently.

I have a fairly quick temper and I say what I think when I should not do so. I do not do that as often as I used to do. I think now, it has something to do with reading. I am sure it has something to do with it. Even when I should fly off the handle, with good reason, I do not. Yes, I think I am more confident in me. (You feel this is an inner confidence?) Yes, yes!

The tutor of the other student who admitted to having lost his temper frequently before starting his course remarked:

He has really come out of himself. He is so normal, amiable and easy to be with....but then he has been here for several years.

Confidence to weigh evidence

Sometimes the students' ability to assess evidence for themselves increased, and this indicated some increase of self-confidence.

Well, there is always certain things in the paper that is not on the news. Yes, I notice them. I read about Ali's fight and I thought it was a good scrap - in the newspaper! But on the telly, he got knocked down four times!
Confidence to evangelise

Another sign of a change in confidence is perhaps the willingness to evangelise. A few students were extremely active in this and they were the ones who stated that they felt considerably more confident. Typical of those who did try to spread the good news is the rather vivid evidence of the student who said:

Yes, I have. There is a drinking pal of mine of about forty years old. I have tried to get him to come in. He cannot even write his name, I can do that. But he cannot and he will not come. He is in the same boat I was. He does not care who knows that he cannot read but he will not come to the sessions. Yes, I have told him. I have even got a poster up in my window. I would not have done that before.

Confidence to be self-reliant

The next major criterion exemplifying an increase in confidence was the growth of the students' fundamental self-reliance, eg:

I have more confidence in writing reports which I have to do frequently

and:

It helps me shopping, reading the stuff that we wanted, food and going to buy records. Once upon a time I could not read them (the record labels) and I used to get a young girl aged eight to come to ..., to choose them with me. She used to come and read all the records for me to choose.

and even more conclusively:

Well, they do not look at you the way that you have got to ask them all the time. Sort of thing! You can do it yourself. (Independence?) Independence, yes, if you want to know!

There is definitely a feeling of independence - definitely, it is a change - independence, that's right!

And, an example of the happiness that flows from that feeling of emerging self-reliance:
Confidence? That has increased, definitely! Funny that you should ask that because my husband has just been getting over flu and has been in bed. One or two bills needed to be done. I did these and wrote the cheques for them quite happily. And he was very happy! Oh, yes! He is a great help to me because he says "Well, you do it then. It is practice for you!"

Confidence as evidenced by self-assurance

Similarly, self-assurance may be listed as a further criterion of progress in confidence, eg:

Achievement? I would like to think so. Well, you need not take my word for it but the girl friend has recognised that... well... I have a lot more self-assurance. I feel that I am at last doing something definite about it.

Sometimes I take over. (Leadership of a voluntary group) I find that I can go now and say "Well no; I do not think that that is right." Before I would just sit because I would be sort of worried about saying the wrong words. Being able to write them down and having to do it.... doing the work, I find that I can talk to people better as well. It helps me both ways ... I do get carried away a bit!

It is, of course, difficult to prove but one senses that as the student's self-assurance grows, the truer nature of the individual may be revealed and appreciated; and that the student, intuitively aware of this reappraisal, responds further. One student, who looked like an all-in wrestler and could be extremely tough, was pretty formidable in the first interview. As one began to know him better over the course of two years, one began to understand the inner worth of the man and the limitations of single-interview research techniques. The tutor's evidence not only describes his growth in terms of self-assurance but delineates, unconsciously, the characteristics of a good tutor:
When I first came he was waiting for you to write every word and he would then laboriously copy it. So, yes, in three years he has altered by that amount. A lot of effort goes into what appears to be little achievement in the skills. Yet to that individual it is a great step forward. But this is it; I expect him to suddenly make another breakthrough. The one so far this term is that he has started to spell on his own. That has been a tremendous breakthrough and I am delighted by it. He is really working class - (pause) - but such a gentleman with it.

The answers to the questions put to the student referred to above were crisp, direct, and to the point:

Interviewer:

So your last year has not been a waste of time?

Student:

Not whatsoever. No. And you know that!

Interviewer:

Tailed off?

Student:

No, steady progress all the time.

Interviewer:

Easier with people?

Student:

Definitely!

Interviewer:

With your family?

Student:

Definitely!
Confidence as evidenced by a diminution in anxiety

If 'confidence' has improved, students should have experienced some diminution in anxiety, in a general sense. In practice, most tutors and students referred to 'embarrassment' as the description of a lack of confidence. As time passed, it became clear that many students and tutors had seen at least one, though never all, of the programmes of a BBC series called 'On the Move'. Indeed, nearly half the students interviewed had been invited to a pilot programme at their adult education centre. These programmes included accounts by selected adult illiterates, who usually explained their disadvantage by the word 'embarrassment'. Consequently it became a catchword and, for this reason, some students were provided with a scale of words, to help them to identify various levels of anxiety. These were, in descending order of anxiety:

- panic
- dread
- alarm
- trepidation
- embarrassment
- disquiet
- apprehension
- unease
- defeatism
- self-distrust
- depression
- defensiveness
- qualms

Most students asked what each word meant when the list was read out to them; many students looked at the list as it was read to them, and pointed to the word, or rather to the position of the
word, which they thought best described their feelings. The interesting point to emerge was that the words chosen by the students were at the top extreme of the scale, whereas tutors used the whole range. It seems that no matter how empathetic the tutor is, it is nearly impossible to reach into the feelings of a student who has experienced difficulty in a common mode of human communication.

This is not a criticism of tutors. A tutor who admits, quite cheerfully, to making spelling mistakes herself may perceive a student, whose lack of skill is a matter of poor spelling, as being in a state of defensiveness. Yet when the student is asked about his own perception, the replies are usually of the following kind:

I have been conscious of this!...it is a continual worry.

... feelings of horror ... it is unfortunate that I was made to feel I had a stigma!

... dread at being found out!

Well, I am really in a state of panic. I do not like people knowing. Well, not many know really. Only just my family. It is between dread and panic.

I would not like anybody to know. I feel about trepidation; a little more than embarrassment. I feel that people tend to look down on you. I mean, we cannot help it! They look down on you!

There is also the comment of the student who felt that the interviewer was perhaps complacent and patronising:

You do not know what it means to have this problem. How can you? You can do it? So don't xxxx come it, mate!

Thus, the use of one word 'embarrassment' to describe the feelings of students is clearly inadequate, and one of the signs of an increase in confidence seems to be that the student sees himself over a period of time, as descending the scale of anxiety.
Checks to the growth of confidence

So far, the more successful students have been considered. In fact, there are students who lose confidence. Some of those who gave up after a very few weeks may have screwed up enough courage and confidence to come forward and then found their confidence ebbing. Sometimes it could be due to over-expectations on the part of the tutor:

Student (1976):

She is going a little bit too fast for me - she thinks I am better than I am.

Tutor (1977):

She has not contacted me since I last saw you (1976).

Sometimes, loss of confidence was due to extraneous circumstances well beyond the control of the tutor, such as an unsympathetic employer, a jealous wife:

Since I started, she reads large fat books, when she is washing-up, all the time!

Sometimes, the very friendliness of an adult centre made the evenings between seem very lonely:

I was coming to classes before this (court) case came up, but the classes kept me going because I do not have anybody to talk to. YOU do not look out of it like that, do you?

Sometimes relationships in one-to-one tuition at home went awry; the friendliness of the smart young housewife was misinterpreted and the impression on the rejected student could hardly have increased his confidence.

Similarly, over friendliness between tutor and student could result in a lack of progress in skills and, as has been noted, the relationship between skills and confidence is a two-way one.
Inevitably then, the failure in skills must to some degree inhibit growth of confidence, particularly if the tutor does not appreciate that provision of companionship and friendliness might be the most potent educational force that can be applied in some specific circumstances. One tutor reported with some disappointment that:

> Well, I think she could go further but she just did not put in enough time, quite honestly. Really and truly, unless you are going to work at it every week, you are not going to do much anyway. We found that after every gap we had to start again. So I do not have her any more. It was very sad; I had to sit and wait and she did not turn up. I would not get an apology or, perhaps she would phone the next day. I think this is perhaps because we became friendly. I think that, in future, it is better to keep it as a strictly business arrangement. You know I think perhaps if it becomes too friendly you are taken advantage of, you know. I thought it would perhaps work out. Anyway she learned an awful lot in the time.

Furthermore, it was clear that progress in 'confidence' could be limited in certain situations. For example, some students never wrote a thing except in the presence of their tutor. Their confidence was limited to the ambience of their tutor/student relationship.

A tutor reported that:

> He is working (in his job) with a man who knows that he cannot read and keeps rubbing it in, which has made him more tense than ever ... I can see it ... his home life, he thinks, has improved.

Here the student had gained in confidence sufficiently to feel that home relationships had improved but the increase was not enough to deal with a less sympathetic person at his place of work.

_Confidence, subcultures and functional literacy_

We have shown that the lack of confidence can be a limiting factor in the acquisition and utilisation of skills. It is also discernible that a lack of confidence may lead to the lack of use of a particular skill and it is difficult to forecast, in practice, precisely how
the student will respond to the knowledge he has gained from his studies. To place this behaviour in a generalised pattern the ethological approach is the most appropriate, for each student has his own subculture, either chosen or imposed, in which he must survive. Consequently, so far as the student is concerned, whatever the skill, it has no significance for him unless it is used 'functionally'. But the term 'functional' has a peculiar and particular meaning which is ethological rather than sociological: in this context, 'functional' means a response to a subcultural environment which the student thinks will increase his viability within that environment. The following conversation with a particular student, her tutor and her husband, demonstrates this point:

Interviewer:

How about reading?

Student:

The reading is marvellous ....

Tutor:

Yet we did not really do a great deal of reading. We concentrated on spelling!

Interviewer:

Well, how about writing?

Student:

I still intend to continue and I still do three or four pages over again to do one page. When I write one letter (for practice) then I go through that book (dictionary) and correct my own spelling. I am still not sure in my mind about the spelling, I have not got that confidence.

Husband:

There was a time when she would not do it (anything to do with reading) at all. She is reading a lot more in the last two years, probably more than ever before ....
We meet every Wednesday; we did a course in home nursing; lift people, make a bed and so on. That was marvellous because I did not have to write - I did not have to spell anything.

Interviewer:

Have you written an actual letter to anybody?

Student:

No, there again, the phone .... I can just pick it up. It is an easy way out to me.

Interviewer:

Looking back, how would you put, in order of importance, writing, reading or confidence?

Student:

I think confidence more than anything else. (Very much so?) Yes I think so: Next comes the reading. I find that useful and I use it.

Thus, to take a particular case, this student who spent most of her time learning to write, in fact used reading as the functional response to an environment which provided a telephone and which required largely, if not solely, the technical ability to read. Because she was not continuously challenged about her writing, her survival, in terms of human relationships, was not at risk.

Two points emerge from the above quotation, that:

a) the tutor's subculture differs from that of the student and both individuals perceive in terms of their own subcultures, and

b) the student is confident in general, but not over spelling for which there is no immediate environmental demand.

Teachers and sociologists regard spelling as one of the proper demands of society as a whole and it is these demands which determine their definition of functional literacy. On the other hand the students' first, and possibly only, demand for literacy is in
terms of their own particular subculture. The evidence suggests that any attempt to persuade a student to meet the demands of society as a whole must follow after confidence has been established, enabling him to break out of his subculture, if he so wishes.

Summary

Whether a student acquired confidence or not depended on the warmth of the tutor's personality; her knowledge of the aims of adult education, whether acquired through training schemes or by instinctive empathy; on the relationship of the student with the tutor and, quite often, with other students; and on extraneous factors to do with the ordinary process of survival. Confidence was rarely a simple entity and usually the students who gained generally in confidence would display a lack of it in particular activities or perceptions not required in the first instance by his subculture.

Thus, confidence may be defined as being composed of:

(a) an improvement in bearing (physical attribute)
(b) a feeling of ease within oneself
(c) a willingness to reconsider personal attitudes
(d) an ability to assess evidence
(e) a willingness to evangelise
(f) an improvement in self-reliance
(g) an improvement in assurance
(h) a diminution in anxiety
and: increases in confidence associated with literacy skills (see p.345)
Though the notion of confidence is complex, it is the basic constituent of affective personal achievement and because of its importance, it places affective personal achievement as the prime, yet pervasive, objective of a project concerned with ameliorating adult illiteracy or, indeed, of any project concerned with subcultures of the 'disadvantaged'.
CHAPTER XII

COGNITIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

SECTION 1 - READING SKILLS

Because of the emphasis of most training schemes and from their own experience of teaching children, tutors thought of the skills of reading and the objectives of their teaching in terms of such taxonomies as the Barrett taxonomy. This taxonomy of criteria lists five major accomplishments:

1) literal comprehension, including recognition and recall;
2) reorganisation skills, including classifying, summarising and synthesising;
3) inferential comprehension, including inferring details, ideas, sequence and relationships;
4) evaluation skills, including judgements of reality, opinion, validity and appropriateness;
5) appreciation skills, including such emotional responses as appreciation of character development and language imagery as presented by the author.

(a) For a detailed list of Barrett's taxonomy, see Appendix C, p.158, in 'Developing Fluent Reading' Open University Course Book ME 231, Block Units 1, 2, 3 and 4, by John Chapman and Mary Beermann; Open University, Milton Keynes, UK 1977
Many tutors began by expecting their students gradually to develop all these skills but after a short period of time those that did not give up accepted that:

i) their students' aims were different, in that most individual students had objectives which were specific to his/her own requirements;

ii) progress would be limited;

iii) there could be gaps in a student's skill displaying a very low ability even to recognise some words and that this could be associated with an ease of recognition of more difficult words.

The following quotations illustrate these points.

(i) Acceptance of the student's objective as the criterion of reading success

He can read though sometimes he has to work it out. He is a bit on the slow side but he does read a newspaper for himself and he reads with his children which I think was one of the objectives of the exercise ... he is obviously fond of his children ... I do not think he has a lot of outside interests.

(ii) Acceptance of limited progress in reading

That is one of the things that made me rethink slightly. The people that I was teaching would never be reading the greats - the things that I would read ... but even to get them to read a newspaper and to take an interest in political things - to be aware - things like that.
(iii) Recognition of more difficult words and inconsistent progress

Student: Don't know that word!
Tutor: What is the first meal of the day?
Student: Breakfast!

Tutor's evidence continued:

So often she will get the word 'elephant' right ... usually with long words, they seem to get hold of them far easier than the short words: 'then' becomes 'they'. Little words seem to confuse them.

Consequently, when tutors in the research sample were asked to assess their students' progress in reading[^a] the questions were framed to take account of their perceptions of the students' aims in coming forward for tuition in reading, and six criteria of progress were established:

1. increase in word recognition skills
2. increase in sentence recognition skills
3. increase in comprehension skills
4. increase in the ability to read informational texts
5. increase in the ability to read texts beyond the purely informational levels
6. increase in the ability to read newspapers

Throughout this study it has been emphasised that there was a complete spectrum of cognitive ability, ranging from the student who could hardly read a word to the student who could read simple versions of Jane Austen's works. Thus, progress in individual students was measured from several base levels but, nevertheless, the outstanding feature that emerged from this study was that, proportionately, progress in reading in general terms came second.

[^a]: Cf. p.131
to that in confidence gains. The quotations illustrating progress in reading, by each of the six criteria given above, clearly exemplify the general feeling of both tutors and students that success in this area of skills was noteworthy and satisfactory.

1. Increase in word recognition

Very few students could not read the common social words, or, rather, recognise them. 'Men' or 'Gentlemen' were words recognised as being different from 'ladies'; similarly 'left turn' looked different to 'right turn'. Since, in functional contexts, most of these words were supported by signs, very few students had difficulty in coping practically with such examples. Nevertheless, there were examples of students with very basic reading skills and the speech of these students was usually so heavily accented that:

Her knowledge has obviously not been based on phonetics and sounds of words, so maybe she can do harder words and then stops at a simple one. She is erratic. She reads, it is the basic stuff she does not know.

- He can read reasonably well, but if you give him a word like hat or mat and say "Make another word out of that by changing the first letter" he will look at you and say "What?".

But of this student, the tutor/organiser was able to say that after a period of attendance of some three years, the student:

...has slightly improved since you saw him eighteen months ago - more than slightly. He went at a tremendous pace for a certain time and then seemed to reach his peak and I feel that he has been on a plateau for a length of time. At that point, I felt that he was really making no progress but I think he will go on again because he is still quite keen to work hard at it.
And the student's view of the matter?

Student: Getting on very well!
Interviewer: Is your reading getting better?
Student: Yes

2. Increase in sentence recognition skills

The great majority of students who came to learn to read wished to acquire sufficient skill to read sentences, paragraphs or whole texts. Most of these, of course, had to be helped with particular words, but their main problem was that of anticipation and prediction. Their progress was largely in terms of sentence recognition skills, because most of them did not, in fact, read any text continuously but rather attacked a paragraph at a time. As one student described his reading:

Steady progress (overall), not rapid. Reading has increased quite considerably. Now I will push myself to read something: an odd notice or something that comes through the door. I will attempt to read it.

The impression was that he would read enough to make sense of the text, and that probably he would decode only a few sentences at a time. This was as far as most students wished to go, for if they had learnt that much they could read any information that was absolutely necessary (e.g. the Highway Code) and they could get the gist of a newspaper's heavy print story which immediately follows the headline.
In a few cases tutors were bitterly disappointed that their students went no further because, in principle, to read sentences is to be able to read books. One such tutor said:

I say there is nothing wrong with his intelligence but he is not using his skill. Children at school do not just have three or five reading lessons a week; they pick up books to do arithmetic, geography or anything. And you see HE IS NOT READING!

However, the great majority of tutors and students in the sample were delighted to have reached this stage, but then about 50% of the students were already there before they joined the scheme anyway. Only about half of all the students wanted reading practice and these were given help in the comprehension skills.

3. Increase in comprehension skills

The main feature of these skills is to understand the burden of the argument in the text. For example, as a tutor reported:

Very good at reading, yes, very good. He definitely understands what he is reading now. He is reading books for the first time.

and the student perceived his progress as:

Yes, you know, it (the lessons) helped me a lot with the reading; once you learn how to pronounce a word you get along with the reading. I have read 'The Journey to the Centre of the Earth' by Jules Verne right the way through. That is the first time I have read for a long time (period). Each time I used to get fed up and pack it up. No, I could not do it two years ago. No. That is the biggest thing that I have managed.

Or:

But if he has a straightforward book he understands what he reads and he is interested in reading. Whether he will ever become a great reader I do not know.
and, as an implicit example of increased skill in comprehension:

Oh, he is improving. He has an impediment in his speech but I still think his reading is better than it used to be (i.e., testing his reading was difficult because of the speech impediment). He is reading library books; he has now a habit of borrowing books from the library and he reads full length books quite easily. I do not think he read quite so much before. I think he was able to read newspapers before.

But there were some students who had started at a lower level of skill and who had just begun to understand what they were reading.

One such, a fairly typical case, was described as follows:

Tutor: Well it is very difficult to know what to say in answer to your question "Any progress in reading?". He has just continued very slow but very steady progress. He has gone onto a better type of book now. He is reading a bowdlerized version of Ian Fleming's 'Dr No'. Really, on the whole he seems to be getting on quite well with it. He gets occasionally stumped over the odd word but, in the whole, he gets on quite well. I have some reservations about the level of comprehension but I think he has continued to make slow but noticeable progress.

Interviewer: Would he have been capable of reading 'Dr No' when he came to you?

Tutor: No, I would not think so. No, he could not even read paragraphs out of the local paper on subjects which were of particular interest to him. I should think, no, certainly not: it is being read, of course, in conventional novel print. When he started I had him on the 'Adventure Reading Series' with print three times the normal size. Incidentally, he has got another of Ian Fleming's books, in the same style, the simplified version, at home and he is reading that to his wife. Apparently he is enjoying the story very much. Now I have never ever had him read anything before and say that he was actually interested in the plot.
As well as the general increase in the students' ability to exercise the comprehension skills, tutors reported increments in reading skills in terms of very definite task achievements, such as reading the Highway Code (an informational text), reading poetry or reading a newspaper. Indeed, one experienced tutor argued that:

I try to pin down my pupils to realistic aims right from the beginning. As soon as I see them I say "Let's write a list of the exact things that we are aiming at, so that we can tick them off when we do them." I am sorry I have not got any of these lists for you to see because we destroy all papers about students as soon as we have finished with the students, for reasons of confidentiality. However, they would include such things as wanting to write a cheque, notices, minutes for a meeting and so on.

Interviewer: So most students come with a specific literacy aim?

Tutor: Most of the intelligent ones and the ones who find it easier to learn certainly have specific aims.

Based on such evidence, often repeated in other versions, the remaining three major criteria of success in reading were extracted.

4. **Increase in ability to read informational texts**

Informational texts are written in differing styles demanding different levels of ability, and students often specify the need to read certain pamphlets as their objectives. The higher the level of skill which the student had already attained, the higher the level of informational pamphlet that he usually wished to be able to read; thus, students generally acted as self-selectors and often gave an example of a type of informational pamphlet within their possible level of achievement. It must be stressed that other informational pamphlets were brought to their
tutor for explanation and completion, in much the same way as highly literate people take their income tax demand form with its accompanying information leaflet to their accountant.

Examples of the type of pamphlets which students regarded as criteria of personal reading success were:

I can fill in my car form by myself and the licence form. I can do those by myself. That makes a big difference.

I will read the odd notice that comes through the door - advertising material. Before I used to just put it aside or leave it for the wife or something like that!

I plumbed the kitchen sink unit in and there was no trouble because I could look up my Do-It-Yourself instruction manual.

Helps me with D.I.Y. instructions, definitely!

I can do time sheets at work. (read headings and complete)

I can read words on the telly now and again, if they stay on for a few seconds.

5. Increase in ability to read texts beyond purely informational levels

Progress in this ability is relative to the student's starting level of reading skill, although in fact the actual reading levels of the students who had declared themselves in need of general literacy work was quite startling; many students could read perfectly well:

Reading? That was all right! That was not the trouble!
Other students refurbished their reading capability whilst taking lessons in writing; for example, there was the student who had writing lessons only but who thought that her tutor was responsible for the improvement in her reading ability. Of her reading she said:

The reading is marvellous. I can read anything. I do not gallop along. I used to pick something up and just gallop! Now I stop and watch the words.

Tutor:

She used to jump at things and make up her mind about something instead of reading it carefully.

Student:

Yes, now I sort of stop, and I break the words up as if I am writing them. - Another book I have been reading is Bellamy's - that is a marvellous book. His words are long sometimes. But what I do is to break them down. The names of flowers you know! I could not even pronounce them. I sit there and make three or four words and join them up all together! What I like is that I can pick up a book and READ!

Some students read books to their children, usually of the simple, short story variety, but their descriptions of their pleasure in reading aloud - with meaning and emphasis - were heartwarming. Other students read poetry books for the first time in their lives, and yet others read the book of a television series, such as 'Poldark', and compared the written version to the visual version.

Many students, often those who said they could read before joining the scheme, registered a new sense of pleasure, of sheer enjoyment, at being able to read books. Tutors recognised, therefore, that one of their major criteria for success was the willingness and ability to read a continuous text, and reading a book beyond an informational level was an important milestone which, though far
short of 'War and Peace' was, nevertheless, a marker in the way to self-awareness. (a)

There was another book about the first airmen or something - he took that home for Christmas!

She would take responsibility if she wanted. It did not show you this - on the telly. You know, I was rather glad I had read the book. It was completely different!

I just want to get up and read my favourite hymn!

You know, she enjoyed reading a book. She read quite a bit really. She could read with understanding.

6. Increase in ability to read newspapers

A further mark of progress was the ability and willingness to read a newspaper. Various levels of reading skill are required between newspapers, and even within the same newspaper. Most students read the simpler tabloids and many students only read the headlines or large print paragraphs or particular pages.

Nevertheless, typically, tutors and students frequently mentioned newspaper reading:

My student is now taking a newspaper to work (The Sun), writing Christmas cards and reading the literacy project magazine...

Oh yes. Reading newspapers! He always bought newspapers, so he told me, but now he buys newspapers and he reads them!

Well, I can read a newspaper right the way through. Two years ago - no! I used to read some of it and then pack it up. I can read the papers I am supposed to read instead of making believe that I could do!

Newspapers now. I used to read bits two years ago and then it turned out that these were the main bits!

But not all students reach that level easily; for example:

(a) C.I.p.48-49
Newspapers? Well, yes and no, really! Say something comes up like the advertisement I saw the other night, that I did now know or I was not quite sure of or I could not break it down. Then I usually get the Mrs to read it. And all of a sudden I say: "Oh yes! That's quite right. Yes, I should have known that!" But there are some words I still miss.

It was extremely interesting to hear tutors who had emphasised the criteria of reading success in quite high level technical jargon during the first series of interviews switch to the criteria suggested above during the second series of interviews. One particular tutor spoke of "dyslexia, tests, eyetests" and of finding that he was "acutely cross lateral" and that "he did not sequence properly" and of taking "reading age tests". At that time the tutor reported that:

We are reading the 'Mrs Pepperpot' omnibus which has a reasonable size of script; he can read 'caught' and 'thought' in context ... In fact he reads quite difficult words like 'brightness' which he manages quite readily. He, curiously enough, like so many people like this, gets caught out on words that you really would not expect. He continually falls down on 'what' and reads it as 'that' ... candidly, my personal view is that I have not made much progress with him.

Yet about fifteen months later, the same student was reading an Ian Fleming book to his wife, and in answer to the question: "What has he achieved?", the tutor replied:

No. 1 - confidence, as for example his jury service.
No. 2 - reading skills
No. 3 - writing skills.
He does not have to use his writing at all at work except in so far as he fills in a licence application. The writing skill area is definitely the field in which he has made least progress!

Indeed, this tutor's evidence was typical; most students could decode far better than they could encode, probably because they were required more often to do so and thereby they had practice in decoding. In their ordinary lives they would read signs, the
television programme schedules, knitting patterns, newspapers or novelettes; these would all be read slowly and painstakingly by some, quicker by others, but read nevertheless.

So far as reading was concerned, embarrassment occurred when they had to read aloud and in public. Consequently, they would prefer to take home something to read slowly in their own time or to read with the help of their spouse. Often, once a document was read there was no need to reply other than orally. Thus, for example, a poor reader would be able to read the rate or rent demand from the local authority; if he disagreed he would go along to the Council Office and argue the case, or use the telephone.

Though decoding was usually practised by students from the day they left school, encoding certainly was not. Moreover, encoding required organisation, the assembly of ideas in a logical order, and this was exactly the characteristic so markedly missing in the vast majority of students. Some could run successful businesses, run successful lives, but that is not the same as writing successfully; there is no necessary transfer of abilities from other fields to writing; and it was one of the features of the literacy campaign that this simple proposition was ignored. Hence the surprise of both tutors and students that progress in writing was usually both slow and limited.

Many tutors who had helped their students to revise, and had brought their students up to the level that they had attained at school thought, in the early months of the campaign in 1975/76, that real, large-scale, speedy progress would be made. By mid-1977 there was universal acceptance of the realities of the encoding
problem. It was the writing problem that caused a tutor to comment (and many other tutors to hint):

It is a very, very complicated business ... it is a much slower process than I ever thought it was ... we have had fifty four sessions of about one-and-a-half hours ... BUT he is not using his writing - he does not have to.

Since, by mid-1977, some tutors were remarking that the campaign should have been called the 'Adult Reading Campaign', not the 'Adult Literacy Campaign', and because of the general agreement of students and tutors that writing, in all its aspects, improved least, the next section dealing with the criteria for achievement in writing starts with a description of an investigation of progress in writing skills based on the actual work of students as judged by independent panels.
SECTION 2 - WRITING SKILLS

To assess the improvement or otherwise in the written work of the students, students were asked to provide samples of what they considered to be their best work, with an average interval of six months between each piece of work. Twenty-seven students agreed to co-operate and panels of assessors were chosen to evaluate their work.

Panel A consisted of 13 practising teachers, with experience in either primary, secondary or specialist remedial education, who were attending a part-time course at an Institute of Education; Panel B comprised 6 more-experienced teachers who were attending a full-time English course at the same Institute of Education, together with two experts in the teaching of literacy.

Panel A was asked to assess whether, compared with their experience of children's work, the first piece of each adult's written work was similar to that of a child aged between 5 up to 8 years, 8 up to 13 years or 13 up to 16 years. Then Panel A evaluated each adult's second piece of work in the same way. Altogether the teachers made 329 individual judgements of each of the two sets of adult work.

This panel thought that the first piece of the students' written work indicated that, out of 329 scripts:

- 207 were equivalent to a child aged 5 up to 8 years (62.92%)
- 111 were equivalent to a child aged 8 up to 13 years (33.74%)
- 11 were equivalent to a child aged 13 up to 16 years (3.31%)

The second piece of work, which had been completed about 6 months later, was assessed as showing that, out of 329 scripts:
166 were equivalent to a child aged 5 up to 8 years (50.46%)
140 were equivalent to a child aged 8 up to 13 years (42.55%)
23 were equivalent to a child aged 13 up to 16 years (6.99%)

No attempt was made to analyse whether a particular student had moved from one group to another, since the assumption in using panels of adjudicators is that aggregate decisions are likely to be correct even though single judgements may be highly individual.

In view of the rough, three-part division into child-equivalent ages, it seemed prudent to use this part of the questionnaire solely as an indicator. Nonetheless, the generally low level of attainment is shown by the fact that, of the total of 658 assessments, only 34 were placed in the eldest child-equivalent group of 13 up to 16 years.

Secondly, the members of Panel A were asked to judge whether the work of each of the students, taken in chronological order, was 'worse', 'about the same' or had 'improved' in the following seven ways:

a) handwriting (motor skills)
b) spelling (in terms of spelling precedent in English)
c) use of words of more than two syllables
d) sentence length
e) level of communication
f) punctuation
g) attack

Twelve panel members (1 form was rejected) made 304 judgements in each of the seven categories, with the following results:
Thus the responses of the panel to the second part of the questionnaire indicated that between:

2% and 8% were worse in some respect,
41% and 59% were about the same in some respect, and
38% to 52% had improved in some respect.
During the discussion that followed the adjudication process, the members of Panel A indicated that they had experienced great difficulty in recalling the writing age of an average child in each age group; they said that it depended largely on their experience of the average standard in their particular school which, itself in turn, depended on the catchment area of that school and the ability and willingness of parents to encourage their children to practise their writing. Therefore, in the opinion of Panel A, the acceptable standard of, say, a five-year-old child in one area differed markedly from that in another area. This raises fascinating questions about conceptions of national standards which are outside the scope of this study. Nevertheless, the evidence of these teachers provides yet a further case for rejecting reading ages as a criterion of progress for adults and for adopting the methodology advanced in this book (see p.8).

Panel B was asked to complete only the second part of the form, i.e., the seven categories section. The six experienced teachers worked as three pairs, so that each pair could make an assessment after discussion, whilst the two experts in the teaching of literacy judged individually; thus, five forms were completed. The conclusions of Panel B were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage 'worse'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>spelling</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of words</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentence length</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attack</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>level of communication</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>punctuation</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>handwriting</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The responses of Panel B suggested, therefore, that between:

- 5% and 14% were worse in some respect,
- 24% and 46% were about the same in some respect, and
- 45% and 67% had improved in some respect.

Two points emerged from the discussion that followed the completion of the form:

a) the judgements of Panel B agreed with the outline of the assessment given by the students' tutors of the progress in writing of particular students as recorded on the tapes, and

b) Panel B had a more uniform, sophisticated and precise idea of the criteria on which to judge each of the seven categories; in discussion they defined them as follows:
Consequently, the 'opinions' of Panel B were taken to be probably more reliable but, nevertheless, broad conclusions were drawn by reference to the 'opinions' of both panels, particularly where there was an overall measure of agreement. Accordingly

a) the range of improvement was probably between 45% and 67% over all categories;

b) the range of 'worse' performance was in the overall range of 5% to 14%;

c) proportionately fewer students were worse in spelling;

d) proportionately more students were worse in handwriting;

e) about half the students were the same in both spelling and handwriting;

f) over half improved in handwriting but
g) the greatest range of performance was in handwriting.
h) the greatest proportional improvement was in the level of communication.

Thus, in the 'opinions' of the panels, the students' handwriting altered most of all the writing skills, and most students seemed to increase in confidence sufficiently to attempt to communicate at a higher level. From the discussions, it became clear that both panels were surprised at the low level of writing skill as evidenced in both the pieces of work provided by each student.

As in the case of reading, although many tutors started with rather complicated ideas of the techniques of writing, the objectives in this particular skill became fairly simple and basic. Seven categories emerged from the evidence:

1. improvement in the motor skill of writing
2. improvement in spelling
3. improvement in the ability to check spelling
4. improvement in the ability to take dictation
5. an ability to complete commonly-used forms or questionnaires
6. improvement in the ability to write letters
7. improvement in the ability to write extended prose texts

In judging the performance of individual students, improvements or achievements depended on the starting base level of each student, but although there was a range of ability equal to that noted in reading, the spread of ability was generally at a far lower level.

The following is an exceptional case:

He came in his late twenties with what he thought was an enormous writing and spelling problem. It just dissolved. It just went. I found that I was having to prepare a tremendous amount of work each week; he just took off; he did not know how good he was.
But the more usual case was that of the student who:

... was a very poor speller - she had no idea - she did not really know that seventy per cent of the language was regular - (I think it is seventy per cent!) - She did not realise that there was a pattern to things, generally speaking. I think she mastered a few words, such as 'apple' ends with an 'l' followed by an 'e' and not an 'e' followed by an 'l'.

At the other end of the spectrum were a few students, usually with the background of special schooling for the educationally subnormal, whose accomplishment would be no more than to write a few common words legibly. These students, like all the rest, were much better at reading than writing, but for these students to write anything cursively was an accomplishment that required an effort equal to that expended by an intelligent person to attain the highest academic award. It is in this general context that the following discussion of specific accomplishments in writing needs to be assessed.

1. Improvement in the motor skill of writing

Once they left school, most students rarely practised their writing and consequently their actual script was usually extremely childish.

A typical comment from tutors and students was that:

He (I) can get along perfectly without having to write and spell.

Nevertheless, most students learned enough to write out short notes to the milkman or simple aide-memoire to help them in their work, and although they never seemed to cease being nervous when they picked up pen or pencil, the typical progress was registered as follows:
Originally he was printing and now he is writing in script. He only prints when he becomes worried and agitated and only if he is having a lot of trouble in working out the words. Otherwise, he is writing legibly and his letters are so well formed that there is no doubt as to what is meant by his writing. I am quite happy about that!

or:

His writing is much quicker and more sort of fluent. Not so angular. It was very laboured and rather large and he still does not put the loops on the 'l's. He says he was told not to do that at school, but I pointed out that it might be an '1' or a 't' if you have forgotten to cross it. But I think he will never learn that.

or, as the student put it:

As far as putting pen to paper is concerned, it is becoming easier now. It's not quite there!

But many students were able to write perfectly well:

His handwriting? Quite good. It has always been all right, in fact it is that of an average adult in cursive style.

On occasions, the tutor allowed the student to sacrifice his standard of handwriting in the interests of giving him more practice in spelling and sentence construction. An interesting account of such a dilemma which continually, and particularly, faces the tutor of adults is that of an experienced tutor/organiser who said:

His handwriting has got worse but what he is writing has improved fantastically. Once upon a time, he would never write anything at all without looking at it and copying it. I am now giving him spelling tests. Now that is a great achievement because he was so unsure of himself and so afraid that he could not possibly do anything at all. Now, I have proved to him that he can. It is remarkable. So writing, yes. I think to put with the handwriting at the moment. What is coming out is good. We are moving it.

In fact, as the above quotation shows, most tutors aimed for improvements in spelling and most students hoped to achieve this as their major aim.
2. Improvement in spelling

Some organisers of literacy schemes have suggested that many students admit to being poor spellers but, in fact, they are also poor readers and poor writers. This may have been true of a minority of students, but the evidence of the students seen suggested that most of them were quite truthful in this self-analysis. They could read better than they could write; they could hardly write any extended piece of text if they could not spell and progress in this aspect of writing was greatly appreciated. How much it mattered to students is clearly explained in the next quotation from a student:

There is no way in which anyone can experience not being able to read or write. I feel that much different ... it is still the small silly little mistakes that I am making that I could have learned when I was ever so young. But since I've come here, I have been learning the words that I would use today. I have less difficulty with the harder words than the silly little small catch words. But I'm getting to the stage where a couple of times at work, quite out of the blue, someone has asked me "How the devil do you spell so and so?" Before, I would have gone off to the toilet quickly without hesitation. But now, I've been fortunate in these couple of instances and known how to spell the word. It does wonders for your ego!

But spelling remained their greatest hurdle; in fact, very few students ever seemed to reach the proficiency of being able to write a two-page script. The usual student was more likely to be properly described in one of the four assessments given below:

Of student A, the tutor said:

She still has great difficulty in combining the sounds that make up a word and her spelling and her writing, therefore, are just as slow as ever and there is no progress. She does not have a chance to use it in her social life or occupation.
and student B:

Well now, his writing is still laborious. He can copy. But if he wants to write something of his own invention, then it is a slow process to which he has to give terrific attention, and even then he will look at his tutor for help.

and student C:

... has made pretty well nil progress ... still only writes in block capitals and she knew that before she came to us. She does not have the competence to imagine a word, how it looks.

and student D:

She is slightly worse than student C; no progress.

Those students who started off with higher levels of writing skill rarely improved very much further in actual spelling skill; that is, when not using aids. For example:

I seem to learn the big ones better than the small ones (words). Yes, I can get them down on paper - my handwriting has improved a lot.

or:

I can write a bit more - it's the spelling that comes unstuck, you know! I could write a lot better if I knew how to spell the words better.

or even a student who became an aide to other students:

I find I can write things down much better now, without having to think about it. Still a bit slow at doing it; I have to have time; I find I can do it on my own without having to ask quite so many spelling questions, you know. I think, other than that, I am doing quite well.

3. Improvement in the ability to check spelling

Consequently, many tutors' attitudes changed and more emphasis was placed on how to approach the problem of literacy and on using aids:
They have got, as an achievement, an approach to solve their problems later ... you give them a framework in which they can think about spelling and reading and you help them to realise that most things that are written they can use ...

Well, undeniably, an ability to see the problem as something they have to contend with rather than that they were thick.

Thus, tutors often emphasised how to check spelling and how to use aids to spelling, and the ability to use a dictionary was frequently mentioned as an achievement by both tutors and students.

To give but three examples of their opinions:

His determination is to get on with the bigger words because he is learning dictionary skills and we are working a lot on the dictionary.

I have to have a dictionary handy, just to make sure!

Obviously there are some words that I cannot do, but I can work round these with the help of a dictionary.

4. Improvement in the ability to take dictation

Improvements in this skill were judged to demonstrate that the student was more capable of dealing with the phonic processes.

At the same time, many tutors used dictation as a means of helping the student write a more extended piece of text. Usually, the dictation passages were extremely simple. The normal use of dictation was described as follows:

It is very difficult for them to learn spelling so it always seems easier to teach reading. If I am going to give somebody some work - a dictation, for example - I find a book that they can read easily, but they will not be able to spell half the words. Thus, I go to an easier book to give them practice in taking dictation.

Incidentally, that is what we are doing - this Blackwell Reading thing - the one with a word and a sentence. He likes me to dictate to him so that he can practice his spelling. He wants dictation because he knows that if he writes it, he is just copying. He is working considerably slower than a lot of people but he is getting a lot of satisfaction out of it, because it is what he wants to do!
5. **An ability to complete commonly-used forms**

Many tutors made enquiries about which administrative forms were used by their students; these ranged from application forms for a car licence to those for social security grants. Frequently the students were drilled sufficiently to complete such a form and to some students and tutors this was their major achievement. For example, one student said:

**Interviewer:**

How does this class help you?

**Student:**

Well filling up forms, that is my problem. I have a lot of hospital forms, rebate accounts, and I would not have done it on my own. But now I can do it better but I still have to get the social worker to check on what I do. Apart from that I think I am improving slowly.

**Interviewer (later in the conversation):**

Is this helping you in any other way?

**Student:**

Forms and things like that - I can read my knitting patterns now - it's helping there.

6. **Improvement in the ability to write letters**

Similarly, tutors tried to make their tuition more germane to the lives of their students by helping them to write a letter which they really wished to post. A typical example of this, as an achievement, was reported by a tutor:

But she wrote to her boy friend when he was away. This was the very first letter she had written. She wrote the letter with some help from me in the class, but she was able to write to him and she was quite pleased about that.

However, it is worth noting, at this point, that these enactive achievements in writing took place in the present of, and with the
help of the tutor. When it came to doing things for themselves and by themselves, it was quite a different matter.

7. Improvement in the ability to write extended texts

A few students (perhaps more than originally suspected), could be described as being reasonably literate before they joined the scheme. One such case was reported by a tutor:

The first time he wrote, he wrote something that he considered to be a good GCE model, a beginning and an end, linking. It was quite obvious that the lad had been trained to pass examinations based on a marking scheme. There were sufficient interesting phrases and so on, but even when he relaxed his English was still good. It was always competent and coherent.

or, more usually:

To my amazement he produced a four page foolscap account of a fishing trip. It had a whole lot of spellings wrong but it was most entertaining reading; it was very graphic. It was unorthodox in places but it was vivid, real writing and he staggered himself by doing it. And the week after that he just could not do a thing - he seemed to absolutely turn himself out by that! And we had to go back to the beginning and plod through worksheets ... I thought that I would get less able students and that we would have to go to the very beginnings of phonics.

But the average students rarely wrote an extended piece of work or an essay; all they accomplished was:

Tutor:

I asked him to write a brief account of some activity on his own. Such as going to the seaside. I got about four lines: "I went to the seaside, I saw ... We went in the car and it rained. We had a picnic on the beach. We looked at the shops. Then we came home. When we got home it was 7.30." You know, that sort of thing.

Student (interviewed separately):

Writing is, well - I don't do a great deal of writing. I fill in my worksheets every week but I do not do a lot of writing so my main concern is reading.
Thus, the students normally progressed only a little in their writing skills, whatever their starting point. Their reading skills tended to improve more, but it emerged that even the skill achievements were more a matter of building up confidence than anything else.

SECTION 3 - CONFIDENCE THROUGH SKILL TUITION

It is undeniable that some progress in the actual technical skills is a proper requirement of a literacy scheme; but it is also true that little or no progress in the technical skills may be far outweighed by gains in confidence from joining classes and meeting people who share the students' technical problem.

Indeed, as time passed, the schemes specifying one-to-one tuition at home recognised this fact; for example, a social evening organised by one such organisation was reported in these terms:

... a tremendous number of pupils came ... such a successful party ... I think the social ease was something really worth handing on to - unbelievable!

It seems that the greatest gain comes from the act of sharing rather than the skill. One tutor/organiser expressed this fact strongly and lucidly in the following conversation:

Interviewer:

But when we come to reading, spelling and writing, there is not much change?

Tutor:

No, I'm afraid not. That is, after the first, say, three or four months, when they were brought out of complete inability or some ability to where they would have been if they had gone to school. But other than that each student seems to have
come to a point (after eighteen months) where they say:
"This is as much as my brain can do! It cannot cope with complications any more."

Interviewer:

So really, what they have done is to meet people outside their normal lives, to widen their knowledge of life, and if we called it 'Adult Education' and suggested that they should learn the skill of carpentry or sewing, in a class, then you could say the prime achievement would have been the same?

Tutor:

Yes, even if they had not learned carpentry, that's right. Oh yes, it would have still been worthwhile. It has been worthwhile from the social point of view of all those students - widening their vision, widening their experience and their knowledge of how other people live, talk and read. Yes certainly. Therefore they are better educated people.

The bedrock of self-confidence and of self-awareness emerges again, but nevertheless there are confidence factors resulting from the learning of literacy skills; these are exemplified by:

1. an increase in concentration during tuition;
2. a diminution of anxiety with regard to literacy;
3. an expression of enjoyment in reading and writing;
4. an expression of an expectation to succeed in the literacy skills.

1. An increase in concentration during tuition

Most students found it difficult to concentrate for any length of time. However, after a period of tuition lasting eighteen months or more, it was found that the concentration of some students, though by no means the majority, had improved and that they could work for up to half-an-hour without a break.
Most tutors found that the major difficulty they faced was to get their students to concentrate, particularly after a holiday or other gap in regular tuition:

...a nine-week break, then we had to go back a long way.

although increases in concentration during tuition were rarely mentioned:

He can concentrate for longer periods during lessons - there does seem to be an improvement there.

2. A diminution of anxiety with regard to literacy

Many students, particularly those working in groups, reported that they felt less anxious about their literacy problem; for example:

But now I don't seem to mind; everybody is in the same boat.

or:

I've got over it because I am talking to YOU about it NOW!

or:

I must try to cure my reading problem and I do not like to talk about it because it upsets me and if anybody says anything about my reading, I fly off the handle. I still do it, but I do not do it as much as I used to do.

or:

I mean, I got a little card in my window and the lady across the road said to my next-door-neighbour "What does that mean? Does it mean that he will help you to read?" "No," she said, "he goes to night classes and since he has been to night classes, he is reading a lot better - he is reading a lot better than he used to."
3. An expression of enjoyment in reading and writing

So far as most students were concerned, the skill of reading never came easily, but a few actually reached the stage when they could say they enjoyed reading:

We are trying to improve his spoken words and to increase his enjoyment of more difficult words. This he is doing ....

He is actually enjoying reading (the books) ...

But so far as writing was concerned, no student interviewed stated that he enjoyed writing. The most favourable views expressed were merely that they could now write "to fulfil such and such a task". Nevertheless, many students increased in confidence through learning just enough writing skills to deal with the situations in which they were required to write, few though these occasions were.

4. An expression of an expectation to succeed in literacy skills

Many students showed great perseverance, especially when receiving group support, and part of their confidence was based on a stubborn belief in eventual success. After four years, one said:

This made me say that there is such an improvement. I am confident enough to keep coming to this place.
Oh yes, it is coming but it still looks like being a long job. Yes, it is! I hope to read properly some time. I do not think there is any time limit on it. You cannot rush it.

Yes it is a lot of time, but I don't look at it as time really. I just look at it as - well, as long as I get the reading; I am not too worried about the writing as long as I can read. If it takes another twelve months or two years, perhaps, I will go on!

Summary

Nearly all tutors and students, looking back, said that they felt the achievements had been in:

- a) general confidence;
- b) confidence associated with literacy skills;
- c) reading; then
- d) writing

in that order.

The criteria of cognitive achievements identified in this chapter are:

Reading:

An increase in:

1. word recognition skills;
2. sentence recognition skills;
3. comprehension skills;
4. the ability to read informational texts;
5. the ability to read texts beyond the purely informational levels;
6. the ability to read newspapers.
Writing:

An improvement in:

1. the motor skill of writing;
2. spelling;
3. the ability to check spelling;
4. the ability to take dictation;
5. an ability to complete commonly-used forms or questionnaires;
6. the ability to write letters;
7. the ability to write extended prose texts.

Confidence associated with skills:

1. an increase in concentration during tuition;
2. a diminution of anxiety with regard to literacy;
3. an expression of enjoyment in reading and writing;
4. an expression of an expectation to succeed in the literacy skills.

It has been shown that the major skill achievement was, indeed, in reading, and that achievement in writing was of a lower order, possibly because, in the students' subcultures, encoding was not regarded as an essential feature of the environment. However, although students performed tasks with their tutors, one of the real purposes of education is to provide the ability to act independently; the next chapter deals with the degree of achievement in this respect.
CHAPTER XIII

ENACTIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

The evidence in this chapter is based upon what both students and tutors said the students actually did outside the ambience of the classroom or the tutorial session. From their statements, ten criteria of enactive achievement emerged, each of which will be discussed below.

1. The use of reading skills

There was a vast range of achievement in the general use of reading, starting from the rather humble:

He looked into shop windows and occasionally saw something that he could read, and at the names on buses - it was very basic but it was an achievement!

To the real achievement of the enjoyment of books as expressed by an exuberant student in the following quotation:

Well, I have not done much writing ... no, I can pick up the phone ... my daughter wrote the letter to ---. I read books now ... the reading is marvellous.

But to obtain a more detailed view of reading achievements, questions were asked about the actual use of:

i) libraries,

ii) newspapers,

iii) books,

iv) the extent to which they read to their children, and

v) the use of reading at work.
i) **Use of libraries**

Out of nineteen replies to this question, six said that they had joined a library and these six students were enthusiastic; for example:

We have just joined the library. I can go and pick a library book. I went to the woman and whispered to her that I was 'On the Move' (BBC series for illiterate adults). I read 'Jane Eyre' and it was a super thing. I felt as if someone had given me a pound note! and:

She had been here two years and she found out from me the library was free. She kept on saying "beautiful library, beautiful library free!" She was really thrilled. They have some Asian books as well.

and:

She reads herself, goes to the library and actually buys books.

The remaining thirteen replies were usually short:

**Been to a library? No!**

but two of the thirteen students used their children to obtain books to read. For example, the clear:

My children get the books; I don't go!

or the rather ambiguous reply:

I've come out of (left) the library; but I do go myself. I get a bit mixed up. My daughter picks books out for me.

**The proportion of students not using the library service was probably greater than the 68% suggested by this sample. Many students were not asked directly about their use of libraries because it was quite clear during the interview that this question would embarrass them.**
ii) Reading a newspaper

Reading a newspaper was often stated as an objective by tutors and many students obviously wished to do so, perhaps not so much because of their interest in the news but rather because to be seen to be doing so would be a public affirmation of their ability to read.

Thus a tutor said:

My student is taking a paper to work.
He doesn't take an interest in current affairs so I do not think he will read the national newspapers.

and a student asked her tutor:

"How long will it be before I can read a newspaper?" She did not realise that it would take a long, long time!

The typical student, however, struggled through bits of newspapers, registering some new-found achievement:

I read newspapers - a little bit. Before I used to look at the pictures ... The Sun!

and:

Read a newspaper? Well I read bits, mostly the ads because they are all the same letters (similar words).

Nevertheless, other students had the ability to read newspapers if they wanted to do so, and some actually did;

Interviewer:
Could she read 'The Guardian'?

Tutor:
Yes, she could. I don't know that she would want to but she could. She could write the 500 most common words; spelling was her problem.

and:

I read 'The Sun'.

and:

Now I can read a newspaper at home.
and:

I can read a newspaper; I couldn't do that before.

One student considered the newspaper as a rather soft option; he said:

I read only magazines, not newspapers!

Another student, who must have started at a fairly high level of literacy, bounded ahead:

By the end he was reading more in 'The Guardian' than I was reading. He would ask if I had read various articles in 'The Guardian' and I just had not time to read them.

But 'The Guardian' reader was really very exceptional; not only was the student who read only parts of newspapers typical:

Interviewer:

Read a newspaper?

Student:

No, because they are too small for me.

Interviewer:

Headlines, then?

Student:

Yes, I can read some of it.

But a large proportion of students, even after nearly two years of tuition, never reached the stage of doing so. For example:

Reading? better than I expected but he cannot read a newspaper.

or:

He has not got to the stage of reading newspapers!
or the student who thought that newspapers were comics:

I can read a bit of the papers, my son's comics.

However, many of those who could read newspapers went forward to reading books.

iii) Reading books

A few students could read fluently before they joined the scheme; one commented:

I read before I came here. I read historical novels usually - Jean Plaidy books.

However, those students who read a book during the period of attendance probably did so for the first time, and their achievement was usually hesitant and often surprising to their tutors:

I try to read books but it takes me a while to get through them.

and:

I read my first book....

and the register of pleased surprise:

He is reading a book - and is actually interested in it!
Many of the students read do-it-yourself manuals, recipe books, or books concerned with their work. Features of this type of reading were that it was of practical value to the student and that the student could read a section; students were not sufficiently accomplished to indulge in reading extensively. The books that were named were usually simple stories:

I did read a cowboy book at work and I was quite chuffed at that: it was the first time I had ever read a book.

or presented in fairly easy versions, as is the case of children's books such as the 'Ladybird' series. However, a few students read adult books of an undemanding nature:

I read stories like 'Sea Change' and that.

and:

I believe he said he was reading the James Herriot books.

and:

I read a book by Lillian Beckwith, 'The Hills is Lonely'.

and:

She bought 'Summer of 42' - but she has a comprehension problem and really likes reading Enid Blyton.

A very few students were encouraged to read, and did read, books requiring an emotional response; one student said, rather proudly:

I started to read poetry!

but, regrettably, few students seemed to be able to comprehend the meaning of texts which could be described as even slightly sophisticated.
iv) **Reading to their family**

Most students, mainly women, who claimed to read books had read a children's book aloud to their own child and this was, to them, a tremendous accomplishment; indeed, only a few students managed it.

I read aloud to my little girl.

and:

I read to my children, but I don't know every word.

He is reading (her son, aged 7) and I find now that I do not hesitate so much when I am reading to him.

and, more positively:

I am reading to (my son) with expression - "poor old man, he has really hit the dirt hard" - put more feeling into it."

Yes, I read to my kids nearly every night now. They won't go to sleep without a story. Not now!

v) **Use of reading at work**

Very few students used their reading skills directly for work:

Really, reading does not come into my work!

and:

I don't use it at work, I have never had to read at work.

and:

... in his job he does not use literacy for any reason.

but the few students who could put their new skill to direct use found it invaluable:
I can check the names on the equipment I use at work.

and:

It helps me at work and all that. Instead of going up to my mates and asking them what the word is and all that, I can read the labels. (storeman)

2. The use of writing skills

However limited the use of reading skills, far more was done in that field than in the use of writing skills as has become evident already. One tutor expressed her disappointment:

Interviewer:

Has he done anything that suggests he is using his skills?

Tutor:

No, nothing at all! Oh yes, reading the newspapers; but he is NOT using his writing.

The typical attitudes of the majority of students emerge from the following quotations:

Interviewer:

Have you used it at all?

Student:

No, I don't think so! I do not like my own writing!

or, more typically:

Writing is not my need; I don't have to do it!

and:

I have not written any letters to anyone, but you see writing does not come into my work.
Writing letters

Written a letter? No, though I have written one in class.

or:

Well, I started to write one (a letter) to my father; I sort of finished one but nine out of ten times my wife sort of reads it through and corrects the mistakes.

Nevertheless, some students tried:

I wrote a letter to see if I could get a pen friend; a year ago I could have never done that. But they did not reply!

and quite a few wrote postcards to their tutors when they were on holiday. Similarly, quite a few wrote practice letters to their tutors; for example:

Her letters to me seem to have improved.

Only a few students, however, actually wrote letters independently and for a purpose, and these students were particularly pleased with their accomplishment:

Now I can do the cheques and bills ... I do all the letters. I have to write letters to school and I do that now.

and:

She feels now that she can write letters to friends without having her husband do it for her. She says: "It is amazing; I just write as if I am talking to them."

and, though a fairly painful process:

I think before I write - I can think better. I wrote to my son in Canada - it took me ten times to get it word perfect.
ii) Completing forms

The great majority of students avoided filling in any form without some help or without passing it to someone else for completion (for example, wife or tutor) so that they only had to sign their name. For example:

Interviewer: Have you filled in any form?
Student: No, I don't like it. I never have done!

and:

Forms? My wife fills in the forms.

and:

Forms? I let my husband do that.

and:

Filled in any forms? I always take it home and get my wife to help me.

The refusal to complete forms was surprisingly ingrained, for it was not simply a matter of not being able - they were often not willing.

Though he really was good enough to tackle anything, if someone presented him with a form he would say: "Oh well, I'll take it home."

However, some students were pleased to be able to complete even a section of a form:

I can write my name and address now!
Other students would certainly complete routine and repetitional forms, such as work time sheets, and this accomplishment was the one most frequently mentioned. There were a few students who did act independently in this respect:

He will fill in forms, petrol garage forms.

and:

Interviewer:

Have you filled in a form for yourself?

Student:

Yes, for my driving test, I filled that it myself. I passed first time for my motor bike.

and:

I can fill up forms which I could not do before. I could do something when I started but it is getting easier now.

and finally, in the case of a more able student:

She is filling up forms; she is writing letters to school, yes, she is filling in the report sheets that they have to send back ... Oh, she could write and read very well - she could not spell, that's all.

iii) Free composition notes

Few students actually wrote notes involving any degree of free composition.

A note to anybody? No!

and:

Interviewer:

Do you write notes to school now?

Student:

Oh no, I leave that to the Mrs!
but, to at least one student, a note was a milestone in his life:

Interviewer:

Have you written anything outside your work in class?

Student:

No! Oh, I left my wife the first note she had ever had!

iv) Christmas cards

The writing of Christmas cards was encouraged by tutors as being a practical use of their students' skill; many students of low levels of skill were able and willing to do this, but in nearly every case in the sample, students received help.

She did write and send off (with help) Christmas cards.

One or two male students claimed to do it for themselves, but usually Christmas card writing was an occupation left to wives.

Interviewer:

Have you written any note?

Student:

No, but I wrote my first Christmas card.

v) Use of writing skills at work

Just as few students needed to read at work, so few students needed to write other than simple phrases:

I do not have to use (write) English in my everyday job at all!

and:

My job does not mean that I do a lot of writing; just once a week when I make my time-sheet out. There you are!
He can now write notes; before he had to mark a reject with an 'R'.

When I took over the machine last week I felt very happy. I put things down like 'dropped a blade' and 'waiting for further instructions'.

However, a few students needed to improve their writing if they were to make progress in their work or, indeed, to continue in their present job:

I use it at work. I have more confidence in writing reports which I do frequently. My boss said "Only five mistakes which I will correct, they are too silly for words. You are getting on very well." I said: "Oh, thanks!"

and:

I got through an exam for a job! I always wanted to do that, even though the pay was less!

vi) Other uses of writing

Some students began to keep diaries which, originally, they showed to their tutor as an exercise; one student mentioned continuing this practice after the completion of her tuition:

I keep a diary; I do about a page a day.

Another student used her writing skills independently for relaxation, but this was an extremely rare case:

Yes, (laughter) yes, I think i can do a crossword puzzle on my own. I still tend to write it at the end first and then ask. I do 'The Sun' crossword and the 'Daily Mirror' crossword.
Other active achievements

1. Regular attendance for tuition

Logically, as tutors often said, students could hardly learn without taking the trouble to attend lessons. In the event, most students, particularly those in groups, attended regularly when they intended to continue. As soon as they were satisfied that they had gained all they wanted, the regularity of their attendance tended to decrease until they left.

Thus, the act of attending regularly could be counted as an achievement. Indeed, after a long day's work, it was.

He used to come every week, no matter what.

and:

She comes very regularly - our main problem is that we tend to talk rather a lot than do actual lessons and I feel rather guilty about this.

and:

Well, I look forward to coming. I DO! I dislike missing class when I am on overtime.

2. Homework

At the outset of the scheme in 1975/76, many tutors set great store by the completion of homework; in the event, very few students did any homework. The typical response was:

He did no homework.

and:

He won't do any homework so we are not getting anywhere.
He never did any homework. ... he admitted he was really doing it (the course) because it was a good thing!

That the amount of homework was never very great is illustrated by the following quotations:

Homework? Not a lot, I have not that much time. I pick a paper up and have a quick look through it and that sort of thing.

and:

I get a little each week (homework). I do not give her a great deal - she had a full-time job plus looking after her family.

and:

He brought some homework. His wife helped him.

but the following was typical of a few students:

I do homework. I usually take it up to bed and do it when the children are in bed.

There was the exceptional student, spoken about with some awe, who:

... just enjoys reading at home. He did some word building exercises from 'Common Sounds' and he did more of them at home - he is just a poor speller, that's all!

3. Display of literacy 'tools'

One of the signs that a student is intending to use his literacy skills is to carry round the tools of his trade! In fact, quite a number of students did not do so.

Interviewer: Do you carry a pen around?
Student: No!
On the other hand, many students showed some pride in their very possession, clearly regarding such acts as achievements. For example:

Carry a pen?
Not until recently. I keep one in the car now.
I have a pen within reach which I did not have before.
For the simple reason I might have had to use it.

and:

He would go off and buy packets of pens and pencil sharpeners; in fact, he gave me a pencil sharpener.

and:

One day he took some biros out of his pocket and said: "Ah well, I suppose I have become the sort of person who carries biros around in his pocket!"

or:

But I do carry a note book in my pocket for work ... it helps me to memorise things.

4. Finding directions

Most students were able to read the common instructions for road users, as in the following case:

Well if I want to go to any seaside place round here I can get there. I drive and I am fairly decent on memory - I know where it is! I have always been able to read road signs, 'Halt' and things like that.

Nevertheless, for many students the achievement that they recorded as being most useful was to be able to find their way around with greater facility; usually it was a mere matter of street names:
I can read a notice at work ... and road signs now, but usually I get my transport manager to read them to me.

I can pick out street names. I could not do that before.

Interviewer:

Can you get to a small village outside, say, Norwich?

Student:

Yes, I think I could make it. I can go by the lettering.

Interviewer:

Would you have been able to do that when you first came?

Student:

No, no! I would not!

A few students reached high levels of achievement and were actually able to plan routes from maps. A tutor clearly was pleased with her student's progress in this respect when she said:

He has even been planning a holiday which he knows he will not take. Looking at maps and planning his routes and what he would find.

5. Consumer activity and purchasing methods

Many students were able to shop quite easily, either because they could read:

Shopping? Oh yes, I can manage that all right.
I can read!

or because they had their own system:

Shopping? You don't need to read the labels. I know the shape of the bottle; H.P. means the Houses of Parliament, you can see the picture. If there is no word you look for the first letter H!

But equally, a large proportion of students either improved or were able to perform purchasing operations for the first time, though still in a very limited way. For example:
"I can go shopping without my wife", so he said. I think that is quite an achievement for him.

Well, I can go and find wheat flour. I look at the package and break up the words. My husband stood there and said: "Yes, that's the one you wanted."

Now I can write the loaves of bread I want today or if I don't want any bread - things like that.

I cannot write a shopping list but I can read it.

The great majority of students used cash to make payments but, with the spread of the cheque system, some students managed to use their cheque books at the point of purchase for the first time. However, the reluctance to use cheques was often put quite strongly:

She has always had a Trustee Savings Bank book so that you did not have to sign cheques. But now they are bringing in a cheque book system - she does not want to have anything to do like that.

Signed a cheque? No. I can do my name. I could do it before I came here!

Written cheques? No!

But the importance of cheque writing as an achievement is shown by the following five quotations:

Cheques, I wrote the cheques - I was surprised at myself!

I can go out and write a cheque (in a shop).

I can now write cheques!
Yes, I have a cheque book and sign cheques all right, though I take my time.

and:

I can write my cheques quite easily - no stopping ... I have to think about the word 'twelve'.

Some students only managed to use the postal order system:

I can send a postal order. I do that myself. I cross them and make payment. I did not do that before.

In a rare case, a student applied his literacy tuition to a complex transaction and was pleased with his successful enterprise:

No, not really. I have not written any letters, apart from the fact that there are bills and so forth. Oh yes! I just recently wrote a letter to ------ asking them to do a transaction for my mortgage. It worked out quite well - but I had to use a dictionary.

The quotations illustrate that the actual use of literacy in consumer affairs was of a very simple order. Most of the students continued to shop by brand name or bottle shape, and most continued to use cash or left it to their spouse to sign the cheques.

Of equal importance are the activities not mentioned by the students; for example, no student mentioned reading hire-purchase agreements, which seems to confirm the conclusion that the actual use of literacy skills in consumer activities was generally very limited.
6. The critical appraisal of communications media

Since the main forms of communications media consist of newspapers, radio and television, students were asked about their use of, and their views on the reliability of, each type of medium.

In fact, the vast majority of students did not accomplish the level of reading skill described as 'reading comprehension' and a typical response was:

I listen to the radio more because when I read it off the papers I get mixed up.

Nevertheless, a minority of students were able to compare the various types of media and to make appraisals. One student compared some of the popular newspapers:

Interviewer: Has reading made you question things?
Student: Yes, because I find that I can get the full story from the paper and I find it reasonably corresponds with what I heard on the radio. I like to buy 'The Sun'; I used to buy the 'Express' because I find, funny enough, the financial side at the back interesting - not that I get involved in it! 'Mirror' sort of fails me; it is more advertising and more propaganda and that sort of thing than basic news.

Other students preferred newspaper accounts to the television versions of events; for example:

I do not watch TV that much. The papers put it more bare to you. The television leaves out a lot.

and:
Interviewer: Do you think that what the papers say is different to what is said on the TV?

Student: Oh yes; it is different news, entirely different! I mean there are two different opinions. Television used to be my world, I was like a cabbage. Now it's not. Anything I wanted to know was on the telly. News - I listen to the news but now I can read it in the paper.

Yes, I have noticed the TV account is not the same as in the newspaper. It was Curry (the ice skater) when he said he was going to give it up - on the telly! When you read it in the newspaper, he was thinking of going professional. The paper gave a fuller story.

On the other hand, other students preferred television accounts to those in newspapers and were extremely sceptical about the press:

I am always very sceptical about what I read. I read 'New Dawn' and the 'Express' - politics is like football; it depends on which side you are on! I read (an article) in a Sunday newspaper about a chap who said "This is me, this is Cathy Come Home" - that was a load of tripe, I knew him! That was years ago.

and:

I used to get it all from the TV. I would rather see it on the telly because I think you get a true picture - I do not trouble with the papers because they put in a lot of things which people do not say. The tape you are taking now says what I say, whereas the newspaper reporter makes his story and therefore he puts things in to suit his story.

One exceptional student compared a television play with the book she had read; she appreciated the written version as being more sophisticated.

Interviewer: Do you feel the book is true to life?

Student: Much truer to life than the actual TV series were......
Thus, among students there were as many different preferences for various media as one would expect to find in the adult population as a whole, but, so far as these students were concerned, literacy tuition had to some extent enabled them to exercise some critical view of the media.

7. Action taken to ameliorate physical deficiencies

The most common physical deficiency revealed was poor eyesight, and one of the results of coming for literacy tuition was the recognition of the need for spectacles. In a sense, the wearing of spectacles was, to the student, much the same as carrying around a pen. Being without spectacles was an excuse for not reading; thus, the action of wearing spectacles was a public declaration of a willingness to read and, in this sense, an achievement. The difficulty of persuading students to wear spectacles can be gauged from the fact that two of the three following quotations register a lack of success:

- He needs glasses but he won't use them.
- I tried to persuade him to have an eyetest, but whether he did I do not know.
- He has gone to the family doctor and optician for glasses.
8. Movement from paired tuition at home to group tuition

The impression was given that students did not, on the whole, use their skills other than within the period of tuition. Taken with the other evidence, this may have been due to a lack of confidence when in public and it seemed that, perhaps, the most important enactive achievement was to move from a solely student/tutor relationship to a group situation.

Quite often the paired system of tuition created conditions inimical to student independence:

What he really needs now is a class or group. But he resists the idea.

She would not join a group, I am pretty certain of that. Not even a group with one-to-one tuition - no, I'm sure she would not. (Why?) . . . embarrassment I suppose, really. She would not even see the organiser for lessons while I am away on holiday. She would not consider it at all. She really was very upset at the thought of somebody else teaching her.

However, some students did move into groups for tuition or attend group socials for paired students at home; for example:

She has gone with a friend to form a group in the local authority organised scheme.

and:

(A tutor) We had a shot in the dark, the tutors and the pupils came to a social - a film was shown followed by literally a party. A tremendous number of pupils (sic) did come, with and without their tutors. I have never seen such a successful party!
This statement was confirmed by students who attended:

Interviewer:

Did you go to the party for tutors and students?

Student:

Yes, great, really interesting!

It would be too optimistic to deduce that the move to group tuition was always successful. Very much depended on the way the group was organised, and on whether the level of the group tuition was appropriate for the student. One student left a group in which each student had a tutor, to join a group taken by one tutor. There were several reasons why the move was inappropriate and these are implied in the student's own account:

I started to go to the GCE class next door. Now the teaching there was very efficient but there was no room for a laugh and a joke if you made a mess of anything. But in here, where we are now (this is why I have come back!) it is a nice, friendly atmosphere. Everybody gets on!

Summary

Ten criteria of enactive achievement were identified as:

1. The use of reading skills as shown by:
   i) using the library services
   ii) reading newspapers
   iii) reading books
   iv) reading to any member of the family
   v) reading instructions at work

2. The use of writing skills as exemplified by:
   i) writing letters
   ii) completing forms including cheques and payment slips
iii) writing free composition notes  
iv) signing Christmas cards and addressing envelopes  
v) using writing skills at work  

3. Regular attendance for tuition  
4. Completion of homework assignments  
5. Public display of literacy 'tools' (pens, pencils etc.)  
6. General use of literacy skills in locating places from street signs or maps  
7. Use of communications relevant to consumer choice and payment systems  
8. Ability to evaluate the reliability of various communications media  
9. Action taken to ameliorate physical deficiencies such as wearing spectacles  
10. Movement from paired tuition at home to some form of group tuition

When the schemes started, the category 'enactive achievements', largely derived from tutors' views of the meaning of functional literacy, was third in the list of aims (see p. 161). After a period of two years, and the experience of the students' limited independent enactive achievement, tutor/organisers revalued their priorities and any specific enactive achievement became less important. As an LEA tutor/organiser said: "Tutors start by thinking they are going to teach straightforward English. As time goes by they switch to adult education", and a tutor/organiser in a voluntary scheme said: "We have got to give them an approach to solve their problems later. I talk to other tutors now and ask them what they are working towards and they seem to agree!"(a)

(a) Cf.pp.18 & 19
As one perceptive tutor expressed it: "And certainly, to my knowledge, they were not doing much work. But very much was gained in self-confidence. It would follow from that that they may have gained in self-confidence and social aspirations and they may start reading (and writing) quite soon. Because of this! Because they are a lot more confident."

In the next chapter, the socio-economic achievements, linked to the social aspirations mentioned above, will be considered.
1. Getting a better job in terms of more pay

At the start of this literacy research in 1975, many tutors thought that, through increased literacy skills, their students would enhance their employment opportunities. For example:

Most of them come with the hope that when they have done this, they will be promoted....

However, at the end of two years, most tutors realised that the increment in skills was generally not of the order to lead to 'better' employment and that, in any case, employment opportunities for individuals often depended on national, and international, levels of economic activity.

Students, on the other hand, seemed to have been consistently more realistic; the typical student is described in Jaques' song in 'As You Like It':

'Who doth ambition shun
   And loves to live i' th' sun,
Seeking the food he eats
   And pleased with what he gets

or, more prosaically, as a tutor said:

As far as he was concerned there was no such thing as promotion. He was very happy in his job and he had no intention of giving it up!

Another tutor thought that his student was earning quite a substantial income anyway:
He gets about £100 per week (1975 values) though I am not sure if that is his actual take home pay.

In fact, in contrast with the students who said that:

But wherever you go, you find that the reading (lack of) pulls you back whatever you do (at work).

and

When you are offered promotion in a job and you know you can do it but you can't write, so you turn down the job! No one can tell you it does not matter! You have just talked your way out of a good job!

Six students stated, quite categorically, that their 'problem' had made no difference to their employment. For example:

The reading problem has not stopped you getting work?

No, not at all. I like the job I have got; I just better myself each time I get a new job.

and:

I was never refused a job because of my writing (lack of)

and:

No, it has not stopped me getting a job.

or:

Has it stopped you doing something you would like to do?
No, I like to be outside (in my work).

or:

He tried to hold me down because I could not do the paper work and said I was not worth more money. So I moved out and got a better job.
Not stopped me from getting another job for the simple reason I have never tried.

As usual, there was the marked exception to the general rule:

She had to give up a job ... she was offered an area managership at £5000 a year (1975 values).

Nevertheless, quite a number of male students wanted to relearn and improve their literacy skills in order to retain their present job; for example:

They have been laying off blokes; if I am made redundant I can't go back down ten years. This is what I am afraid of; but they keep saying "Don't worry". I don't want to go down the ladder again. I am in charge of seven blokes.

and:

He wanted the skills for his job.

and:

He wants it for his business.

Similarly, a number of women felt that they required a better standard of literacy to retain their jobs; for example:

Also it is a business thing - she says in the business world, you have to be careful and if you cannot read you can so easily be done.

and:

She got what she wanted to run her business.
She needs to take telephone messages down for her husband's business.

However, a few students had aspirations:

I would like to get a better job.

and:

I want to set up my own business.

and:

I want to be a manager.

She wants a better job ... she is very aware that the job she has got is below her ... she would like to work in a shop.

He would like to be the manager of the catering section but he cannot because he cannot write very much down.

I would like to go into office work.

But in the sample, only two students stated that their increased literacy had directly helped them obtain higher pay. One had apparently been taken on as a 'disadvantaged' employee at a fairly low wage rate; on proving that he could be more effective, because he could now read package labels, he said that he persuaded his employer to give him a twenty-percent increase. And the other stated:
Now I have a better job because if I had not learned a bit of reading - got on better with my reading - then I would not be able to do the job I do. You see, I got on because of my reading classes....

The majority of students, however, had jobs that did not require more than the basic reading skills, which they already possessed. Therefore, getting more pay as a direct result of literacy tuition was extremely rare.

2. The capability of re-entering the employment market

Many women took a long-term view. Though they rarely went into employment on 'finishing' their course, they prepared for a return to work when their children would be attending full-time school; for example, a tutor/organiser noted that:

And they (the women students) also do it so that they can get a job when the child's gone to school.

and students:

When the children are all at full-time school I could perhaps go on to 'A' level and go in for typing; not just copy-typing but secretarial,

and:

We had a couple of deaths in the family then and it made you realise ... panic a bit ... you thought "Heaven forbid that anything should happen" (to her husband) - but ... it's an insurance - I thought "It's up to me!"

But of the women students, a fairly large proportion had to face the implications of a broken home and these students desperately needed every skill they could muster to support themselves and, in many cases, their families. Most tutors stated their student's
predicament fairly starkly:

The reason she joined was to do with home—she had got to face supporting herself.

3. Assumption of greater responsibility at work

Some students learned to write, or to read, enough key words or phrases to enable them to perform basic, and usually repetitive, tasks, such as entering petrol sales on customers' monthly account cards or completing basic time sheets for themselves and their 'mates', and these students felt that they had now been allowed to exercise considerable individual responsibility at work. But, for the majority of students, the assumption of greater responsibility at work meant no more than that they did not have to be helped as much as previously; for example:

Oh yes, definitely. You don't seem so pushed around and to have to rely on everybody else. That is what it amounts to.

So you have greater responsibility at work;

Yes, that's right, yes.

Nevertheless, no matter what the circumstances, any small step forward in individual responsibility meant much to the student, and these were examples of considerable achievement.
4. Getting a better job in terms of personal satisfaction and interest

As with many adults throughout the community, some students felt that they would like a more satisfying job, regardless of pay.

Two students actually managed to achieve this aim:

These classes have given me that much courage to get a new job.

More cash in your new job?

No, I shall be taking a reduction.

Why are you moving then?

Not so much security ... it's ... just a feeling that I will have a job that I think I can enjoy doing and that I can do quite well.

Comradeship?

Yes, plus the fact that it is a service. It's not a 9 to 5 run-of-the-mill. It's a challenge for life - every minute something different could happen.

and:

I am passing exams, lower exams but catching up (at work) ... I have been given the opportunity to go abroad.

Another student had been given help too late in her working life; her story is not just one of individual frustration but is also one of high social cost. In her own words:

'I don't want to be a cleaner all the time ... the happiest time of my life was when I was looking after people even though it was bedpans and washing for them ... I said to the Matron: "Can I go upstairs as a ward orderly?" And that was marvellous ... I took those old people to heart - they were mine - it was super. "Would you like to go to night school (for nursing qualifications)?" said the Matron. She was sweet. But I could not pluck up the courage to tell her that I could not write, so I could not go!

Then I worked in a Children's Home. It was a marvellous job but they wanted another Housemother. And it meant a lot of writing. Now I could not tell
them. In fact I had a nervous breakdown. If only I could have said "I'm sorry, I want the job but I can't face all the reports." I just went berserk. One Friday morning they asked me to sign a paper. I just screamed and that was it!

But for most students, a better job in terms of satisfaction was neither required nor attainable. Nevertheless, the students had their dreams; for example, one said, rather vaguely:

I hope to change my job - get on and improve

and yet another, because of his literacy tuition, began to think of converting his dream into reality - perhaps a first step to an actual achievement:

I was somewhat taken aback when he was talking the other day, somewhat tentatively, of setting up a business of his own. I am sure that would not have entered his head when he first came to me.

5. Better relationships in the place of work

In fact, the majority of students felt that their conditions of work had improved because their newly-found confidence had resulted in better relationships. There was no doubt of the sincerity of their accounts, their appreciation of their tutors' role in this achievement and their somewhat wondrous delight that this should have been a result of their 'literacy work'. Speaking generally about this aspect of their achievements, the following statements were typical:
At work . . . . it does wonders for your ego.
So it (literacy) has been used at work?
Oh yes.

It makes me feel better at work . . . . I felt that I
was under them and they was above me!

Changed a lot - at work - that helps me at work and all that.

Yes, well I can talk to more people at work.

It makes a lot of difference at work . . . . you don't
have to say you have forgotten your glasses any more!

Some students felt that it helped their relationships because they
were now willing to turn their hand to other tasks at work or could
do their work better; for example:

I got a great deal out of it. I do honestly. I feel
myself . . . . well, before it used to hold me back. I
used to think twice before I would do a job (at work)
. . . . I have more confidence in myself.

and:

I find it easier at work . . . I actually took over the
machine last week . . . I can get by on my own now!

and:

I have got more confidence in writing reports (at
my work).

The employers were generally supportive and helpful. One student
recorded, with appreciation, that her 'boss' had encouraged her
to start:
The boss said "You just go to learn to spell and you would get enjoyment out of it."

But sometimes the employer's enthusiasm was misplaced, and quite a few students who came because of their employer, lacked the personal interest to take advantage of their opportunities and, if anything, were probably worse off as a result. Such students merely repeated their failure at school. One such student was described by a tutor, somewhat acrimoniously:

The firm had pressurised him to attend to improve his spelling; he was under pressure. He might as well have been out. (The student, in fact, left.)

Furthermore, although many employers were supportive, their foremen, often the student's immediate 'boss', were sometimes less than helpful:

He is working with a man who knows that he cannot read and keeps rubbing it in: which has made him more tense...

It is interesting to note, therefore that, in general, when employers initiated the process, students gained very little.

6. Participation in civic duties

Some students began to involve themselves in various civic duties; one student, encouraged by his tutor, accepted his call for jury service.

a) Jury Service

He was called for Jury Service and he talked quite sensibly about it.

On the other hand, another student, whose tutor was less adventurous, was excused. In the words of the tutor:
We had a long discussion about what he was going to do about this Jury Service. In the end I wrote them a letter ... (so he did not do it)

b) Parent/teacher liaison

Other students found that their role in the valuable process of parent-teacher liaison had improved. A typical case of this feature of achievement was noted by a tutor who was also a teacher at the school attended by the student's child:

She is much more able to visit her Junior School as a parent.

c) Your club leadership

Some students began to make a contribution in youth clubs. One student, in fact, thought that the confidence he acquired was best shown by his activity in this field and his main achievement was given as:

I go along to help with the lad's (his son's) club now.

d) Committee work

However, where the skills, per se, were required, students avoided their civic duties; as one student said:

They asked me to go on a Committee but I could not do it.

e) Voluntary service participation

This was best illustrated by the case of a lady who could read but still disliked writing, and who joined in activities where writing was rarely required. After two years' tuition, she had gained in confidence to the extent that her tutor could report:
She has joined the home nursing group ... she has got involved in the local community school - she is very busy. It really is - a success story.

There was one student (a rare case of broken schooling) whose confidence and ability in the skills improved sufficiently for her to become a literacy tutor in a one-to-one group supervised by a tutor/organiser.

**Summary**

The criteria of achievement that emerged from a consideration of socio-economic activities were:

1. getting a better job in terms of more pay;
2. increasing the capability of re-entering the employment market;
3. the assumption of greater responsibility at work;
4. getting a better job in terms of personal satisfaction and interest;
5. developing better relationships at the place of work;
6. participation in civic duties such as:
   a) accepting Jury Service
   b) improving parent-teacher liaison at children's school
   c) accepting youth club leadership
   d) accepting committee membership duties
   e) participating in voluntary services

The great majority of students experienced better relationships at the place of work and many of these assumed greater responsibility at work, usually resulting from their increased confidence to carry out the simpler routine writing or reading tasks.
Quite a few students began to participate, or extended the depth of their participation, in civic duties, particularly those duties concerned with parent/teacher liaison.

A very few students obtained better jobs in terms of personal satisfaction although it was extremely rare to find a student who, because of literacy tuition, had obtained a better job in terms of more pay.

The capability of a few students to re-enter the employment market was only slightly improved by the system of one or two lessons a week in literacy skills. Yet, for some students, there was a desperate urgency in their need to equip themselves to earn an independent livelihood and it was unfortunate that such students were not re-directed into something like a Training Opportunities Scheme or College of Further Education where there would have been a reasonable period of tuition every day. Thus, this criterion of achievement, which was obviously so crucial for the students concerned, was not allocated the importance it deserved because the very system of organisation of the literacy campaign militated against success.

Indeed, the success in socio-economic achievements was largely due to the fact that few students demanded economic success and that the majority required social success. This theme is continued in the next chapter, which deals with affective social achievements, that is, improvements in the students' ability to harmonise the maturation of personal psychology within various aspects of social relationships.
1. Improved relationships within the family

The most important of the affective social achievements centred on the students' relationships with their families. There are two reasons for emphasising this point.

First, whatever the source of information about a literacy scheme, whether it was from broadcasting, the newspaper or from friends, the student's final decision to enrol was, in the majority of cases, due to the encouragement of one or more members of his immediate family. Five typical examples illustrate this point:

I think she really persuaded him to do something about it.

and:

She (wife) got me here.

and:

His wife used to drag him along.

and:

He persuaded his sister to come to the class.

and:

His brother had been encouraging him for some time.
Another student suggested that his desire was to help his son to read but clearly he only enrolled because of his wife; he said:

My little lad, yes. My wife kept on about it and I kept thinking of it more and more! ... she is pleased because I come here.

Secondly, students and tutors all recognised the importance of student family relationships and the ameliorative effect that the students' efforts were usually having in these relationships. The evidence of two typical students was very decisive in this respect:

Easier with your family?
Definitely!

and:

Is it helping you in your family?
Oh yes!

as were the comments of three tutors:

She does feel that she is the one in the family that can't (read) because her two brothers and sister can.

and:

I think better relationships with the family; I would think so from the way he talks.

and:

We decided that he could now, quite cheerfully, tell his family that he was having lessons with me. It is a curious world, to me, of human relationships!
But these relationships were shifting, changing and complex; though most students claimed an improvement, disappointments and worsening conditions also emerged, sometimes as a direct result of the student’s involvement in remedial literacy tuition. One male student’s relationship with his son had the quality of a shooting star; his tutor said:

And then they took the son into their confidence ... the son just thought that his father was lazy ... the son started making him do his homework and he started making leaps forward. Then the son got bored ... and now, his son tells his Dad that he (the Dad) is stupid!

The evidence of these relationships can be categorised into three main groups:

i) the student-husband’s relationship with his wife;
ii) the student-wife’s relationship with her husband;
iii) the students’ relationships with their parents.

1) the student-husband’s relationship with his wife

Usually, the wife’s attitude was one of pleasure that her husband had enrolled, and most student-husbands recognised this as an improvement in relationships. For example:

She (wife) is pleased.

and:

Before I used to have to ask the wife what it was. She notices the difference now ... my Mrs. realises it. I know she knows it.
What does your girl-friend think of all this?
... I even hid it from her. But she knows now and I get the support I should do.

His wife's attitude is of general encouragement. I would not think she has put any pressure on him but she is all for him trying to get better.

Many husbands received help from their wives; one tutor said:

His wife seemed to be helping him.

and a student noted that:

She prepared a lot of words for me to go through.

Equally often, the wife had not the temperament nor the ability to help her husband and it seemed that husband/wife relations improved when a tutor entered the scene.

She is a secretary; she wants to help him but she has not the technical knowledge (to teach literacy skills).

or:

She tried to help him but she used to lose patience with him which was understandable, but when he came to me, his wife was more patient with him.

On occasions, students wished to be independent of their wives' help; the following student looked forward to this when he said:
I wanted to be more independent - my wife has been writing for me so far....

Some students, by enrolling, did not improve their relations with their wives; they may not have become worse, but they had the problem of meeting their wives' expectations:

He wants to live up to his wife's expectations.

and sometimes they had to live in circumstances where a wife feared her husband's disability becoming known. One such couple, neighbourly and socially aware, were placed in such a dilemma when the student enrolled in a scheme; both were worried about being 'found out' and the wife obviously felt very strongly about it. Indeed, the husband's evidence was so vehemently given that, perhaps, it would have been better to have left well alone:

She dreads it; very, very, very worried, as much as I am ... (at his illiteracy being known in the neighbourhood)

The picture of the supportive wife, benignly giving her husband encouragement, was far from being universally true. It could be argued that if marriage is seen as a joint and equal partnership, then both partners should have been interviewed in the initial stages, and any advice should have been based on broader principles than just the advisability of the student becoming literate.

11) the student-wife's relationship with her husband

The arguments in section (i) could also apply in some of the following cases; one tutor described a classic case of the well-intentioned husband:
Is her husband supportive?

Yes, he is. At times in the past he has been overpushing. He has suggested that she go along to night school and on one occasion he enrolled her for a course. He knew the teacher. He enrolled her in a course for typing which was a very strange thing to do because she went along and went to pieces in the lesson, of course. I think he thought it would help her writing, if she could type, but of course she does not need that! She reads excellently - no problem in reading. You see she was 'working class' and is, now, I suppose 'middle class' ... I am keeping in touch with her but she feels she cannot cope with any work at the moment because of her domestic problems.

Many of the women students sought release from an overdependence on their husbands' skills and, on the whole, the women's evidence was presented forcibly. For example:

I would say: "Oh, I wrote a letter to your Mother" and he would sort of go over it and correct it. It used to make me cry and I thought I should have got it right in the first place.

and:

She feels now that she can write letters to friends without having her husband do it for her! Her husband was doing quite well (economically and socially) and she was very nervous.

But most students felt that their husbands provided tolerant encouragement; for example:

He is very helpful ... when I arrive he clears out of the way and that sort of thing.

and:

He (the husband) was very happy; oh yes! He says: "Well, you do it then. It is practice for you."

and:
She (Mother) thinks I have improved a bit and my boyfriend, when he hears me read, he says: "You are getting on better than you used to, because you don't hesitate so much now."

However, the general impression was that few husbands actually pushed their wives into having tuition; many encouraged, but few actually exercised the pressures that wives exerted on their husbands. The most usual attitude was:

Husband approves?
Yes, yes; provided I am happy doing it. He says: "If it starts to worry you, pack it up!"

iii) the students' relationships with their parents

Many of the unmarried students said that their parents, especially their mothers, were pleased that they had enrolled. Mothers had usually had the task of dealing with their children's schools and, after the frustration of those experiences, many of them felt relieved that their children were taking advantage of a second chance. Consequently, relationships between student and mother usually improved; for example:

Apparently his mother asked all through his school life if he could have special teaching and was told "No!"

and:

His mother just seemed to think that he ought to read better - a sort of moral ideal! The effort he put into reading was incredible; he used to go red in the face with crying, but it was really his mother who brought him.
or, more usually:

Does it comfort your mother?
Yes, because she knows that I am not an idiot. She knows that I can get on all right on my own. She was a bit bothered before!

and:

Family's views?
My Mum wants me to come. She feels I am improving and I feel I am improving.

Fathers tended to follow the mothers' lead; for example:

We are better now, we (student and his sister) never used to get on. Mum and Dad are pleased.

There was one case where the father, in particular, was irritated by his son's inadequacies; here the relationship certainly improved:

I get on with my Dad better than I used to do!

2. Reading to their children

A surprising number of students said that their main purpose in enrolling was to learn to read to their own children. On closer investigation, this statement had two distinct meanings:

i) to improve their relationship with their children through the act of reading to them, and

ii) to improve their relationship with their wife by sharing or being able to share, if required, the duty of reading to their children.
i) reading to their own children, per se:

Even this fairly simple criterion of achievement contained several layers of perception. Most students simply enjoyed reading to their children:

Yes, I read to the kids.

I like reading to the girl.

My little girl now likes me reading books to her. She is three and a half years old and she sits down and listens to me now.

Other students felt that reading at home was a necessary adjunct to their children's schoolwork:

It started because her daughter was having problems with phonics ...

Yet other students found that reading to their children was a shared experience, in that their children also read to them:

They read to me actually - of course, I can read the one (book) that he is doing and I am better at it.

And many students, probably the majority, found that their improved relations with their children were part of their more general confidence in their ability to deal with life. Such a feeling of more general confidence is implied in the following two quotations:

Also I find that I am much more confident now with ---- (her son).

Oh yes, a lot easier to get on with the kids.
ii) reading to their children as part of their relationship with their spouse

In general, most students felt that:

I thought I ought to help the children with one thing or another!

but mothers expressed a feeling of maternal inadequacy because of their lack of literacy and over-dependence on the father, in statements such as:

(My daughter) says: "You help me Mummy," even when my husband is helping her.

which their tutors corroborated in the following terms:

Have any of the women said that it is better at home because they can help their children?

Oh yes. Certainly!

and:

She is much more able to help her children. She does not need to say: "Well, go and ask your father!" It is good in that respect because she is very attached to her children and she wants to do everything she can. And that was really her motive for starting, anyway.

Similarly, the fathers resented too explicit a dependence on the mother and their statements nearly match those of the mothers; for example:

Easier at home?

Well it is really, for the children. I read 'Ladybird' books to my son. Before I used to say to them: "Go and give it to your Mum!"

Such a statement was confirmed, once more, by tutors who remarked:
His children were at the age when they were bringing home homework. His son was having spelling problems at school and it was always felt that his mother would help him. He was fed up not being to do his bit.

and:

I think his pride is hurt that the child goes to the mother and not him.

3. Sharing ideas with others through literacy

A few students were able to use their literacy skills to share ideas with others, as distinct from reading the ideas of the authors. One student used the BBC TV programme 'On the Move' as a vehicle to share ideas with her son:

We used to watch 'On the move' (BBC TV programme) because it helped the children so well; we shared it.

But, more frequently, students learned to share their problem of illiteracy and, in so doing, enlarged their own personality. One such experience, typical of the accounts of many students, is that of a student who met a friend who showed embarrassment at being asked to write down a list for a bazaar; in the student's own words:

"Yes," she said, "Because I cannot spell." So I said "That makes two of us, Jill." ... I was not bothered because I can tell them.

Both humility and confidence emerge from this evidence with, above all, a precious moment of human contact and understanding. To have been able to respond thus was, surely, an achievement.
4. Willingness to put forward own point of view

One of the achievements noted by both students and tutors was the students' increased ability to put forward their own ideas, rationally and in public. Many students remarked on their own nervousness, shyness and reticence, and commented that their relationship with tutors and other students had helped them to converse more readily.

Both my husband and my mother have noticed that I am not so shy. I am better if I have to go out and meet strangers, I can talk more!

and:

I can talk to people better as well.

Other students brought their own ideas to the notice of their group and to their tutor/organiser:

He is trying to hatch ideas now on how we can make some money and make ourselves independent (the Centre faced the problem of increases in fees). He had a suggestion for a jumble sale and a suggestion for a bring and buy sale. I have left him to work at some others.

One student who thought, quite correctly, that the solution to a problem posed for group consideration was to enlist some help, stood up and said so, much to her own surprise and delight:

I had the nerve to stand up and say: "Could I have four strong men?"

whilst another student recorded her progress in this respect as:

I help to run a group (children's playgroup) and I find I am asked to go to a meeting. Instead of just sitting there agreeing with everybody, if I think something is wrong now, I will put my point of view.
Many other students perceived this as an achievement; in fact, they argued that their discussion with the research interviewer was, in itself, clear proof of a willingness to put forward their own point of view. This was confirmed by the number of students, usually those in the sheltered one-to-one home tuition nexus, who declined to be interviewed.

5. Improvement in social relationships with fellow students

Since the development of the students' relationships within the group was observed by both tutors and interviewer, the evidence of improvement in this respect may be regarded as probable confirmation of the students' own perceptions of their developing relationships at home and elsewhere.

There was no doubt that the students' ability to handle social relationships improved in the groups attending the adult centres. Though group occasions were infrequent in the voluntary schemes, when students did meet together the tutors noticed the success of those gatherings. However, it was only at adult centres where group behaviour could be continuously observed and estimated of improvement attempted; consequently, the following evidence refers to students in such groups. Of ten typical cases, tutors said:

- He is much more alive now than when I first came.

or:

- He has become far less uncouth.

or:
He is much more outgoing.

and:

He certainly does now join in with the group (at the Centre).

and:

We have given them sociability - definitely. We have brought them out of a lonely backwoods existence where they had no social contacts.

and:

I think he is coping with life better than he was - he panics - but he does not lose his temper in the same way - he is very edgy, childish in some ways. He is really here for group therapy!

and, as a summary:

His main achievement is a total change in human relationships - I think he handled it (his affair with another student) very well - he has matured.

Summary

The criteria of achievement which resulted from the evidence about affective social achievements were:

1. better relationships with all members of the family;
2. better relationships through reading to children
3. better relationships through sharing ideas about literacy;
4. better relationships through being willing to put forward one's own point of view;
5. better relationships within tuition groups.
Although tutors recognised the importance of these relationships as the schemes matured, students seemed to know intuitively that this was their principal gain.

I get on with people much better - it is gradually getting better. Well, I don't have so many arguments with people like I used to do.

and as sad, but moving, tribute to the Adult Centre:

I have two years' probation - they put me on tranquillizers - these classes helped me keep going.

Thus the role of tutors was far from being that of a skilled purveyor of technical knowledge: whether they liked it or not, whether they were qualified or not, they found themselves in the roles of counsellor, friend and listener.

Sometimes the very fact of joining an empathetic group caused the student to question other aspects of his way of life; for example, one experienced tutor/organiser remarked:

I don't think he is terribly happy in his digs; but there again, that might be something we have done to him - I don't know!

But, as has been stated in previous chapters, students seemed to represent the variety to be found in the adult population as a whole, and, so far as social relationships were concerned, the average student was not very different from the average fully literate adult.
Nevertheless, many students faced problems, the solutions of which were far beyond the training or experience of the voluntary literacy tutor. A number of students clearly needed the comfort of talking to someone, and saw the literacy symbol as a means of achieving this. For example, some students faced, or had just experienced, a breakdown in their marriage:

The trouble with my student was that his marriage broke up. He was becoming interested in his children's work - so really, why he wanted to learn was for his children and his wife and then this was all gone. So the interest had gone, though he got along quite well.

or:

He was afraid of being an embarrassment to his children who were teenagers. He has just got divorced.

or:

He is having domestic trouble; he slept out in the car, left home and then returned home.

An extreme example of such a case was given by one tutor:

I could not accept the way he was treating his girl friends and thought that someone ought to put it very strongly to him - the idea - someone who he respected which I thought he did me - that this girl with whom he was going out was quite obviously in love with him. I turned myself into a counsellor ... he decided to sign himself off and said that he had made a lot of progress in English. I said "Well I think it depends on what your standards of progress were. After all," I said to him, looking him straight in the eye, "you were not just coming for English were you?" He coloured and did not look back at me. So maybe I was too direct in the end but I did feel that he was the sort of person who would
go on sheltering behind me and other friends. I don't know what I should have done. I think I did get very involved with him. I wanted him to go to the counselling sessions that they had in town ... I see him in town and he does not recognise me ... I think he was confused himself; he was disturbed.

Thus, the problems were more complex than any remedial literacy tutor could reasonably be expected to handle, and many failures to achieve a modicum of affective social balance were the fault of neither tutor nor student, but rather the result of erroneous expectations on the part of some of the innovators of literacy schemes who underestimated the need of a counselling service to sift students in their initial contacts. An indication of general problems was given by Marilyn Morgan when she wrote:

The third group of students (about 25%) comprises students who were ascertained E.S.N. at school, those with specific learning difficulties or those with a physical handicap (partially-sighted, partially-hearing, etc.)

This proportion was probably also correct for the sample discussed in this investigation, and must always be remembered in any consideration of the problem of literacy (see pp. 8-10)

However, as Bacon wrote: "They are poor discoverers that think there is no land when they see nothing but sea." The majority of students were normal people who, in groups, sharing experience with tutors and fellow students, found a new confidence which enriched their social relationships, and on this assumption the emergent criteria will be evaluated in the concluding chapter.
In Chapter V, p. 101, three objectives of this study were postulated; this chapter reviews and summarises the attainment of these objectives within the framework of an ethological approach to the subject matter.

a) Methodological considerations

It has been shown that student members of the literacy schemes represented a variety of levels of competence in literacy skills and consequently the definition of an illiterate adult is an adult who thinks he has a reading or writing problem. The terms of this definition imply that the students wish, first, to improve their technical literacy skills and, secondly, to ameliorate their self-image of inadequacy. The paradox is that although this dichotomy of aims may be stated analytically, in the process of achievement the improvement in skills was often found to be subservient to, and dependent upon, the enhancement of self-image. Consequently the development of individual literacy skills, like other skills, can take place satisfactorily only within the context of a process of adult education.

This process, usually, is one in which there is an interaction between three constituents: the student, the other students and the tutor. The student brings to the group his own assumptions and conceptions of himself as an unique person. Through his relationships with other students he sees himself mirrored and
reflected and, in that respect, as in normal daily 'social' interaction, his reactions will be largely adventitious. However, the student usually expresses a desire to develop in some specific respect, in a skill such as literacy or in an individual emotional or spiritual context as, for example, when a student joins a marriage counselling group. In this process, from the student's point of view, the tutor has a double role. As a fellow adult, the tutor partly represents another student, who may be a source of competition or be supportive. Nonetheless, the tutor possesses privileges beyond those afforded to the other students and these are based on the student's acknowledgement of the tutor's expertise and on the willingness of the student to allow the tutor to intrude into certain aspects of the student's private psyche. Because the tutor has been granted these prerogatives, the tutor himself, or through his influence on the student group, may moderate the largely accidental influences of the students upon each other, in order to facilitate each individual student's development towards maturity. Thus, whatever the skills being taught, the student's self-image and view of his inadequacy are likely to change, and the adult illiterate may conceivably gain little in a skill achievement but, through the modulation of self-image, learn to deal with his disadvantage.

However, the argument has been advanced that adult education need not take place under the guidance of tutors. A student may learn from daily social contacts or through television and radio or from books. Learning through daily contacts is, as described above, adventitious, and learning through television, radio or
books is limited to a one-way form of communication in which the student may neither redirect nor contribute to the process of learning. A student with a literacy problem is handicapped to a greater or lesser extent in profiting from these wider opportunities and, on the evidence, needs direct tuition and sympathetic guidance to reduce the handicap.

Though it is undeniable that all forms of communications media may contribute to adult education, we have argued (a) that the written word as a medium is, next to the spoken word, currently the most economical and universal method of conveying instructions or ideas. Particularly because of the use of the written word as a means of transmitting knowledge in its widest sense, it is a contradiction in terms to describe an illiterate person as educated, and insofar as education is a desideratum, literacy cannot be regarded as anything other than a basic, essential, universally-desirable skill. Furthermore, it is a skill related to other manifestations of social activity.

Accordingly, there have been sundry international and national initiatives to achieve universal literacy. One of the most recent of these initiatives has been the 'Adult Literacy Campaign' (b) inaugurated in 1975 in the United Kingdom. The present study has been of the aims of this campaign, the stated criteria of success and the actual achievements of students and tutors in a typical area in the United Kingdom, namely Cambridgeshire, London and other large

(a) Chapter II, especially p. 34
(b) See p. 56
cities have special, atypical problems, principally those stemming from inner-city social deprivation and population migrations.

Information from other concurrent research projects, primarily from the research conducted into 'The roles of broadcasting in mass literacy remedial adult education' by the National Institute of Adult Education, confirmed, however, that the forms and historical development of the services provided by Cambridgeshire and the experiences of tutors and students in the County were in the most important respects similar to those elsewhere, particularly in England and Wales.

Several methodological approaches were considered, but were rejected as leading to over-simplifications of the nature of the students' perceptions of their problem of illiteracy. Given a spectrum of individual students' abilities, from inability to structure a sentence to sensing inadequacy because of relatively minor spelling mistakes, it became necessary to construct a field of discourse whose boundary encompassed a sense of individual inadequacy. Inadequacy in what? The student expressed it in terms of literacy, but the exciting possibility was that an approach existed which would take account not only of feelings of inadequacy in literacy skills, but of all cases where lack of a skill is the stated reason for such a feeling. Hence the choice of an appropriate methodology for literacy could also be utilised to illuminate perceptual patterns of other disadvantaged groups seeking adult education.

Ethology has, as the boundary of the universe of discourse, the notion of a struggle for genetic survival through behavioral adaptation to the natural and social environment of a specific notion provides the disciplinary framework within which the
of the observation of animate behaviour, of the derivation of hypotheses, of the procedures of reobservation and of interpretation are fused. (a) By adopting the ethologists' approach and by re-defining survival as meaning that level of self-image which enables a man to cope to his satisfaction with the majority of his practical, emotional and spiritual problems, it becomes clear why there is never any given level of skill which will satisfy all individuals at any particular time. The man with an 'O' level standard of English language who joins a literacy class will be acting rationally if, in his view, such a standard is not adequate for his survival self-image. Similarly, a ukase may not be issued declaring that all who are able to read, for example, page 29 of 'War and Peace' will be deemed literate; there will be some for whom that 'objective' standard of literacy is insufficient for survival, as defined in this context.

To adopt the ethological approach is not to allege that man's senses and sensitivities are the same as those of other animals; man is capable of an image of 'God'.(59) Whatever that image is, it must to some degree affect his self-image, for the very ability to comprehend an idea of 'God' displays an ability to perceive past and future, deception and truth, all constituent factors in any individual's self-image. Thus, the ethological approach utilised in this text is a sophisticated derivative of that usually accepted by the naturalist.

Consequently, the student who came forward could be considered as having reached a decision to rectify a perceived disadvantage; primarily to alter the perception of disadvantage rather than the

(a) See Chapter V, pp. 108-115
identified limitation in skill, and his aims could be interpreted within the framework of the concept of survival. Following the scientific principles of the ethological approach, we showed how tutors' aims and students' aims shifted over a period of time and how each group's aims interacted.

In Part I of the study two themes clearly emerged: namely, that many tutors were concerned primarily with the technicalities of teaching the skills of literacy and their training usually emphasised this; and that the aims of the campaign were often a series of short-term pragmatic objectives, even though certain long-term aims were specified or implied in the BBC Literacy Handbook. (a) Nevertheless, although the scheme was initiated in a state of confusion so far as aims were concerned, the present study is a record of how these aims were modified and of how, in the fact of students' reactions, criteria associated with the purposes of adult education came to the fore. In particular, the advantages of group tuition emerged strongly, as mirrors by which individual students were able to reassess their self-image, and the limitations of one-to-one tuition in achieving the objectives of adult education became clearer.

Consequently, through time, not only did the criteria for success change, but the priorities of individual criteria altered. Thus, through a process of classification and of reclassification of aims, a five-group schema of hypothetical criteria was produced. These five groupings, as given on p.161 were, in order of importance:

(a) See p.133 and pp.138-139
Nevertheless, from the evidence in Chapters XI to XV of their perceptions, given by tutors and students during two interviews well separated in time, and from samples of the students' written work, a re-ordered, amplified and scientifically more definitive, list of criteria of achievement or success was devised: the emergent criteria.

b) The emergent criteria

Perhaps the most important conclusion that can be asserted is that students did not primarily judge their success in terms of utilitarian objectives; they registered a feeling of increased confidence, often described as a feeling of being at ease within themselves. Because of this result, the order of importance of the five major groupings of criteria changed according to the frequency of 'confidence' factors within each grouping. The revised order of these groupings is, therefore:

i) Affective personal achievements

ii) Affective social achievements

iii) Socio-economic achievements

iv) Cognitive achievements

v) Enactive achievements
Though the evidence strongly supports the priority of affective achievements, there is far less certainty about the relative positions of each of the last three groupings because:

a) the priority of each achievement depends largely on the individual student, and this is particularly true of the relative importance of the last three groupings to any specified student;

b) the development of cognitive achievements is, as stated in the evidence given by students, more a matter of four or five years of tuition than of one or two years. It is therefore possible that if the period of this study had been extended, cognitive achievements might have become more important once the bed-rock foundation of student self-confidence was more firmly established.

However, cognitive achievements seemed to be more frequent and more important to students who were already in the upper bands of literacy ability. These students seemed to achieve confidence through cognitive achievement and the realisation of their expectation of cognitive progress proceeded pari passu with other achievements. Such cases were few in our sample population; the 'normal' student seemed to place cognitive achievement low in his scale of self-identified, experienced achievement.

On the assumption that improvements in self-image hinge upon personal relationships, as has been argued in the opening pages of this chapter, then the complete list of the constituent elements
of the five groupings of emergent criteria of success, in order of importance, is as follows:

1. Affective personal achievements (p.245)

   a) a feeling of ease within oneself
   b) an improvement in self-reliance
   c) an improvement in assurance
   d) a diminution of anxiety
   e) a willingness to reconsider personal attitudes
   f) an ability to assess evidence
   g) an improvement in physical bearing
   h) a willingness to evangelise
   i) an increase in confidence associated with literacy skills:
      (i) a diminution of anxiety with regard to literacy;
      (ii) an increase in concentration during tuition;
      (iii) an expression of an expectation to succeed in the literacy skills;
      (iv) an expression of enjoyment in reading and writing.

2. Affective social achievements (p.333)

   a) better relationships through being willing to put forward one's own point of view
   b) better relationships within tuition groups
   c) better relationships through sharing ideas about literacy
   d) better relationships with all members of the family
   e) better relationships through reading to children
3. Socio-economic achievements

a) developing better relationships at the place of work
b) participation in civic duties such as:
   (i) participating in voluntary services
   (ii) accepting youth club leadership
   (iii) accepting committee membership duties
   (iv) improving parent-teacher liaison at children's school
   (v) accepting jury service
c) the assumption of greater responsibility at work
d) getting a better job in terms of personal satisfaction and interest
e) increasing the capability of re-entering the employment market
f) getting a job in terms of more pay

4. Cognitive achievements

a) Reading achievements displaying an increase in:
   (i) word recognition skills
   (ii) sentence recognition skills
   (iii) comprehension skills
   (iv) the ability to read informational texts
   (v) the ability to read texts beyond the purely informational levels
   (vi) the ability to read newspapers
5. **Enactive achievements**

(a) regular attendance for tuition

(b) a movement from paired tuition at home to some form of group tuition

(c) use of reading skills, as shown by:

(i) reading to any member of the family

(ii) reading instructions at work

(iii) reading newspapers

(iv) reading books

(v) using the library service

(vi) finding directions from street signs or maps

(vii) using reading to exercise consumer choice

(d) use of writing skills, as exemplified by:

(i) completing forms, including cheques or payment slips

(ii) signing Christmas cards and addressing envelopes

(iii) writing free composition notes

(iv) using writing skills at work

(v) writing letters
e) the public display of literacy 'tools': pens, pencils, etc.
f) action to ameliorate physical deficiencies, such as acquiring spectacles
g) general use of literacy skills in locating places from street signs or maps
h) the use of communications relevant to consumer choice and payment systems
i) an ability to evaluate the reliability of various communications media
j) completion of homework assignments

This list is based upon the philosophical criteria for judging achievement or success; in practice all the criteria are interrelated. It is not in any way a prescription for ordering teaching method nor is it a check list to be used to compare the progress of one student with another. All that is being stated is that any particular student is likely, from the evidence of our sample, to achieve some of these criteria of success.

The actual number of criteria of success that any student will wish to achieve will depend on his view of what level of self-image enables him to cope, to his satisfaction, with the majority of his practical, emotional and spiritual problems. It is thereby unlikely that any single criterion of success, couched in terms of any particular skill, will be an adequate measure of success for any student. What seems more probable is that a student will seek to achieve a sheaf(a) of criteria of success based entirely on individualistic preferences. The evidence strongly suggests that any grouping of

(a) Mathematicians may care to read the source of this analogy as set out in the opening paragraphs of 'Continuously variable sets: algebraic geometry equals geometric logic', Bristol Logic Colloquium 1973, published by North Holland Press 1975.
criteria chosen by any individual will contain at least one of
the most important of the criteria listed in the affective personal
or social achievement domains, and that these are synonymous with
the general aims of adult education.

Adult education is a healing process; but it cannot promise
cures. If this proposition is acceptable, then it is understandable
that the students in our sample and, over time, most of the tutors,
came to see that the literacy campaign was not a matter of skill-
training but of adult education with special reference to literacy.
It is therefore correct that a tutor should see success in
ameliorative terms, principally in the improvement of self-image,
and it is a pity that many tutors denigrated their achievements
because of the lack of progress in the literacy skills.

Though all the criteria are inter-related, the centre of the
activity is in the domain of adult education. Our concern has been
the problem of the illiterate adult, and the evidence gathered was
germane to that problem, but we may venture the hypothesis that
any adult minority sub-group in which individuals think they have
a particular problem in any specific skill will be best served within
the domain of adult education. Because future initiatives of this
kind may well take place, it is worthwhile examining in some detail
the practical implications stemming from the philosophical stance
described above.

c) Practical implications

Though it is convenient to analyse the practical implications of
the above theoretical argument in terms of the roles of organisers,
tutors and students, the overall success of a literacy scheme depends
fundamentally on the strength of the inter-relationships between
these groups. The affirmation of this study is that a basic factor leading to correct relationships is an understanding by each group of the goals of a literacy scheme and an acknowledgement of the nature of the criteria of success.

Organisers

The principal problem facing organisers was whether to provide tutor/student facilities in a private home, to provide tutor/student facilities in a room under the supervision of a qualified and experienced tutor/organiser or whether to offer a class facility with a tutor and, say, five students.

It has been argued already that a student is more likely to be successful if he is a member of a group and that a student/tutor pairing in someone's home is psychologically restrictive and ineffective, except in special circumstances as, for example, the case of a student who is severely lacking in confidence because of some physical defect.

Furthermore, the use of unqualified volunteers as tutors in an exercise which is firmly dependent on developing human relationships implies that such tutors require continuing support and guidance, which can be given only if a tutor/organiser is present and able to observe the developing social nuances. Such continuous availability is essential; sometimes the tutor/organiser will wish to switch a tutor from one student to another to avoid the growth of over-dependence or he will decide to leave a tutor with the same student for a longer period than is usual to build up confidence; sometimes he will recommend that the tutor uses a particular visual aid and he may even advise the tutor to try a different approach to solve a student's spelling problem.
We have suggested that at all times it is necessary for students to meet each other and to share problems if they are to succeed in engaging in the process of adult education. Similarly the tutors need regular opportunities to meet each other and, because of the presence of a professional tutor/organiser, they themselves may engage in the process of informal adult education on such occasions as the coffee break period.

If the organisation is based on the principles outlined above, then the training schemes offered to volunteer tutors may be, first, extended beyond the limitations of an 8-10 hour preparatory course and, secondly, may be based on a more sensible estimate of what a normal volunteer tutor can learn without practical experience.

In the first case, the preparatory training scheme need not be based so much on the technicalities of literacy teaching; there will always be a professional tutor/organiser to help tutors as specific problems arise. Thus more attention may be given to the principles of adult education, with at least 50% of the discussions centred on such principles.

Secondly, since the training of tutors in this type of tuition organisation is continuous, it is unnecessary to pack so much information into preparatory training schemes; the development of a volunteer's expertise will take place in the group where practice and principle may be related.

Tutors

At the end of the period of fieldwork, in July 1977, a tutor was asked to report on the progress of a student. In summary, the tutor replied:
I am not really sure what sort of information you want... his spelling mistakes are almost as frequent, but much more logical than they used to be... he agreed that his reading is getting better although it is still quite a strain for him and he tires easily... his eye distorts 'then' into 'he' or 'here' into 'where' or perhaps 'her'. This sort of error throws out the sense of the sentence and then he thinks he has made a mistake with the longer words... I fear he will never be able to 'scan read' because his eye gives his brain the wrong pictures, the same is probably true of his spelling - he can't see the right shape in his mind's eye...

However, we will press on. -------- is very keen, he writes a diary and corresponds with lots of friends....

Clearly this is an assessment from a conscientious tutor about a keen student; but the evidence of the letter suggests an over-emphasis on skill achievements as the criteria of success and, largely because the relationship is between only tutor and student, an under-emphasis of progress towards the criteria of success within the domain of adult education.

Moreover, one senses the tutor's isolation from other tutors in that she is unsure about the appropriate subject matter of a report on a student's progress. Similarly, one senses the student's isolation, since clearly he is a sharing-type of person as he writes to friends; on the basis of this letter and of an interview with the student, it is probable that he would enjoy meeting other students.

However, this letter is not quoted as a butt for criticism. It is a typical illustration of the predicament of tutors and students working in isolation, and even of some tutors and students working in groups where the tutor/organiser lacks the imagination to envisage, or the knowledge of, the principles of the practice of adult education. It illustrates the need for tutors continually to receive guidance and support from each other and from organisers. It demonstrates how much the counselling role of tutors and the
criterion of confidence as a mark of success needs to be emphasised in training schemes. It also suggests that the fact that tutor and student are proven to be psychologically well-matched does not automatically result in a student's success; each party must know what the desired successes are.

Students

As more experience of interviewing was gained during the course of this study, it was realised how little the students required to be prompted. The interviewer became a mirror to which students directed their perceptions and saw reflected their own personality, their experiences and their hopes. So did tutors and organisers, who often said: "We don't think of you as a person - if you see what we mean!". This experience, as well as the evidence of students' perceptions, leads to the conclusion that students sense the need for counselling as the most important ingredient in adjusting their self-image and, had they been able to formulate their needs in terms of adult education theory, they would have done so. It is only by accepting this that we can account for the persistence of the majority of students who knew that they were making very little or very slow progress in the skills of literacy. This was confirmed by the number of students who, when told that success could be correctly described in terms of the growth of confidence or the feeling of ease within oneself, positively beamed with delight.

For these reasons it seems probable that if tutors had really understood the criteria of success their initial - and developing - relations with their students would have been easier, and perhaps some 'drop-outs' could have been avoided.
Most students, of their own volition or because of the public attention directed to illiteracy problems, expressed the view that their lack of skill in literacy was the cause of their perceived incompetence. In fact, most students needed to be reassured that their value as a human being was not to be measured in terms of literacy skills. This was the reason why so many students felt better when told the myth that two million adults were illiterate; if so many shared the disadvantage, what was wrong with them as one of so many?

Consequently, when they appealed for help, their appeal was couched in terms of, for example, a wish to read to their children; when they had solely one tutor who took such a statement at face value as a demand for a technical skill, they were disappointed, for: "I wish to read to my children" also meant: "I feel that my wife treats me as an idiot because my son has to ask her all the time ... I feel that I am being shouldered out of my rights as a father ... I am letting down my wife and son ... I am letting myself down!". Given those feelings, they required counselling and expertise from the tutor and support from fellow students, so that whatever they gained in the skills was put to maximum use because of the generalised benefits of their experience of adult education. Thus, the establishment of the emergent criteria of success and the dissemination of this information among all the participants of literacy schemes should improve the quality of the schemes.
d) Literacy and Society

The 'Adult Literacy Campaign' in the United Kingdom emerged from a Conference held in 1973 and organised by the British Association of Settlements entitled 'A Right to Read'. David Hargreaves, writing in 'On the Move - the BBC's contribution to the Adult Literacy Campaign in the United Kingdom between 1972 and 1976', records that: "Its (the BAS) advocacy was passionate, well-informed and skilful". Through the influence of this pressure group, 'society' was persuaded to allocate the resources, human and financial, to provide a service for a section of the adult population whose needs had hitherto been largely ignored. In mid-1977 there are two major problems: first, that the passion which inspired the innovation of the national campaign will evaporate, largely because of the relatively small number of people willing to come forward for assistance, and, secondly, that future schemes will continue to be based upon skill training rather than being set within the context of adult education.

The strength of the adult education service in the United Kingdom lies in the variety of provision and, provided this characteristic remains, there should at all times be a place for adult illiterates, whatever their number.

Finally, adult education is only one of the means of increasing universal literacy. As the late Simeon Potter wrote:

The problem of illiteracy is not solved by compulsory schooling alone, if, as in Britain, many men's reading is limited to the gutter press, or, as in America, many people assume a 'mucker pose' and shun as affectation anything that suggests conscious refinement or ennoblement of life. Literacy is not a state, but a process; it cannot be finally guaranteed in any society. It involves hard toil in teaching the young and it demands
the subsequent enlistment of every conceivable means of enlightening grown-ups - sound radio, television, cinema, theatre, press, museum, art gallery, public library, university extension, and adult education. It is useless to teach the alphabet and the three R's to young people and then turn them back into a society that remains stubbornly uncultured and unlettered. It is essential to fortify them continually against the insidious depravity of soul-destroying slogans; to train them to be wary of all absolutes and oversimplified either-or choices; to show them how to distinguish word from thing, and how to discriminate intelligently between facts and inferences and between inferences and value-judgements; to teach them to see how language really works in action; and to help them to recognise and respect life's fundamental loyalties.
Dear Tutor/Tutor Trainer/Organiser,

During the next two years I am conducting a personal, part-time survey, under the supervision of Professor H.A. Jones of Leicester University, into what constitutes 'achievement' for adult illiterates.

Before actually seeing more of the students themselves, I thought it useful to identify the consensus of the Tutors' opinions of what is meant by 'achievement'. This consensus, once established, will help me to focus my study of the experiences of particular students over a period of time.

The attached form is being completed by Tutors on voluntary-organised and local authority-organised schemes in Cambridgeshire. As you will recognise when you see the form, the validity of establishing the consensus opinion depends on statistical techniques and on receiving a large number of replies. Thus I would be most grateful if you, in Dorsetshire, would complete a form, so that the 300 replies from your county may be added, for statistical analysis, to those from Cambridgeshire and other counties.

When you come to complete the forms, would you please bear in mind that it is your opinion as a Tutor that I am seeking.

Many of you will wonder where the phrases originated; all of them were gathered from Tutors or Organisers in the United Kingdom during the past nine months so that, in varying degrees of priority, they had already formed the objectives, so far as Tutors as Tutors were concerned, in existing and operating schemes.

I would like to thank you for your help; if you wish I shall be very pleased to let you know the results when the research is complete.

Yours sincerely,

Alan H. Charnley

Cambridge 47471
25 Nightingale Avenue, Cambridge CB1 4SG
November 1975

APPENDIX A

THE QUESTIONNAIRE OF '25 PHRASES'

Cambridge 47471

25 Nightingale Avenue,
Cambridge CB1 4SG

November 1975

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Yours sincerely,

Alan H. Charnley
INSTRUCTION SHEET

IN YOUR OPINION as a Tutor, a Tutor-Trainer or an Organizer:

SECTION A

1. Please classify, by placing a tick in the appropriate column, the degree of importance of each phrase as a sign of a student's 'achievement' or 'progress'.

   (A is the highest degree of importance)

2. (a) Look down the A column and circle the tick which, in your opinion, is opposite the most important phrase as a sign of a student's progress.

   (b) Do the same for the B column

   (c) Do the same for the C column

   (d) Do the same for the D column

   (e) Do the same for the E column

SECTION B

3. List the five most important phrases in Section A, by number, for each stage in a student's tuition.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of phrase</th>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Your coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regular attendance at classes</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>General improvement in confidence and bearing</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Improvement in clarity of speech</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Improvement in range of spoken vocabulary</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Movement from a one-to-one learning situation to joining a group (even if individual teaching still takes place)</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Reading to his/her children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Borrowing books from library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Extending range of reading beyond information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reading information material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Willingness to talk about his/her literacy problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Expression of expectation to succeed in reading and writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Diminution of anxiety (general)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Joining more social groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Assumption of greater responsibility at work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Letter relationships with members of the family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Increase in comprehension skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Increase in word recognition skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Ability to take dictation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Ability to check spelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Ability to write a letter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Ability to read newspapers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Increase in the period of concentration during tuition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Diminution of anxiety with regard to literacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Getting a better job in terms of more pay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Getting a better job in terms of personal satisfaction and interest (not necessarily better paid)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please remember to ring the most important tick in each column)
I have been advised that the order of importance of the phrases in Section A may depend on the stage of the Student's tuition; in order to cover this point I have suggested three stages.

Using the numbers of the phrases in Section A, will you please enter what you feel are the five most important phrases, in order, for each stage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Order</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) After a few weeks' tuition</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) After one year's tuition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) At the end of the student's course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What was the main reason given by student for applying for help in reading/writing/spelling? (please delete if not applicable)

Reason (his/her words if possible) ..................................................

Other phrases which you think describe achievement and which you think I should take into account:

(a) ........................................................................................................

(b) ........................................................................................................

(c) ........................................................................................................

Name of Tutor/Trainer/Organiser
APPENDIX B

Additional criteria of success as suggested by tutors to Section B
of the 25 phrase form (Appendix A)

169 replies were received to the question which asked for
"Other phrases which you think describe achievement and which
you think I should take into account"; these were as follows:

1. a) ability to 'attack' words not in student's vocabulary
   b) ability to find meaning of unknown words
   c) ability to write legibly

2. a) ability to join in conversation with peers
   b) ability to discuss topics

3. a) keeping one step ahead of own children learning to read
   b) being able to sleep at night
   c) being able to write out own cheques
   (these were given by tutor as actual examples)

4. a) social competence
   b) better citizen

5. offhand attitude of employer (D.H.S.S.) should be mitigated

6. ability to clearly express thoughts in writing (sic)

7. a) assumption of more respect from society
   b) more confidence in forming new friendships
   c) improvement of performance in hobbies' skills

8. Comment: "I think as a tutor one's concept of achievement
could vary from pupil to pupil (sic) i.e. one would feel some
points were most important to one pupil than another. This
form seems to generalise too much."
9. a) feeling of "being as good as anyone else"
   b) knowing that one can cope with any reading or writing work alone
10. a) acceptance of him/herself by others before and after tuition
    b) willingness to help others as he/she has been helped
11. a) voluntarily to bring forward work done at home
    b) able to fill in a questionnaire form, etc. without fear
    c) able to admit to his/her difficulty to others beside the tutor
12. a) to understand word building and to write sounding out words
    b) to find how to spell a word i.e. dictionary
    c) to read and write more independently, i.e. self-help
13. a) acknowledgement of need - "I know I want practice and have got to work at it"
    b) improvement in companionable domestic skill - "I shall write out the shopping list instead of my wife"
    c) use of cursive handwriting instead of capitals
14. buying books or aids at own suggestion e.g. 'On the move' workbook
15. a) perhaps their being able to grasp their own problem as part of a larger very common problem - to blame not themselves but the society which abandoned their problem for so long and limited their real potential
    b) to attain a greater tolerance and understanding of different customs, beliefs and others' problems, through their reading
16. a) ability to see and assess his own improvement
    b) ability to relate what is learnt to everyday experiences
17. desire for further education (e.g. 'O' levels)
18. a) regular attempt and/or completion of homework
   b) interest in words beyond present skills
19. a) ability to cope with everyday situations e.g. shops, public transport
   b) to have a sense of achievement
   c) to realise ambitions regarding career
20. gradually to overcome aggressive feeling to society in general
21. Comment: "I have no experience in answering any questions
   (X is my first student) - as yet it is beyond my knowledge
22. ability to fill in time sheets and such like forms for work
23. a) to help his son when he starts school
   b) to join an English class later to improve grammar and construction
24. a) diminish personal anxiety
   b) draw his/her own pension
   c) teach her daughters to read
25. a) ability to understand and fill in forms
   b) greater fluency in writing
   c) ability to make quality comparisons when shopping
26. a) ability to use a dictionary
   b) confidence in completing official forms
   c) to be independent of other people
27. a) to realise literacy problems are quite common
   b) following or developing hobbies via reading/writing
   c) new understanding of grammatical skills
28. a) ability to help children with school work
   b) ability to understand instructions regarding safety and medicines
   c) ability to shop confidently and unaided
29. a) ability to use dictionary
   b) habitual use of a good dictionary
   c) economy of self-expression
30. a) ability to shop in 'supermarket'
   b) willingness to do homework
31. a) eagerness to work beyond the prescribed time
   b) enrolment for further education
   c) confidence to assist fellow students
32. reading books for pleasure
33. recognition of patterns in spelling
34. a) taking an interest in reading and word formation
   b) expression of actual progress already made
35. getting literacy problem into perspective
36. a) ability for the eye to go before the voice when reading
   b) ability to read with expression and not just read each word separately
   c) confidence to work with other students - testing spelling etc.
37. a) to have confidence in the tutor
   b) to have a friendly relationship with the tutor

(Comment: "I feel you should place more emphasis on the tutor/student relationship")
38. a) ability to remember simple grammatical rules
   b) gaining confidence with other adults apart from tutors and family

39. the development of a more enquiring mind

40. a) to progress further in education i.e. 'O' level English
   b) to join recreational classes at college
   c) to help generally in the Community i.e. youth work, voluntary social work, etc.

41. a) to assume role of leader/organiser in social setting
   b) ability to become himself a tutor of illiterates

42. a) ability to read menu posted in canteen or cafe
   b) ability to read simple posters on 'Works' notice board
   c) eligibility to drive car and find way by maps

43. a) recognition of initial letters
   b) non-reversal of letters
   c) reading with child

44. ability to understand and respond to punctuation marks

45. ability to use punctuation marks correctly

46. ability to write more quickly and confidently

47. a) an increased awareness of various aspects of literacy
   b) constructive attitude towards the problem
   c) active curiosity overcoming personal shame
48. ability to enjoy the written word

49. lessening of dependence on tutor - move to self-learning

50. ability to verbalise experiences, however simple

51. joining a class instead of one-to-one tuition

52. a) ability to express ideas in writing, to undertake creative writing

b) to take examinations giving qualifications

53. a) ability to write one's name

b) ability to fill in forms

c) familiarity with the order of the alphabet (to be able to use dictionaries and telephone directories)

54. a) ability to generalise

b) using context to work out meaning

c) going back and correcting without prompting

55. a) ability to see and correct mistakes unaided

b) ability to generalise and see patterns

c) ability to read for context and meaning rather than just trying sounds to letters

d) Comment: "(tutor's own) increasing confidence that he, as an individual, might, one day, make some sense out of it all"

56. ability to read and write

57. a) student's persistent attempts to work by himself

b) student's pleasure and awareness of increments of success

58. a) ability to generalise - some general rules and apply them in practice

b) to read for meaning rather than mechanically

59. feeling more confident at work
APPENDIX C

Additional criteria of success as recorded by Georgina Ingleby in her enquiry conducted in 1976 (under the direction of Dr. Margaret Peters of the Cambridge Institute of Education)

To the question "What level of achievement would you count as success for your student?" twenty six out of thirty seven tutors responded, as follows:

1. The ability to stay ahead of her infant son
2. Able to communicate by using the written word
3. "If he wrote a decent, acceptable, moderately well spelt and grammatical letter. Would also like him to have some understanding of the basic structure of language and even enjoy reading and writing."
4. A reading age of 9-10 years for academic success (brain damaged)
5. 'O' level English
6. Just being able to recognise necessary words
7. When he is satisfied with his results
8. Able to read, write and spell to a satisfactory standard
9. When he can write from dictation
10. Able to read independently and tackle new long words. A reader for pleasure rather than just 'Daily Mirror-Sun' fluency. A sliding scale of success would have to be adjusted every few months,
11. Ability to understand and write simple English
12. Ability to write reports (on Trade Union Meetings) and make short notes on, e.g. operation of machinery, spell confidently, use cursive script not capitals.
13. To read with fluency an easy newspaper
14. Short-term aim - to read a book! (possibly Ladybird)
15. Improvement in spellings of words which follow a simple rule. Also common and useful words
16. Too early to say
17. To be able to pick up any piece of printed matter and read it fluently. To be able to write clearly and correctly
18. Able to compete with others at Day Release
19. Better writing ability i.e. upright instead of sloping in all directions.
20. Read reasonably difficult book fluently, without hesitation; write fluently.
21. Success achieved so far (a) confidence to address a stranger, (b) first letter ever written in her life, (c) expressed pleasure in reading.
22. Ability to apply for a specific job. Success in reading away from the tutor-student situation. Fluent reading, autonomy.
23. Able to express ideas on paper, correct spelling of basic words, coherently, readably.
24. Keep one step ahead of her children's reading. Ability to cope with official forms and letters; read and use recipes, read horoscopes, 'agony' columns. Write letters to school and family.
25. When he can regard print in a positive way, not something to be feared.
26. Initially - self-motivation - to want to read. Having mastered the reading skills, to then use them in everyday life as well as read for pleasure.


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Note: To reduce the Bibliography to a manageable level, I have included a number of texts of readings, collected essays or symposia which themselves contain extensive bibliographies covering a wide range of sources; naturally, many of the original sources were consulted in the course of preparing this study.

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B. Educational practice and methodologies
C. Ethological studies and methodologies (including some studies of the relationship between animal and human behaviour
D. Statistical methods
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A.H. Charnley - AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF ADULTS IN REMEDIAL LITERACY SCHEMES: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CAMBRIDGESHIRE

The thesis is in three parts. Part I deals with the conceptual background, principally the meaning and place of literacy in adult education, together with the purposes of various projects concerned with mass adult literacy and the organisation of literacy schemes in Cambridgeshire. Part II identifies and classifies Tutors' aims and suggests the possibility of adopting an ethological approach as an appropriate methodological means of analysis. Part III demonstrates how quotations from tape-recorded interviews with Tutors and Students may be analysed to reveal structures of evidence which indicate criteria of achievement.

The findings suggest that, in the process of achievement, the improvement in skills was subservient to, and dependent upon, the enhancement of self-image. The criteria of achievement were, in order of importance: affective personal achievements, affective social achievements, socio-economic achievements, cognitive achievements and enactive achievements. Constituent sub-criteria within each group are listed, and it is argued that they are inter-related. Any grouping of criteria chosen and applied to any individual's progress will contain at least one of the prime criteria listed in the affective personal or social-achievement domains, and these are synonymous with the general aims of adult education.

These notions are set in the context of the United Kingdom literacy campaign and there is a contiguous discussion of the recruitment, training and use of volunteer tutors, the role of broadcasting, alternative systems of tuition and the need for counselling.