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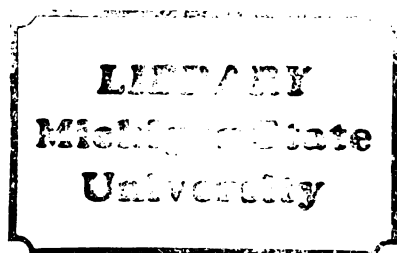
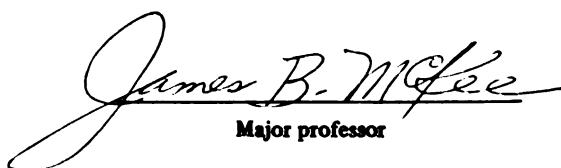This is to certify that the

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THE ROLE OF LITERACY IN THE LIBERATION AND THE

DEVELOPMENT OF THIRD WORLD NATIONS

By

Charlotte Ellen Henderson

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ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF LITERACY IN THE LIBERATION AND THE

DEVELOPMENT OF THIRD WORLD NATIONS

By

Charlotte Ellen Henderson

Despite efforts taken by many governments, volunteer
organizations and international organizations, the actual
number of illiterate adults has increased. Because of their
historical conditions of exploitation, Third World countries
have the highest incidence of illiteracy.

Traditional approaches to literacy taught "literacy
for the sake of literacy". Contemporary approaches have
taken on a much broader role. Rather than being viewed in
isolation; literacy is now viewed in relation to formal
education and society as a whole. This comprehensive per-
spective has resulted in two distinct approaches to literacy.
The functional literacy approach seeks to integrate its
participants into the national development process. In
contrast, conflict literacy sees literacy instruction as a
means of generating awareness about the social, economic,
and political contradictions in the participants' lives.

This study critically examines literacy from the
functionalist and conflict perspectives. Theoretically, the

study examines effects of social change theories on educa-
tional reform and policies. Empirically, functional literacy
is analyzed in the context of UNESCO's Experimental World
Literacy Programme (EWLP). While a case study of the Cuban
mass literacy campaign provides the data for an analyais of
literacy within the conflict framework.

The major conclusion about illiteracy is that it is
a structural problem and therefore, its resolution must be
linked with transformation strategies of other structural
problems; the major objective being to change existing social
structures in order to transform developing societies to a
more equitable level.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give special thanks to Professor James McKee for his efforts in supervising this thesis. Appriciation is also extended to Professors Christopher Vanderpool and William Ewens.

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of the Problem

The vast majority of the people in Third World[1]

countries are illiterate. The United Nations in 1948

adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which

proclaimed that everyone has a right to an education.

Therefore, the right to read, one would assume, is very

basic to formal education. In reality, however, this

right has been denied millions of people in the world.

Despite efforts taken by many governments, voluntary

organizations and international organizations, the actual

number of illiterate adults worldwide have increased. In

1970, there were 742 million illiterate adults in the world;

in 1980 there are some 814 million and in 1990, there will

be 884 million, unless measures are developed to reverse

these trends. The expansion of education has managed to

decrease the rate of illiteracy but expanded education has

not equalled population growth. The result is the total

number of adult illiterates has risen (Rhola, 1980:1).

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[1]For purposes of this study the following terms are
used synonymously: Third World, underdeveloped, developing
and dependent countries.

Due to their historical conditions of exploitation which resulted in their underdevelopment, projections for Third World countries are even worse.[2] Nearly three quarters of the world's illiterates live in Asia, approximately 20 percent in Africa, and 5 percent in Latin America. More than 400 million illiterates, i.e. the majority of the world illiterate populations are to be found in only 11 countries, 7 of which are Asian. By 1980, 23 countries will have an illiteracy rate that is higher than 70 percent, including 18 African and 4 Asian countries (UNESCO, 1978 as quoted in Bhola, 1980:4).

Historically, literacy in Third World countries was initiated by religious organizations and for the most part to enable their converts to read the Bible. Frank Laubach, a Christian missionary began his worldwide travels in 1915, contributing to literacy programs by writing texts, suggesting teaching methods, and constructing literacy charts, which were part of his methodology in thirty different languages. Unlike most missionaries, Laubach did not restrict his literacy projects to working with those who had been converted to Christianity. For him literacy was a God given right (Jefferies, 1967 and Molira, 1975).

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[2]Suggested reading on dependency and underdevelopment of Third World countries: Walter Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped (1974); Cockcroft, Frank and Johnson, Dependence and Africa Underdevelopment (1972); Clive Thomas, Dependence and Transformation (1974); Gutkind and Wallerstein (ed.) The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa (1976); and Samir Amin, Unequal Development (1973).

Laubach's impact on literacy is evident in the fact that the method he developed has been translated into 312 languages and is the most widely used method around the world (Harman, 1974).

Traditional literacy such as Laubach's have been criticized for teaching "literacy for the sake of literacy." In other words, literacy, rather than being viewed as a means to an end, was the end in itself. There was no real plan to integrate literacy with adults' daily work. Adult literacy was handled more or less in the same fashion as the teaching of basic skills to primary school children (Malya, 1979).

Today literacy has taken on a much broader role. Rather than being viewed in isolation; it is now seen in relation to education, formal and non-formal, and to society as a whole. How one perceives illiteracy depends upon one's view of these relations. The following statement represents a particular viewpoint of illiteracy:

> Illiteracy among adults implies the non-participation of entire sections of the population in the life of the national community . . . .illiteracy is simply the manifestation at the educational level of a complex series of. . .factors which has prevented entire groups of human beings from participating in the process of development going on around them (UNESCO, 1965 as quoted in UNESCO, 1976:117).

In this context illiterates tend to be perceived as marginal in their attributes. According to this viewpoint since illiterates are marginal because of their illiteracy it follows logically that literacy should enable their integration to take place.

> (Literacy) enables the individual to fit into his
> occupational and social environment and...increase
> his value as a person....It is inextricably linked
> with needs inherent in the construction of the
> national community (UNESCO, 1965 as quoted in
> UNESCO, 1976:18).

In contrast to this viewpoint, Paulo Freire argues that illiterates are not marginal men; they are beings within the social structure, and in a dependent relationship to those whom we call falsely autonomous beings, inauthentic beings-for-themselves (1970b:211).

Given this viewpoint of literacy, interpreting illiterates as men oppressed within the system--

> the literacy process, as cultural action for
> freedom, is an act of knowing in which the learner
> assumes the role of knowing subject in dialogue
> with the educator (1970b:212).

These perceptions of illiteracy and literacy have led to two distinct approaches to literacy. UNESCO's perspective has evolved into functional literacy. Different meanings have been attached to functional literacy. The following definition of functional literacy represents the simplistic connotations of being a functionally literate person:

> A person is functionally literate when he has
> acquired the knowledge and skills in reading,
> writing and notation, which enable him to engage
> effectively in all those activities in which
> literacy is normally assumed in his culture or
> group (Gray, 1956:24).

Functional literacy as advocated by UNESCO subscribers to certain notions about the role of literacy in personal and national development:

> Rather than end in itself, functional 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 know-
> ledge but to training for work; increased produc-
> tivity, a greater participation in civil life
> and a better understanding of the surrounding
> world, and should ultimately open the way to basic
> human culture (UNESCO, 1965 as quoted in UNESCO,
> 1976:10).

In the former definition, a person can acquire functional literate skills with or without participating in a "functional" literacy program. But functional literacy as defined by UNESCO is a means of acquiring skills that will integrate individuals into society.

However, in contrast to the UNESCO perspective, Freire advocates a literacy approach that rather than inte- grate individuals into existing societal relations would encourage radical social changes leading to new structural relations.

These notions, representing two distinct approaches to literacy, have roots in social change theories. Func- tional literacy with its emphasis on economic growth and stability is a derivative of the functionalist paradism. Freire's literacy process which stresses the conflict between the oppressed and their oppressors is based in the conflict paradigm.

The majority of literature on education is centered around the functionalist model. This study provides an

analysis of educational reform from both the functionalist and conflict perspectives.

B. Statement of Purpose

The main purpose of this study is to critically examine literacy from the functionalist and conflict viewpoints. Specifically this research examines theoretical constructs and their impact on educational reform and policies. Empirically, functional literacy is examined in the context of UNESCO's Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP). A case study of the Cuban mass literacy campaign, which shares basic concepts with Freire, provides the data for an analysis of literacy within the conflict framework.

The fact that the highest incidence of illiteracy is found in developing countries has led some economists and developers to consider illiteracy as an impediment to technological and economic progress. However it is the position of this study that illiteracy is one of the many resultant factors of underdevelopment. Therefore literacy efforts will not be effective unless accompanied or preceded by structural changes aimed at creating an equitable society.

Chapter Two is the analysis of the relationships between social change theories and educational reforms. The latter section of the chapter discusses the specific topic of this study, literacy in relation to the functional and conflict paradigms. Included in this section are the

conflict literary perspective theories of Paulo Freire.

Chapters Three and Four provide the empirical data. The former chapter deals with functional literacy as practiced in EWLP and the latter is a case study of the Cuban campaign.

The concluding chapter makes recommendations for future efforts in literacy for Third World countries. The feasibility of functional literacy and the Cuban campaign to other developing countries is considered.

The methodology for this study is historical and documentary research. A computer search by Michigan State University's library provides most of the material used in this study. The following information systems and serial publications were searched: (1) ERIC - The Educational Resources Information Centers system; (2) CIJE - The Current Index of Journals in Education (periodicals) system; and (3) RIE - Resources/Research in Education (microfilm).

Chapter Two

FUNCTIONAL AND CONFLICT PARADIGMS: RELATIONSHIPS TO EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Different approaches to literacy have evolved from various social change theories which are derivatives of the functional and conflict paradigms. It is the intention of this chapter to examine how social theories shape educational strategies in general and literacy in particular.

A. The Functionalist Paradigm
    and its Implications for
    Educational Reforms

The functionalist paradigm consists of three major theories which overlap: (1) evolutionary and neoevolutionary, (2) structural functional, and (3) systems theory.

The functionalist model views society as a system and its main concern is how well the different parts of the system interact. Functionalist theorists adhere to certain assumptions about human values, for example man is seen as being half egoistic (self-nature) and half altruistic (socialized nature) and in constant need of restraints for the collective good (Harton, 1967:22). The following concepts are central to the functionalist model: stability, authority, order and quantitative growth ("moving equilibrium") (LaBelle, 1976: and Horton, 1966).

1. Evolutionary and Neo-evolutionary Theory

Evolutionary theories are characterized by notions of progress, by stages of development from lower--to higher--order forms. Society is viewed as an organism with specialized structures facilitating survival. Paulston informs us that from this perspective "education, as an 'integrative' structure, functions to maintain stability and changes from 'simple' or 'primitive' forms to more complex 'modern' forms in response to change in other structures" (1976:7). Thus educational systems are forced to specialize and adapt as societies become increasingly differentiated.

Because evolutionary theory failed to accommodate the mass of anthropological data accumulated before World War I, there emerged an attempt to rework the theory. (Paulston, 1976) Steward, White, Sahlins, Tax and Dobzhansky, among others, are cited by Paulston as neo-evolutionists who "sought to deal with cultural diversity through shifts from unilinear to multilinear change process, and with efforts to account for both diversity and cumulative change" (1976:8).

However evolutionary and neo-evolutionary pre-scriptions for educational change strategies have a very marginal utility for education planners and reformers. According to Paulston the theory is difficult to test, it explains little, and it is not useful for predictions (1976:12).

As an example of neo-evolutionary efforts, Paulston cites Wilson's neo-evolutionist attempt of setting up a criteria upon which the evolutionary stages of education from the least developed cultures to the most advanced are established. (See Table 1 p.11) Wilson's efforts are in response to Durkheim's call to relate social and educational evolution. Table one represents a scaleogram of levels of cultural differentiation on the left side and educational structural differentiation across the top. Wilson argues that functional requisites at a given level of culture make a particular type of education necessary for that culture to exist. He attempts to establish causes of eight different types of education. But Paulston argues that he fails to establish the causes and concludes "by claiming no more for an "evolutionary theory-of education than that it provides us with an insight and understanding about the nature of education which could not be obtained by other approaches" (Paulston, 1976:8). Evolutionary theories in the area of education are not as popular as structural-functional and systems theories which we will look at next.

2. <u>Structural--Functional Theory</u>[3]

Structural-functionalist theorists are concerned

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[3]For additional reading on structural functionalist and evolutionary theories see: Talcott Parsons "Evolutionary Universals" <u>American Sociological Review</u> 29(June 1964), 339-57; Parson's <u>Essays in Sociological Theory</u> 1949; <u>Social System</u> by Parsons (1951); and Max Black's <u>The Social Theories of Talcott Parsons</u> 1961.

Table 1

Stage of Cultural Evolution and Type of Schooling

Type of Culture	Type of Education							
	Non-Teacher All Indiv. General	Non-Teacher Some Indiv. Special	Non-Teacher All Indiv. Special	Non-Teacher Some Indiv. General	Teacher Some Indiv. General	Teacher Some Indiv. Special	Teacher All Indiv. Special	Teacher All Indiv. General
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Restricted Wandering	X	X?						
2. Central-Based Wandering	X	X						
3. Semi-Permanent Sedentary	X	X	X					
4. Simple Nuclear Centered	X	X	X	X				
5. Advanced Nuclear Centered	X	X	X	X	X	X		
6. Simple Supra-Nuclear Integrated	X	X		X	X	X	X	
7. Advanced Supra-Nuclear Integrated	X	X		X	X	X	X	X

Source: Wilson (1973), p. 225 as found in Paulston, (1976), p. 6.

with the preservation and reproduction of the system.
Whereas the evolutionists placed primary emphasis on linked
stages of socioeconomic and cultural development, structural
functionalist theorists focus on the homeostatic or balan-
cing mechanisms by which societies maintain a "steady state".
According to Paulston, "both theories view societies as
essentially stable yet highly complex and differentiated
(1976:13).

Two of the major vehicles for reproducing the social
system for structural functionalists are the family and
formal education. Both the family and formal education
serve as socialization mechanisms, instructing youth on the
appropriate and acceptable behavior, values and roles. The
educational system plays a more important role than the
family in inculcating expected role behavior in a rather
specific form of socialization as noted by Talcott Parson:

> . . .experience in the course of formal education
> is to be regarded as a series of apprenticeships
> for adult occupational roles, even apart from the
> degrees to which the actual content of instruction,
> e.g., arithmetic and linguistic skills can be
> directly used there. Thus to a much higher degree
> than in the family, in school the child learns to
> adjust himself to a specific-universalistic-
> achievement system. . .the social system operates
> to socialize different personality orientations so
> that in spite of the diversity of their basic
> personalities, they may still fulfill the same set
> of role-expectations. . . .(1951:239-240).

Education from the structural-functionalist perspec-
tive is extremely durable, boundary exchanges between the
subsystem and the environment will be equilibrating, i.e.
they will tend toward "balance" (Paulston, 1976). For

structural functionalist education in its role as an "integrative" structure functions to maintain stability and changes from simple or primitive forms to more complex forms in response to change in other structures (Paulston, 1976). Educational systems are forced to specialize and adapt as societies become differentiated.

Educational planners from the structural function-alist school of thought seek to integrate educational programs into the national socioeconomic development strategies. Besides its socializing function the major purpose of education is to increase productivity by increasing individual skills (Machlup, 1970 and Inkles and Smith, 1974).

3. Systems Theory

Modern system analysis has its roots in the works of Saint Simon and Comte. It was fully explicated by Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown and Parsons, who gave it its most methodologically self-conscious treatment (Gouldner, 1970). The essence of system theory is that each part of a system is inherently related to each other part, so that change in one part affects the whole (Barwind, Barwind, and Miller, 1973).

General system theory, as stated by Paulston, is "an attempt to build on the fields of biology, cybernetics, and information and communication theory in order to move beyond the conceptual and explanatory limitations of structural functionalist theory" (1976:15).

System analysis has been used as a technique for decision-making and for innovation in classrooms. Much of the literature on educational-change efforts in the decades of the 1960s centered on system "malfunction." (Paulston, 1976).

The result of this literature was educational planned development policies, geared to preparing the individual to adjust to change, as evident by system theorists Barwind, Barwind and Miller:

> By focusing on the individual's ability to alter his life style to a more complex, technologically advanced one, thus establishing a state of dynamic equilibrium for the individual as well as for the social system, planned development is an answer to a rapidly changing external environment. . .it is an educational strategy designed to bring about systematic, orderly, and expected change within a system by focusing on human needs and goals in such a way as to maximize a person's ability to adapt to an ever-changing environment (1973:16).

The major task for educational reform from the functionalist perspective is to facilitate investment in personal development and to produce "better" workers within the context of the existing educational and social system.

B. The Conflict Paradigm and
   Educational Reform[4]

The conflict model does not differ totally from the

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[4]Suggested reading material on education from a conflict perspective: Bowles and Gintis, Schooling in Capitalist America, 1976; Deschooling Society (1970) by Ivan Illich; "After Deschooling What?" by Ivan Illich, et al.; Education as Cultural Imperialism (1974) by Martin Carnoy.

functionalist model in the role they prescribe to formal education but how this role is evaluated is where the difference lies. Conflict theorists recommend however a dynamic role for non-formal education.

Society for conflict theorists is a contested struggle between groups with opposed aims and perspectives. Conflict theorists also adhere to assumptions about man and society:

> . . .men are society; society is the extension of man, the indwelling of man; the transcendence of society is tantamount to the alienation of man from his own social nature. (Horton, 1966:704).

Key words of the conflict vocabulary are: qualitative growth, change, and freedom as autonomy (Horton, 1966).

Studies of socioeconomic, cultural, and educational change using slightly different versions of conflict theory increased significantly during the 60s. This work may be divided into three types of conflict theories (1) Marxist and neo-Marxist explanations of socioeconomic conflict, (2) cultural revival explanations of value conflict, and (3) a somewhat mixed bag of anarchist and anarchist-utopian institutional conflict and limitations on human development. (Paulston, 1976:26).

1. Marxist and Neo-Marxist Theory

According to Paulston, "Although all variants of conflict theory reject the evolutionists and functionalists' image of society as a system of benign self-regulating

mechanisms where maintenance of social equilibrium and harmony is 'functional' and disruption of harmony is 'dysfunctional,' only Marxism as social-science theory is linked with policy prescriptions for revolutionary change from below" (1976:26).

Most Marxists agree with functionalist that the major role of education is to increase production via increased individual skills. However the major difference is the context on which this process occurs. For Marxists this prescribed role of education is positive only if a country is operating at a high level of equality and the means of production are commonly owned. Otherwise under opposite conditions, which is the case for most Third World countries, a situation of underdevelopment exists. Thus increased production would only serve to benefit the elite of the country and/or the advanced industrialized countries (Bowles, 1972; Bowles and Gintis, 1976 and Carnoy, 1974).

Marxist, therefore, view formal education as a tool of the oppressor, either local or foreign, to maintain dominance over their subjects. "To reproduce the social relations of production, the educational system must try to teach people to be properly subordinate and render them sufficiently fragmented in consciousness to preclude their getting together to shape their own material existence" (Bowles and Gintis, 1976:130). Thus for Marxists formal education by its ideological nature stifles the creativity and critical thinking of young people.

Educational reform, Marxists argue will not benefit the masses and it only occurs when viewed by dominant political and economic elites as defending or advancing their interests vis-a-vis nonprivileged groups in society (Carnoy, 1974). For most Marxist and neo-Marxists formal education does not play a key role until a radical transformation process has begun.

Some conflict theorists, however, do specify a role for non-formal education that can be effective in pre or post revolutionary periods.

2. Cultural Revival and Social Movement Theory

The area of culture change and conflict applied to educational reform is not dealt with much in educational related literature (Paulston, 1976). Cultural-revitalization theory focuses on collective movements which are trying to change their culture to a more desirable one.

Paulston and LeRoy suggest that regardless of one's ideological perspective one can get a clearer more comprehensive understanding of non-formal education if the study of social movements became a research priority (1974). The purpose of this research would be to develop a conceptual framework drawing on social movement and collective behavior theories. Paulston and LeRoy cite the following questions as concerns of this research agenda:

> (1) why and how social and ethnic movements have developed non-formal education programs as latent movement functions?, (2) under what conditions has the phenomenon of NFE in collective social change efforts occurred? (3) How have various functions--

i.e. to train movement cadres and leaders, to
strengthen solidarity and enhance self-esteem,
to provide a supportive setting--i.e., a safe
place, and to help articulate movement goals
and action strategies, etc., related to mani-
fest movement functions seeking to ease
structural binds" (1974:19)?

From their research Paulston and LeRoy have found
that NFE programs in social class movements occur in two
situations, (1) emerging social-class elements (i.e.,
farmers or workers are seeking more power and they expe-
rience efforts to thwart their aspirations; and (2) ethnic
groups resisting acculturation and/or seeking cultural
revitalization (1974).

The Scandinavian folk movement offers explicit
examples of NFE programs created by folk/farmer/working
class movements. Their "popular education programs" were
instrumental in the welfare-state reconstruction after
World War II. (Paulston and LeRoy, 1974).

Examples of the second situation include the Kenya
"School" Movement which rejected Missionary schooling as a
threat to Kenyan society. In the United States African-
Americans made use of non-formal educational programs in a
variety of ways: leadership training, literacy training,
voter registration etc. Native Americans in the U.S. and
Canada have attempted to establish NFE programs which are
more suitable to their values.

A very dominant figure in "liberating" NFE is the
voice of Paulo Freire. Freire's conscientizacao or
consciousness-raising "refers to learning to perceive social,

political and economic contradictions, and to take action
against the oppressive elements of reality". (1970b:19).
Freire's approach to literacy is discussed in more detail in
the next chapter.

3. Anarchistic and Utopian Theories

The educational prescriptions of anarchistic and
utopian theories draw heavy criticism from functionalist
theorists and their own counterparts, conflict theorists.
Their theories are accused of being too idealistic, too
simplistic, lacking empirical evidence and a socioeconomic
analysis (Simkins, 1977; Paulston, 1976; Postman, 1973;
Gintis, 1973).

Their diagnoses of educational systems however are
considered to be very useful especially by educational
reformers. This is probably partially due to their shared
goal with Marxists for radical social transformation and
their conflict analysis. So, although their "solutions" are
rejected by many educators, those who are unsatisfied with
the present educational systems, find it difficult to ignore
the utopians totally. Their viewpoints are increasingly
being addressed in the formal and especially non-formal
educational literature.

Among the contemporary utopian theorists is Ivan
Illich, who wrote Deschooling Society (1971). Illich
believes that schools should be eliminated; mainly because,
they serve as a tool for the privileged elite to preserve
their power and to obstruct real attempts for social

transformation. Illich defines school as the "...age-specific, teacher related process requiring full-time attendance at an obligatory curriculum" (1971:38).

The functions of today's schools are ranked in the following order by Illich: first, custodial care; second, the selection and certification for social roles and status within the community; thirdly, indoctrination to social values and lastly, learning (Bruch, 1974).

These functions are results of the structure of the school itself. This structure is represented by the concept of the "hidden curriculum". This involves the learning that is acquired which is not explicit in the curriculum. The purpose of the hidden curriculum is to give the message to children that the only worthwhile knowledge is acquired through formal education (Illich, 1971; Bruch, 1974; Paulston; 1976; Simkins, 1977).

Illich's alternatives include: first, abolishment of school: second, educational credit at birth to obtain whatever knowledge or skill one desires; thirdly, skill centers where one would be judged on results rather than the process of how it was learned; fourthly, a learning network to exchange ideas with those of similar interest and lastly, compulsory attendance at school would not be required (Bruch, 1974; Paulston; 1976).

For Illich deschooling is not an end in itself; it is a step to a new society. In this new society technology, which plays a major scheme in Illich's theory, would play

the reverse role of serving man rather than man serving technology (Gintis, 1973; Bruch, 1974; Paulston, 1976; LaBelle, 1975).

The most common criticism of deschooling is that its scheme is not comprehensive although most agree that its argument against schooling is more comprehensive than most utopians (LaBelle, 1975; Gintis, 1973; Bruch, 1974; Postman, 1975).

Postman labels Illich not only a utopian but an authoritarian as well. He accuses Illich of offering nothing more than a definition of a deschooled society. Beyond this Postman claims that Illich, "proposes no strategies, rules of discourse, questions, restraints, modes of conduct, or any thing else that would help to achieve a change of such magnitude" (1975:143-144). Postman says this is predictable because Illich is "firmly fixed on the goal and fixation is the essence of authoritarianism" (1975:144).

Neo-Marxists argue that Illich's deschooling is irrelevant in the final analysis because only a society already in the process of liberation has the option of whether they want to preserve or abolish schools (Carnoy, 1974; Gintis, 1975).

Adam Curle in his Education for Liberation (1973) admits that he has gone full cycle from a functionalist to a conflict theorist. Previously his writings spoke to the potential of education to be a greater liberator. "Now I realize that education as it is mostly practised, does not

so much free men from ignorance, tradition, and servility, as fetter them to the values and aspirations of a middle class which many of them are unlikely to join" (1973:1).

Basically, Curles proposes a counter system rather than the present system. The latter system at the individual level is based on greed and aggressiveness; at the national level on power and exploitation networks. The counter system would be characterized by a higher level of awareness; a peaceful, loving and supportive society and egalitarian.

Curle, like other utopians, uses a conflict diagnosis on the one hand, but on the other his prescriptions do not include an analysis of the relationships between the educated elites and the masses and both of their relationships to political, economic and social institutions (Paulston, 1976).

The above theoretical relationships between social theories and educational reform are applicable to the issue of illiteracy. As was determined earlier the major role for education in general according to the functionalist paradigm is to increase production and to integrate its participants into national development. This same role is designated to literacy from the functionalist perspective.

Formal education for conflict theorists, as was noted, does not have a dynamic role until a post-revolutionary period literacy takes on the role prescribed by functionalist theory--a vehicle for economic growth and

encourages participation in social and political institutions (Freire, 1970; Huberman and Sweezy, 1969; Carnoy, 1979, Fagen, 1969).

Chapter Three

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES
TO LITERACY

The crisis of illiteracy in the Third World is made

evident when one observes the literacy rates in these

countries. In their World Development Report, 1979, the

World Bank provided the following weighted averages of

adult literacy rates of 1975:

(1)   Low Income countries - 36% literacy rate
      These are countries with a per capita
      income of $300 and below;

(2)   Middle Income Countries - 69% literacy rate
      per capita income above $300;

(3)   Industrialized Countries - 99% literacy
      rate;

(4)   Capital Surplus Oil Exporters - Weighted
      average is not available of the three
      countries listed in this category: Saudi
      Arabia, Libya, Kuwait, the latter two
      countries' literacy rates were 45% and 60%
      respectively. Saudi Arabia's literacy
      rate for 1979 was unavailable, but for 1960
      it was 3%.

(5)   Centrally Planned Economies - Weighted
      average not available (See Table 2 pp.25-28).

For women who have in many societies been kept in

traditional roles, the situation is even more critical. In

1960, women made up 50 percent of the world's illiterate

population. Today, they account for 62 percent of that

population. Between 1960 and 1970, the number of illiterate

Table 2

International Adult Literacy Rates

	Adult Literacy Rate (percent)	
	1960	1975
Low income Countries (w)*	29	36
1 Bhutan	--	--
2 Cambodia	36	--
3 Bangladesh	22	22
4 Lao PDR	28	--
5 Ethiopia	--	10
6 Mali	3	10
7 Nepal	9	19
8 Somalia	2	50
9 Burundi	14	10
10 Chad	--	15
11 Rwanda	16	23
12 Upper Volta	2	5
13 Zaire	31	--
14 Burma	60	67
15 Malawi	--	25
16 India	28	36
17 Mozambique	8	--
18 Niger	1	8
19 Viet Nam	--	87
20 Afghanistan	8	12
21 Pakistan	15	21
22 Sierra Leone	--	15
23 Tanzania	10	66
24 Benin	8	11
25 Sri Lanka	75	--
26 Guinea	7	--
27 Haiti	15	23
28 Lesotho	--	40
29 Madagascar	--	50
30 Central African Emp.	7	--
31 Kenya	20	40
32 Mauritania	5	17
33 Uganda	35	--
34 Sudan	13	20
35 Angola	5	--
36 Indonesia	39	62
37 Togo	10	16
Middle income Countries (w)*	51	69
38 Egypt	26	44
39 Cameroon	19	--
40 Yemen, PDR	--	27

Table 2--Continued

		Adult Literacy Rate (percent)	
		1960	1975
41	Ghana	27	30
42	Honduras	45	57
43	Liberia	9	--
44	Nigeria	15	--
45	Thailand	68	82
46	Senegal	6	10
47	Yemen Arab Rep.	3	13
48	Philippines	72	87
49	Zambia	--	39
50	Congo, People's Rep.	16	50
51	Papua New Guinea	29	32
52	Rhodesia	39	--
53	El Salvador	49	62
54	Morocco	14	28
55	Bolivia	39	63
56	Ivory Coast	5	20
57	Jordan	32	59
58	Colombia	63	81
59	Paraguay	75	80
60	Ecuador	68	74
61	Guatemala	32	46
62	Korea, Rep. of	71	91
63	Nicaragua	--	57
64	Dominican Rep.	65	67
65	Peru	61	72
66	Tunisia	16	55
67	Syrian Arab Rep.	30	53
68	Malaysia	53	60
69	Algeria	10	35
70	Turkey	38	60
71	Mexico	65	76
72	Jamaica	82	86
73	Lebanon	--	--
74	Chile	84	88
75	China, Rep. of	54	82
76	Panama	73	78
77	Costa Rica	--	88
78	South Africa	57	--
79	Brazil	61	76
80	Uruguay	--	94
81	Iraq	18	--
82	Argentina	91	93
83	Portugal	62	70
84	Yugoslavia	77	85
85	Iran	16	50

Table 2--Continued

	Adult Literacy Rate (percent)	
	1960	1975
86 Trinidad and Tobago	93	95
87 Hong Kong	70	90
88 Venezuela	63	82
89 Greece	81	--
90 Israel	84	88
91 Singapore	--	75
92 Spain	87	--
Industrialized Countries (w)*	--	99
93 Ireland	--	98
94 Italy	91	98
95 New Zealand	--	99
96 United Kingdom	--	99
97 Japan	98	99
98 Austria	--	99
99 Finland	99	100
100 Netherlands	--	99
101 France	--	99
102 Australia	--	100
103 Belgium	--	99
104 Denmark	--	99
105 Germany, Fed. Rep.	--	99
106 Canada	--	98
107 United States	98	99
108 Norway	--	99
109 Sweden	--	99
110 Switzerland	--	99
Capital Surplus Oil Exporters*		
111 Saudi Arabia	3	--
112 Libya	--	45
113 Kuwait	47	60
Centrally Planned Economies (w)*	--	--
114 China, People's Rep.	--	--
115 Albania	--	--
116 Korea, Dem. Rep.	--	--
117 Mongolia	--	--
118 Cuba	--	96
119 Romania	--	98
120 Bulgaria	--	--
121 Hungary	97	98
122 USSR	98	99
123 Poland	95	98

Table 2--<u>Continued</u>

	Adult Literacy Rate (percent)	
	1960	1975
124 Czechoslovakia	95	--
125 German Dem. Rep.	--	--

*Figures with asterisk are for years other than those specified.

w = weighted averages

Source: The World Bank, August 1979.

adult men in the world rose by 8 million; the number of illiterate women went up 40 million (Hedberg, 1975).

Literacy is a very complex issue and the approaches to it vary. Even the task of explaining "what is literacy" generates different definitions. How literacy is defined is influenced by the above different perspectives of education in general and literacy in particular.

A. Definitions of Literacy

One approach to defining literacy is the negative route. In other words literacy is defined by illiteracy. Illiteracy is most commonly known as the inability to read and write. Therefore literacy connotes the ability to read and write. But this is a very simple definition; by this definition if a person could read and write his name he could be considered a literate person. This is an atheoretical definition. It does not tell us the uses of literacy.

In 1962 UNESCO adopted the following definition of literacy:

> 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 attain-
> ments in reading, writing and arithmetic make
> it possible for him to continue to use these
> skills towards his own and the community's
> development (10).

The above definition differentiates between "literate" and "functionally literate" persons. This

definition resulted in the adoption of existing primary-school level as the norm for literacy. Thus in most countries fourth grade equivalents became the quantitative measurement and definition of functional literacy (Harman, 1974).

But since the levels of literacy required to function vary from country to country it can be argued that no single quantitative definition of literacy can be divised for all countries. Moreover there are non-literate societies which are functioning without literacy, what of these people (Du Suatoy, 1966; Harman, 1974)? The UNESCO definition ignores those societies where literacy plays no role whatsoever, in communication patterns. Paulo Freire's definition takes into consideration such groups:

> Learning to read and write ought to be an opportunity for men to know what speaking the word really means: a human act implying reflection and action. As such it is a primordial human right and not the privilege of a few. Speaking the word is not a true act if it is not at the same time associated with the right of expression, of creating, of deciding and choosing and ultimately participating in society's historical process (1970a:212).

For Freire, literacy is a tool for creating human awareness and the right and capacity as human beings to transform reality. To be literate is more than being able to decode written symbols. It is a process that enables a person to look critically at the culture which has shaped him and to create praxis: reflection and action upon his culture.

The UNESCO definition of literacy with its emphasis on economic growth is directly related to the functional paradigm. The functional paradigm is the most pervasive, (Simkins, 1977 and Paulston and LeRoy, 1974) its definition of literacy put forth by UNESCO is more widely accepted in developing nations. However, Freire's definition is gaining credibility particularly in developing countries. Both definitions carry with it certain implications for literacy, defining literacy is related to views on its purposes.

B. Purposes of Literacy

The need for literacy is viewed at both individual and national levels. Individually, literacy has personal-social value as pointed out by Dauzat and Dauzat:

> The literate person is less handicapped in
> achieving self-esteem and feelings of adequacy
> than is the illiterate. The literate person
> is not forced into maneuvers to camouflage
> and otherwise rationalize his reading and
> writing inadequacies. Literacy increases the
> potential for active involvement in society.
> It also increases the options for self-
> learning of satisfying skills, for discovering
> talent, and for recreation (1977:39-40).

Religion is another motivating factor for acquiring literacy. The ability to read and write in some societies is a prerequisite to full membership in the Christian church; as a consequence Christian church members in many but not all countries have a higher literacy rate than the general public. Also in Islamic countries the reading of the Koran is desired by devout Muslims (Shadlock, 1967).

Other motivations, such as to cope with changing

conditions, to gain economic rewards, and to further educational attainment are related not only to individuals but to the total society. These factors are considered as complementary to, and to some an antecedent to national development.

There is an obvious relationship between illiteracy and underdevelopment. But whether the former is a causal factor to the latter is questionable. Indeed, wherever extreme underdevelopment exists high rates of illiteracy are found. Therefore it has become common practice to associate illiteracy with other social problems. Experts in nutritional, agricultural, population, and health problems, for example, are typically related with a high incidence of illiteracy (Harman, 1974).

These kinds of nations led to the advocating as a postulate to economic development:

> ...Economic expansion may well be retarded if the mass of the population are unable to understand the part they are called upon to play in a national development programme, and lack the elementary educational basis for acquiring new knowledge and skills. The eradication of adult illiteracy should therefore, be regarded as a capital investment in clearing away once and for all a substantial obstacle in the path of progress...(Du Sautoy,1966:12).

This line of reasoning was very popular in the 50's and 60's. But evidence came into being that suggested that although illiteracy and underdevelopment are related, literacy does not necessarily precede development. For example, Waisanen and Kumata tested the hypothesis that functional literacy precedes intersystemic participation.

The result of the test design demonstrated a very modest support for this relationship. In fact, the relationship is "somewhat ambiguous, although not entirely so" (1972:35). Waisanen and Kumata concluded that in addition to educational skills in general and literacy in particular a reallocation of resources must be given in order to maximize participation in development.

Literacy as a Factor in Development a study by UNESCO published in 1965 also could not substantiate the claim that literacy is a causual factor of development. However, the report strongly emphasized the positive effects of literacy on increasing productivity, with the qualifier that it must be carried beyond the elementary stage and progressively transformed into functional literacy. This report paved the way for a strong recommendation by UNESCO to the concept of functional literacy.

C. UNESCO and its Involvement
    in Functional Literacy

The work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) covers many areas but since its inception at the end of World War II. The problem of illiteracy has been one of its main preoccupations. Their ambitious goal at that time was the complete eradication of illiteracy worldwide.

In 1957, after years of intensive work UNESCO published World Illiteracy at Mid-Century a statistical survey. The publication was considered the first systematic attempt to collect all the known facts about illiteracy

in every country of the world. The study concluded that at that time more than two-fifths of the world's adult population could not read and write. And therefore world illiteracy must continue to be of concern to all.

In 1961, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a resolution requesting UNESCO to prepare a report on eradicating mass illiteracy throughout the world. Moreover they were charged with coming up with concrete measures for such eradication. UNESCO responded with a report entitled World Campaign for Universal Literacy which was presented at the UN General Assembly in 1963 (Jefferies, 1967).

The World Campaign for Universal Literacy emphasized the regions of the world where illiteracy is the worse-- Africa, Asia and Latin America. The report recommended a plan which aimed at making two-thirds of the 500 million-- 330 million literate within ten years. The total cost for this plan was estimated at $1,911 million. It was suggested that external aid could be solicited for $430 million, the remainder would be contributed by the countries concerned. It was estimated that only 0.14 percent of the gross national product of these countries would be needed for such a plan (Jefferies, 1967).

Although some national representatives were in favor of this bold action, the Assembly could approve but not enforce such a plan. Other national representatives were hesitant to commit their country to the plan. The end result was that a resolution was passed which repeated past

rhetoric about the grave situation of mass illiteracy
(Jefferies, 1967). From 1961 to 1964 a series of con-
ferences were held in the Ivory Coast, United States,
(sponsored by AID) and Canada. At these conferences the
issues surrounding literacy were debated: teaching tech-
niques, functional literacy and development, curriculum
content, etc.

In 1964, based on information exchanged at the
series of conferences, the members of UNESCO General
Conference outlined a new policy. The new approach to the
problem was a <u>selective strategy</u>--a strategy of intensive
projects rather than of extensive mass campaigns. The
eradication of mass illiteracy remained but it was calcu-
lated that this goal could be better achieved in a
methodical process in selected target areas (Harman, 1974;
Jefferies, 1967; UNESCO, 1964).

The International Committee of Experts on Literacy
(standing committee--UNESCO) supported the selective
approach, arguing that it "may be more rational and more
effective, and that it is reasonable to launch the literacy
campaign in the more organized sections of the economy, in
particular in sections of the population where people are
employed and need literacy for their regular work" (UNESCO,
1964:4).

At this General Conference an invitation was
extended by the Shahin-Shah of Iran to organize a world
conference in Teheran. In preparation for this conference,

UNESCO issued amongst other documents <u>Literacy as a Factor in Development</u>. Besides reporting on the relationship between literacy and development as was discussed above, the report focused on an update on adult illiteracy in Third World countries, particular attention was paid to the extremely high illiteracy rates among women.

Some of the essential features of the new strategy worked out at the World Congress of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy (Teheran--1965) were as follows:

(a) literacy programmers must be incorporated with plans of economic and social development.

(b) literacy work must begin among those population groups whose motivation is strongest and who have the greatest need of becoming literate....

(c) literacy programmes should be preferably linked to economic priorities and carried out in areas undergoing rapid economic expansion;

(d) literacy programmes should not be confined to the teaching of reading and writing but should include professional and technical knowledge....

(e) literacy work must form an integral part of the educational planning and structure of each country;

(f) literacy programmes of this new type should be related to the pursuit of economic and social objectives: increased manpower and output, production of food staffs, industrialization, social and professional mobility, creation of additional manpower, etc. (UNESCO, 1968:47-48).

As part of the new selective strategy, UNESCO launched in 1966 a five year literacy program aimed at

developing, implementation and evaluating methods for the new approach. The term "literacy program" was substituted for what was previously labeled "literacy campaigns". UNESCO defined the difference as a strategy of selective projects rather than broad extensive campaigns. The Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP) was to lay the groundwork for future worldwide programs of this type. The projects were to be work oriented, clearly associated with the occupations of its participants.

UNESCO therefore moved away from its 1961 position of advocating mass campaigns in favor of selective programs; although its original objective of eradicating illiteracy remained, it was thought that this would be the first step in that direction. How EWLP operated in practice is the subject of the next chapter.

D. Major Mass Literacy Campaigns

UNESCO had at one time sought to launch a major assault on worldwide illiteracy. This invoked widewpread criticisms. For most people, the word campaign connotated a one-time assault on illiteracy. It was also feared that this approach could result in wastage of considerable resources. It was also questioned as to whether a mass campaign could be integrated into other adult education and development programs. Lastly, it was believed that literacy campaigns would not be able to inculcate functional literacy skills to a broad segment of a population (Harman, 1974:54).

In actuality these assertions are too broad and they

have been disproved in countries where significant mass literacy campaigns have taken place. The most notable are mass literacy campaigns in the Soviet Union and Cuba. (Harman, 1974:54). Cuba is discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

Under the leadership of Lenin, the Soviet Union placed a high priority on literacy. During a twenty-year period (1919-1939) Russia was able to eradicate illiteracy except for remote rural areas, and these areas became literate in the postwar years. (Jeffries, 1967 and Tonkonogaja, 1976).

In 1919, Lenin made literacy classes compulsory for all illiterates between the ages of eight and fifty (Jeffries, 1967). Due to a number of unforeseen events i.e., civil war and World War II, the complete eradication of illiteracy was not achieved until the early 40s. In the face of any extremely high rate of illiteracy in Russia in the late nineteenth century this was quite an achievement. An 1897 census showed the illiteracy rate as high as 77.7 percent. But the illiteracy rates amongst those in rural remote areas averaged 98.3 percent. Russia had the highest illiteracy rate of any European state (Tonkonogaja, 1976).

The second stage began in 1921 with improved literacy instruction. Special efforts were made to insure the participation of women. In the autumn of 1928, the all-union cultural campaign for universal literacy was launched. During the years of the First Five-Year Plan

(1925-1932) as many as 45 million adults became literate (Tonkonogaja, 1976).

The final stage began in 1933 and was interrupted by the war (1939-1945) but the eradication of illiteracy by then had been achieved except for certain remote rural areas which were free of illiteracy in the early postwar years (Tonkongaja, 1976). The Soviet Union literacy rate is currently 99 percent (World Bank, 1979, See Table 2 p.25).

Since literacy was a government priority, the government made literacy classes compulsory, but there was widespread volunteer support for the campaign (Jeffries, 1967). Literacy to Russian citizens was seen as a factor in building a socialist society (Tonkongaja, 1976 and Jeffries, 1967).

Russia had to overcome many direct and indirect obstacles to the campaign: civil war, economic disorgani- zation, World War II, nomadic lifestyles, numerous langu- ages, at times shortage of supplies, and in the early years of the campaign a poor quality of instruction. (Tonkongaja, 1976). Russia's achievement has historical significance, especially for Third World countries. In Jeffries opinion, "by any standards this concentrated effort of a great nation must rank highly in the record of man's achievements as a social animal" (1967:37).

In 1956 by UNESCO standards China was one of many Third World countries which had an illiteracy problem: countries with more than 5 million adult illiterates

(UNESCO, 1956). Mass education began in the 1920s in China, but programs initiated in rural areas were not very effective. Although educational programs became more innovative and more effective in rural and urban areas, emphasizing collective education, a high degree of illiteracy remained.

The prominence given to the writings of Chairman Mao Tse-tung in the cultural revolution of 1966-67 played a key factor in raising literacy rates. In 1966 there was evidence of a new high degree of literacy (Jeffries, 1967).

Education contended Mao would create the current consciousness and would build new men and women (Rawski, 1979). Literacy became important for political educational purposes and it was observed during the "Great Leap Forward" (1957-1960) that literacy would enhance industrial workers' productivity (Andors, 1977).

The difficulty of Chinese script partly explains past high illiteracy rates and the high percentage of semi-literate people, acquainted with only a limited number of characters (Rawski, 1979). Therefore the literacy campaign was intertwined with the reformation of the language and the simplification of the writing system (Bhola, 1980).

Literacy classes became linked with a more or less formalized system of spare-time education. The objectives for the campaign included the diffusion of the Marxist philosophy, the encouragement of political socialization, the destruction of class barriers, and the economic development of the state (Bhola, 1980). According to UNESCO

these efforts have resulted in a 75 percent literate population contrasted to a 20 percent literacy rate in 1949. (Bataille, 1976).

The experiences of the above campaigns along with other major mass campaigns: Algeria, Brazil, Burma, Cuba, Korea, Sumalia, Tanzania, and Viet Nam, apparently will be capitalized on in future literacy activities due to the combined effort of UNESCO and the International Council for Adult Education. Also there were discussions at the International Symposium for Literacy in Persepolis, Iran (1975) encouraging the study of significant mass literacy campaigns (Bataille, 1976).

The turnabout of UNESCO from mass campaigns to the selective approach is discussed in the subsequent chapter.

E. A Conflict Perspective of
    Literacy

1. Paulo Freire's Theories of Revolutionary Action and Education

Freire, an internationally known Brazilian educator has made a significant impact on the issue of literacy and development especially as to how it should relate to the oppressed peoples. His method or ones with similar technique have been put into practice in: Brazil, Chile, Guinea-Bissau, Guatemala, Honduras, Bolivia, Swaziland, Peru, Tanzania, Botswana, Cuba, India, South Africa, Mozambique and Ecuador.

His Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970) was the first

of his works to gain international fame; he has written many subsequent articles and books. But this work appears to be his most popular achievement to date. It is required reading in many universities in educational and social science courses.

According to Freire the issue of literacy can not be isolated; it must be seen in the context of education in general and the total society (1978). Freire's conscientization (consciousness) is the basic concept of his theory of revolutionary action. It is a process whereby individuals become aware of their reality and act upon it. This occurs through praxis, the unity of reflection and action, which is a continuous process. Conscientization, therefore, both initiates and supports a mechanism by which people become aware of the contradictions in the social structures and situations in which they live in order to change such structures or situations:

> Conscientization implies, then, that when I
> realize I am oppressed, I also know I can
> liberate myself if I transformed the concrete
> situation where I find myself oppressed.
> Obviously, I can't transform it in my head:
> that would fall into the philosophical error
> of thinking that awareness "creates" reality,
> I would be decreeing that I am free, by my
> mind. And yet, the structures would continue
> to be the same as ever--so that I wouldn't be
> free. No, conscientization implies a critical
> insertion into a process, it implies a his-
> torical commitment to make changes (Freire, as
> quoted in Lloyd, 1972:5).

The basic contradiction on which conscientization focuses is between the oppressor and the oppressed. Oppression takes two major forms: externally, the economic

and cultural dependency of Third World nations on indus-
trialized nations; internally, the dependency of peasants
between students of passive learners by authoritarian
teachers (1970a).

The external dominators oppress and silence the
dependent societies. The elites in the dependent societies
become the subjects whose task is to keep their objects in
their state of subjugation. The result is an anti-
dialogical culture characterized by certain principles--
divide and rule, manipulation, and cultural invasion. In
direct opposition of these principles are Freire's princi-
pals for those committed to revolutionary action--coopera-
tion, unity, organization, and cultural synthesis (1970a).

In Freire's theory of revolutionary education he
stresses that education is not neutral. Education is
cultural action for freedom or for domination. The latter
type of education is referred to by Freire as banking
education. The teacher is the subject who possesses know-
ledge as information which is deposited in the object, the
learner. In education for freedom teaching and learning
are reciprocal. This process is carried out through
dialogue as opposed to anti-dialogue used in the context
for domination (1970a).

2. Freire's Literacy Process

The basic purpose, for functional literacy, is to
increase productivity and incorporate individuals into

society. Illiterates from this perspective are considered objects to be filled with knowledge, as he discusses in his description of banking education. These purposes are based on assumptions which Freire finds unacceptable:

> Illiterates are considered "undernourished", not in the literal sense in which many of them really are, but because they lack the "bread of the spirit". . .Illiteracy is conceived of as a poison herb". . .Thus, much is said about the "eradication" of illiteracy to cure the disease. In this way, deprived of their character as linguistic signs constitutive of man's thought--language, words are transformed into mere "deposits of vocabulary"--the bread of the spirit which the illiterates are to "eat" and "digest". . . (1970:207-208).

Freire contends that in this context literacy programs are not tools for liberation because they will never question the very reality which deprives not only illiterates but also literates the right to speak up. Thus, Freire proposes a literacy process which will create conscientization.

These types of notions about illiteracy suggest that illiterates are marginal. Therefore the solution to their problem is not to become "beings inside of", but men free themselves; for, in reality, they are not marginal to the structure, but oppressed men within it" (1970b:211). The literacy which Freire proposes is a process "which men who had previously submerged in reality begin to emerge in order to re-insert themselves into it with critical awareness" (1970b:212).

Basically Freire's literacy process includes a literacy and a post literacy stage. In the initial stage

an interdisciplinary team, including a linguist, sociolo-
gist, and a psychologist, more into the community to study
the environment. Working with members of the community they
determine the "generative words" to be used. The words are
chosen,

> (a) for their pragmatic value, as linguistic
> signs which command a common understanding in
> a region or area of the same city or country
> (in the United States for instance, the word
> soul has a special significance in black areas
> which it does not have among whites), and (b)
> for their phonetic difficulties which will
> gradually be presented to those learning to
> read and write. Finally, it is important that
> the first generative word be tri-syllabic.
> When it is divided into its syllables, each
> one constituting a syllabic family, the
> learners can experiment with various syllabic
> combinations even at first sight of the word
> (1970b:218).

Key issues, problems and aspirations of the community are
also noted.

In the second phase the generative words are
selected from the vocabulary which was studied by the team.
The generative words are used in the third phase to create
"codifications" visual and/or verbal demonstrations of the
generative word. Let us examine this process by using an
example from Freire's literacy program in Brazil:

> Generative word--favela ("slum" in Portuguese)
> fundamental necessities: Housing, food,
> clothing, health, education. . .After analyzing
> the existential situation (a photograph showing
> a slum), in which the group discusses the
> problems of housing, food, clothing, health,
> and education in a slum and in which the group
> further perceives the slum as a problem situation,
> the coordinator proceeds to present visually the
> word favela with its semantic links (1973:82)

As other words are introduced new syllables are learned and combined with previous syllables. With this method a large number of words can be made by the people themselves all of which are drawn from their own context. Discussing these codifications, the participants in a matter of six to eight weeks are able to read.

In the postliteracy stage, the group moves on to "generative themes" related and suggested by local and national problems. At first the themes are dialectic with an opposing and contradictory theme. For example, if the participants do not suggest any themes their "silence" becomes the theme; it is contrasted with the "speaking culture", which dominates the oppressed.

The generative themes are also codified and related to other themes. The specialist and representative of the people both take part in selecting the generative themes. The team then utilizes the generative themes to develop materials for an educational program of which a central theme is culture itself. There is continuous movement back and forth from the team to the "circles of culture" the people in the community and from reflection to action (1970b).

The major problem Freire has experienced with the program is instructing the teams of coordinators. Teaching the purely technical aspect of the procedures poses no problems; but the difficulty lies in trying to instill the new attitude of dialogue. Freire attributes this to the

conditioning of anti-dialogue prevalent in education (1973).

Before Freire was expelled from Brazil, his native homeland, plans were underway to expand his programs nation-wide to include 500,000 people. The plan was aborted by a military coup in 1964. Although literacy activities have been expanded to the level of a mass campaign (MOBRAL). Freire's methodology was looked upon as subversive, there-fore, current literacy activities are carefully planned to check expectations and to restrict the formation of a critical perspective (Sanders, 1972).

Critics of Freire's method suggest that it is open to misinterpretations or manipulations (Sanders, 1972; LaBelle 1976 and Norman 1978). In Chile (where Freire was invited after his expulsion from Brazil) his methods are used in all governmental literacy training programs. Sanders after a comparative analysis of Freire's method in the context of Brazil and Chile notes that in Brazil questions used in literacy materials center around contro-versial issues which challenged the existing government. The following are passages taken from <u>Viver & Lutar</u> (To Live is to Struggle), a text used in the secondary level after initial literacy training:

> . . .The people live and struggle. . .We struggle
> to live. . .Why is our life so harsh? Why do so
> many children die here? Why don't the people
> have housing?. . .Why do people suffer so much
> injustice? (Sanders, 1972:602).

The <u>Communidad</u> used in Chile encourages its readers to cooperate with the government:

> . . .The community, . . .ought to organize
> itself and unite its forces to that of
> government and thus be able to better its
> economic, social, and cultural conditions. . .
> (Sanders, 1972:602).

The differences between the two texts can be explained in part by different national contexts and that in Brazil the group sponsoring the literacy program was outside of the government, while in Chile the sponsoring organization was governmental.

At stake though are:

> two diverging interpretations of the Latin
> American reality of the relationship between
> integrated and marginal segments of society,
> and of the nature of change. Which one is
> current? The Paulo Freire method does not
> tell us (Sanders, 1972:602).

Paulo Freire's method is strongly attacked for lacking an adequate conception of social structure.(LaBelle, 1976; Paulston, 1976; Griffith, 1974 and Norman, 1978). LaBelle argues that it is Freire's psycho-social approach that does not allow for a comprehensive analysis of society. "Although these psychologically based conceptual and theoretical approaches are important in the context of accounting for the acquisition of new behaviors; they generally fall short of confronting the societal rules and structures which are the potential obstacles to creating long term change" (1976:33). Griffith contends that Freire's oversimplification can be blamed on his dichotomizing style. "Freire's rhetoric is designed to emphasize a thesis/anti-thesis approach to both the definition of problems and to identification of solutions for these problems. . .this

perspective is unable to recognize other than two opposing

views (1976:104). Griffith contends that Freire does not

acknowledge a middle ground.

On the issue of revolution and how it relates to

Freire's model the criticism are quite diverse. Starratt

suggests that "although Freire offers few solutions

(educational) he may provide a more profound basis for

educational reform, or indeed for the "revolution" than

many of the strident critiques of the reformers" (1973:28).

While Griffith on the other hand argues that is Freire's

concern with the idea of revolution that restricts him from

coming up with solutions:

> Perhaps it is because he is so thoroughly com-
> mitted to the notion that revolution is required
> to overthrow the ruling elites that <u>Pedagogy of
> the Oppressed</u> is devoted primarily to justifying
> the revolution rather than to expounding the
> specific strategies to be used in its
> implementation (1978:111).

Norman argues that praxis in Freire's model involves

'revolution' but he is not clear about what it means:

> He returns constantly to the theme of permanent
> revolution and claims that the educative process
> is of nature, or must be, revolutionary. But he
> gives no indications as to the modalities of
> revolutionary action. . . .It is nothing short of
> irresponsible to toss out generalizations about
> revolution without distinguishing between dif-
> ferent interpretations of the word and without
> giving any indication of what this in practice
> means in radical adult education (1978:2).

Critics suggest that Freire's model is possibly only

applicable to Brazil. Leon asks the question "does not the

author himself constantly refer to the special features of

the transitional period in which Brazil at present finds itself" (1974:165)?

Norman suggests that certain aspects of Freire's model may not be applicable to other societies. For instance Freire's notion of 'culture of silence' may be appropriate to Brazilian society, but in numerous Third World countries

> . . .a traditional culture transmitted through song, oral literature, or through more complex forms. . .makes the concept 'culture of silence' inappropriate though the problem of political marginalization may be there (1978:4).

Other critics imply that in the Third World countries Freire's model is valid but in "open societies" such as United States it is not. "He is dealing with illiteracy in a closed society; the United States is an open society with relative rights to information, freedom to assemble, due process of law, etc." (Starratt, 1973:30).

Adherents of the Freirean model in contrast claim that it is not only applicable to Third World countires but also to the United States (Lloyd, 1972 and Sanders, 1972):

> Conscientization helps persons become conscious of and gain perspective on their perceptions of their social reality and of themselves, thereby mobilizing them to engage in a process of reflection and action to change the reality. It is relevant, therefore, to adult education both in the closed societies. . .as well as to relatively open ones. It is a means particularly appropriate to the self-realization of oppressed and dispossessed groups (our black, brown, and red peoples), or those whose members are systematically discriminated against (students and

women) because it does not depend on the
initiative of those in dominant positions
of power. . . (Lloyd, 1972:17).

Chapter Four

UNESCO'S EXPERIMENTAL WORLD LITERACY PROGRAMME

Functional literacy is the most common literacy approach in developing countries. This chapter examines UNESCO's attempt to put functional literacy into practice. The first section examines the limitations placed on functional literacy by UNESCO. A brief overview of the individual projects is given based on information from UNESCO's document The Experimental World Literacy Programme: A Critical Assessment. The third section, Tanzania's EWLP project, demonstrates the potential of functional literacy when it is not restricted solely to economic growth. The concluding section addresses the implications of external aid.

A. The Limitations of Functional
    Literacy as Operationalized by
    UNESCO

The intention of the Experimental World Literacy Program (EWLP) was to incorporate literacy programs into plans of economic and social development. In practice, however, EWLP for the most part turned out to be solely economically oriented. In most of the countries participating in the program, literacy activities were linked to agricultural and vocational skills. In practice EWLP was

seen as a means for increasing production (UNESCO,1976).

In retrospect, UNESCO realizes that the above prescribed role for functional literacy evolved from their notion that countries are underdeveloped because most of their people are underdeveloped:

> This affirmation expresses the "marginality'
> approach to illiterates in developmental terms.
> It also reflects the view prevalent in United
> Nations and Western academic circles at the
> beginning of the First Development Decade, that
> development was first and foremost a question
> of economic growth, stressing capital-intensive
> development and high-level technical skills.
> From this point of view, education in general
> and literacy in particular were considered as
> means of 'developing' the 'underdeveloped'
> people in terms of giving them the knowledge
> and skills necessary to expand their 'potential'
> capital in the services of society (1976:121).

UNESCO now recognizes that this concept ignored two critical issues. One, that human beings cannot be under-developed and that the underdevelopment is a "partial result of the inequities of the prevailing world economic system" (1976:121). However, at the Teheran Congress of 1965, the above notion of development as economic growth was the dominant viewpoint, which influenced UNESCO's policy on the role for literacy in economic development:

> If development is mainly economic growth. . .then
> rather narrowly work-oriented literacy is its
> functional partner. This relationship assumes in
> turn that underdevelopment is a mainly quantitative
> problem (insufficient GNP) requiring a mainly
> quantitative solution (economic growth). Inti-
> mately linked with this quantitative approach was--
> and still is, in many quarters--the assumption that
> insufficient GNP was due basically to a lack of
> technology and that economic growth would be
> achieved primarily through dissemination of tech-
> nology. . .Development is economic growth; is a
> technical process; therefore development is
> technical (1976:122).

Now that UNESCO realizes that the problem is not just growth, but development which is growth plus change in social and economic conditions, it suggests that development not be perceived in only technical solutions:

> A broad, multidimensional approach to both development and literacy is required. Indeed, it would seem that literacy programmes can only be functional-- (emphasis mine) and development contexts can only be fully conducive to literacy--if they accord importance to social and cultural and political change as well as economic growth (1976:122).

UNESCO acknowledges that a few countries (Tanzania, Algeria and Guinea) involved in EWLP realized this and included in their aims the dissemination of literacy as a means of enhancing popular participation in social and political activities. Albeit this intent was not followed in all cases in the preparations of materials, curriculum, or pedgagogy.

B. A Synopsis of the EWLP Projects

For the most part the purpose of the EWLP was to link functional literacy to rural development and industrial-vocational training. As explained earlier the nature of functional literacy as proposed by UNESCO encourages a selective approach. It was this element of selectivity (among other notions) that conflicted with the desires of some governments involved in EWLP. Of the eleven countries that participated five countries wanted to make a broader attack on illiteracy, thus they wanted national mass literacy campaigns (Algeria, Tanzania, Guinea, Sudan and Madagascar).

In Algeria there was an attempt to reconcile the

mass/selective conflict. Four years after the program had been in effect, the EWLP policy was revised to coincide with the government plan whereby one million workers were to be made literate.

In Guinea despite strong consistent objectives to the selectiveness of EWLP, there was no attempt on the part of UNESCO to resolve the conflict. Guinea mostly used their EWLP project to train instructors for their mass campaign which was to be launched in 1971.

Sudan favoring the mass approach to literacy viewed their EWLP project as the first step in that direction. The Sudan project was terminated after the first phase in 1973. In 1974 Sudan launched a mass campaign which UNESCO doubts will be successful because of the financial, administrative and technical problems experienced in the experimental project.

Madagascar was never able to reconcile the differences with UNESCO in their desire for a national literacy scheme with a relatively simple structure. UNESCO insisted on a selective project in a limited geographical area and a relative sophisticated and costly infrastructure.

Three countries had various kinds of mass literacy projects in existence before they became involved with EWLP (Ethiopia, Iran, Mali). The major conflict with EWLP in Iran centered around the linkage of literacy with vocational skills. This clashed with the national campaign and caused friction in the pre-operational phase. Eventually, the

national campaign adopted approaches developed within the experimental project.

In Ethiopia the Ministry of Education had its own literacy program. EWLP functioned under the Ministry of Education. Conflict arose because EWLP methods were so different from those employed by other programs that they alienated the proponents of the Ministry of Education's own literacy program.

Mali had begun a mass literacy campaign in 1960 immediately after their independence. The EWLP project was to (as was agreed upon from the initial stage) have a national scope. Its role was to reinforce the National Centre for Literacy Material Production making it possible to reach 100,000 illiterate farmers and 10,000 industrial workers.

Another major source of conflict with EWLP was the desire of some countries to incorporate various sorts of consciousness-raising into their literacy efforts (Algeria, Guinea, Madagascar, Ecuador and Tanzania). The government of Algeria stressed the necessity for literate workers to make the economic and ideological system work. In Guinea the government proposed a campaign linked to consciousness-raising of all people in economic, social and political spheres. Madagascar had in operation already a program centered on the concept of animation rurale which consists of enlightening action based on training local leaders with a view to making the rural population more aware and establishing dialogues between the community and local

authorities. In Ecuador the government discarded EWLP procedures and drew on Freire's model after their UNESCO project was terminated. Any sort of political awareness programs were in direct conflict with functional literacy as modeled by UNESCO.

The above conflicts were partially the cause of many programmatic difficulties. One of the major problems was lack of high-level governmental support in many countries (Ethiopia, Ecuador, Guinea, Madagascar, and Sudan). Most of the countries that did experience high-level government support were ineffective in instilling supportive behavior amongst the lower-levels of the bureaucracy (Algeria, Mali, Iran, and Syrian Arab Republic).

Ethiopia's literacy instruction was divided into three sequential stages: (1) presenting the skills of basic literacy and numeracy, (2) reading to increase vocabulary, and (3) a follow-up travelling library with students being visited by a teacher about once a month. According to UNESCO, "a major problem, however was poor time utilization" (1976:37). Too much time they claim was spent in the first-phase. This explanation does not account for the fact that only 1,700 students were enrolled in the program, compared to the original planned figure of 73,000 students.

Guinea concentrated their efforts on training instructors for their mass campaign. Their project opened forty-three classes; the actual number of participants in these classes was not given, UNESCO prematurely terminated

the program.

Madagascar, Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic all experienced serious operational difficulties which led also to the premature termination of their functional literacy activities.

Five countries (Algeria, Ecuador, India, Iran, and Mali) at least achieved a relatively high degree of enrollments. But the number of participants completing the program was for the most part roughly half of those enrolled.

Table 3 p. 60 demonstrates the numerical failure of EWLP. However, due to the inflation of figures in India the results were actually worse than depicted by the table. India's statistics are not reliable because, in order to increase their numbers, children were included in a program that was intended only for adults. Also the system of reporting class participants collapsed due to the failure of the Ministry of Education to exercise proper supervision. The 200,000 literates who completed the program in Tanzania were administered tests; in most countries there was no evaluation made as to the ability of newly acquired skills. Tanzania enrolled more students than originally anticipated due to the expansion of their program in 1971 in preparation for their mass campaign which was launched officially at the conclusion of the EWLP project in 1973.

The cost of thirty-two million dollars for EWLP was divided between the United Nations Development Program and participating governments. The price would have been

Table 3

Participants' Results of EWLP

Countries	Participant Projected Goal	Participants Students Enrolled	Number of Participants Who Completed Training
Algeria	55,000	53,866	26,933
Ecuador	15,200	17,410	8,715
Ethiopia	73,000	1,700	212
Guinea	78,500	N/A	N/A
India	180,000	300,000	108,000
Iran	80,000	66,000	33,000
Madagascar	51,000	3,388	N/A
Mali	110,000	83,000	50,000
Sudan	N/A	7,400	0
Syrian Arab Republic	15,000	1,949	N/A
United Republic of Tanzania	200,000	303,000	200,000
Totals	857,700	837,713	426,860

Source: Based on data in The Experimental World Literacy Programme (1976).

considered reasonable if the number of participants had been

higher (Ampene, 1976 & Bhola, 1980).   (See Table 4 p. 62).

C.   Tanzania's Work-Oriented Adult
     Literacy Project (WOALP)

The goals of the Work-Oriented Adult Literacy Project

in Tanzania reflected national political and ideological

concerns to a greater extent than did most other EWLP pro-

jects.   These concerns were in addition to the narrower goal

which linked literacy with increased productivity through

attitudinal and behavioral change.   Functional literacy was

ultimately aimed at the development of the total citizen,

not simply the citizen as producer.

The project's specific objectives included:

(1)   Teaching illiterate men and women basic reading

and writing, and solving problems of arithmetic, using basic

vocabulary words employed in current agricultural and

industrial practice.

(2) Helping them apply the new knowledge and skills

to solve their basic economic and social problems.

(3)   Preparing them for more efficient participation

in the development of their village, region and country.

(4)   Integrating the adult literacy and adult edu-

cation programmes with the general agricultural and

industrial development of the country.

(5)   Providing the necessary reading materials,

imparting the knowledge of community and personal hygiene,

nutrition, child care, home economics which would help

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Table 4

EWLP Funding for United Nations Development Program

Country	United Nations Development Program Expenditures	National Government Expenditures	Total
Algeria	1,009,500	4,793,100	5,802,600
Ecuador	1,193,800	1,071,400	2,265,200
Ethiopia	1,812,000	1,661,700	3,473,700
Guinea	756,000	229,500	985,500
India	143,800	4,164,200	4,308,000
Iran	1,683,300	4,268,900	5,952,200
Madagascar	558,500	366,100	924,600
Mali	1,400,700	1,099,600	2,500,300
Sudan	674,700	636,700	1,311,400
Syrian Arab Rep.	251,400	44,700	296,100
United Rep. Tanzania	1,327,300	2,870,000	4,197,300
Totals	10,811,000	21,205,900	32,016,900

Source: Based on data in The Experimental World Literacy Programme (1976).

improve family and community life, providing opportunity for
a continuing education and avoiding relapse into illiteracy
(UNESCO, 1976:104). Political advocation was also a part of
the curriculum (Malya, 1979).

Development policies in Tanzania stressed a strategy
of development toward self-sufficiency in skilled manpower
and food which was to be accomplished mainly through the
upgrading of rural productivity. Vijiji vya Ujamaa (cooper-
ative villages) were to be the vehicle for the above objec-
tive also the adoption of non-traditional, but none the less
labor-intensive farming techniques. Nyerere's Education for
Self-Reliance called for, among other measures, major
expansion in primary and adult basic education.

Thus, the concept of functional literacy as shaped by
Tanzania not UNESCO clearly fitted their development objec-
tives. The concept of 'self-reliance' also called for
participation at the village level. WOALP was supportive
of this concept, particular efforts were made to insure that
literacy education was not viewed as a government imposition.
WOALP was based on the policy stated in the National Five-
Year Development Plan whereby literacy would be implemented
in response to local popular demand as people became aware
of its functional importance.

The above factors made for strong high level govern-
ment support. Cooperation between ministries was also
highly visible. The Ministry of Regional Administration and
Rural Development (MORAD) was responsible for the

implementation at the beginning of the program. This responsibility was shifted in 1970, two years after the program had been in operation, to the Directorate of Adult Education of the Ministry of Education. The program suffered some difficulties during this transition. But eventually the project operations were improved. The Ministry of Education's organizational structure rendered it capable of operating at the local, regional and national levels.

On the local level were "centre committees" set up by organizers from WOALP. This committee was usually made up of the local party leader, a priest or pastor, and others from the community. Their decision making included: (1) how many classes to form (maximum 30 per class), (2) which literacy materials to use, (3) when to meet, (4) location of an agricultural demonstration plot, and (5) length of time classes should continue. In addition each individual class set up its own committee to decide on participant discipline and to determine how the profits from the demonstration plots were to be spent (Zieghan, 1976:10).

Another factor contributing to the effectiveness of Tanzania's project is that since their independence in 1961, the government has made Swahili the official language unlike many other African countries, Tanzania has one dominant African language. Swahili is widely spoken throughout the country although 120 different languages exist (Viscusi, 1971:10).

Tanzania's WOALP was not without its problems. One of the major difficulties was the lack of agricultural specialists, which made it difficult to adequately provide the agricultural-technical knowledge that the program required. Also early in the program the quality of instruction was not very high, ranging from poor to fair. After 1970 the quality of instruction improved although agricultural training remained weak. Moreover to reach its goal of 200,000 participants, Tanzania reduced its standard of literacy two levels.

However, overall, it is clear that Tanzania had the most effective project of those involved in EWLP (Mbunda, 1976; UNESCO, 1976; Ampene, 1976). Viscusi in reference to Tanzania's project concluded, "that as a joint national-international quest for knowledge about education for rural adults and its relationship to social and economic development, the project can be called a success" (1971:39).

Besides the factors already cited, one must consider the importance given to education in Tanzania. It is viewed as being central to the development process. Education is a part of an integrated strategy for egalitarian development which bases itself on a rural transformation.

As mentioned earlier, Tanzania toward the end of its EWLP project launched a mass campaign which is also functionally related to twelve economic activities such as wheat growing, fishing, rice cultivation, etc. In addition there is a primer which deals with national policies. According to

World Education Reports Tanzania as of August 1975 had a total of 5,860,437 illiterate adults. Of the total enrolled over half of them had passed student proficiency exams. Tanzania has divided their literacy standards into four levels. Levels three and four have been achieved by 1,909,011 adults; 784,483 have passed level two; and 83,925 have passed level one, the remainder have not been able to pass as yet any level.

In 1971, when Tanzania shifted from the selective approach proposed by UNESCO to the mass approach, literacy efforts took on a higher degree of importance. One can recognize the similarities of the national spirit that took place in Cuba in 1961 with national will that increased in Tanzania. All mass media and national institutions were geared to promoting literacy. There were special radio programs; one of the newspapers devoted one page each day to an article readable by new literates. Literacy themes were printed on popular textiles; local dancing groups and jazz bands popularized the movement through their music; shows at local functions were designed to popularize the literacy campaign. Political and government meetings would not be complete without a literacy component. The activities of individuals and organizations, both public and private were mobilized in the war against illiteracy (Mbunda, 1976:13). Tanzania, a country which had one of the world's lowest literacy rate will soon (probably in the early 1980's) be the first country of sub-Sharan Africa to eradicate illiteracy

(UNESCO, 1976).

D. Summary

There are many factors which contributed to the
failure of EWLP. We have demonstrated the limitation placed
on literacy by over-emphasis on economic growth. But, there
was also the additional restriction of selectivity. As was
noted out of the eleven countries participating in EWLP,
eight wanted or had national literacy campaigns. Of the
countries that had national campaigns only Mali was permit-
ted from the initial stage of their EWLP project to maintain
a national scope. Mali, perhaps partially due to the absence
of conflict on this issue, had one of the relatively more
effective programs quantitatively and qualitatively.

In selling what it referred to as a product, UNESCO
for the most part ignored the wishes of their clients. Anna
Lorenzetto had cautioned UNESCO against the selective
approach after visiting Cuba at the request of UNESCO to
study their mass campaign: "These programs should include
. . .the greatest number of people, even if they are not
directly involved with the already organized sections of the
community" (1978:35). Moreover, she suggested that such a
selective program would create a literate elite in respect
to those who remained illiterate.

After the termination of EWLP, UNESCO expressed
regrets that they did not assess earlier successful mass
literacy campaigns:

> Had the Cuban and similar experiences been taken
> more fully into account, the world programme might
> well have avoided certain pitfalls. It might have
> also offered participating governments who so
> wished critical--if financially limited--aid to
> undertake mass campaigns. This possibility only
> received renewed emphasis in UNESCO's Programme
> and Budget for 1975-76, after more than a decade
> in disfavour (1974:127).

UNESCO also realizes that there is nothing inherent in the concept of functional literacy that prevents it from being applied on a mass basis.

The EWLP it was feared would be biased against women who represent the majority of illiterates in not only developing countries but worldwide. According to Lorenzetto "one of the weakest points of the project is the fact that only a very small number of women already engaged in artisan industry receive education; this exclusion of women has the danger of increasing the already wide gap between the cultural level of men and women within each country and the world" (1968:35). However, UNESCO stated that vocational programs were opened up to women and since women play a very important agricultural role in many EWLP countries, the result was that females represented fifty-five percent of all program enrollees (1976:162). But statistics published by World Education Reports indicate an increase of illiteracy among women. In 1960, women made up fifty percent of the world's illiterate population. As of 1970 they account for sixty-two percent of that population (1975:8). This suggests that the fifty-five percent of female enrollment quoted by UNESCO is not adequate in closing the gap between male and

female illiteracy.

Another crucial issue surrounding EWLP is the influence of foreign aid on policy-making. As we have observed in many instances the aspirations of the countries which participated in EWLP were antithetical to those of UNESCO. The problem with aid is that it tends to serve the economic and/or geo-political interests of the donors, even when it is multilateral (as EWLP was, supported by UNDP-- United Nations Development Program/UNESCO) and supposedly more neutral than bilateral. For example, the World Bank has been noted for directing its clientele along lines of private investment and has threatened to withdraw funds when its clients move in the opposite direction of their policy:

> . . .The World Bank told President Nyerere that he would have to modify his socialist policies at the price of his country's economic survival. It virtually threatened to withdraw current and future aid unless he suspended his ujamaa programme (Hatch, 1975 as quoted in Gillette, 1977:270).

There is a problem also with the foreign experts who come as part of the aid package. UNESCO concedes that their foreign experts attempted to force a uniform program developed at the international level on national policy-makers. For the future they now suggest that "a more fruit-ful alternative would probably be to lay greater stress on aiding policy-makers so inclined to generate their own innovations in literacy (and other education areas) (1974: 132). Also though the experts were competent in their areas which were consistent with the view of literacy as a

technical problem and with its vocational interpretation of functionality. It does not, however, correspond to the need to view both literacy and functionality in a more flexible and broader socio-cultural perspective (1976:136).

The question arises as to why the EWLP countries agreed to be a part of the program, besides the more obvious response from UNESCO that they saw no prospect of obtaining international aid for literacy in any other way; it can also be argued that many of the countries policies changed during the duration of the program. One has to consider that many of these countries had just gained their independence in the early or mid-1960's. Most of the proposals by countries requesting participation in EWLP were submitted in the mid-1960's. Many of the countries were just beginning to shape their development policies. For example, Tanzania was first visited by UNESCO in 1965. This was two years before Tanzania's Arusha Declaration which emphasized socialism and self-reliance and the crucial role or rural adult education in development. Also it became obvious to Tanzania in the late 1960's that their country was in need of mass campaigns not only for the purpose of literacy but in other areas. In 1970, there was a mass campaign to encourage political involvement--"The Choice Is Yours" followed by a campaign related to health--"Man Is Health" in 1973, and in 1975 a campaign geared to nutrition--"Food Is Life" (Mbunda, 1977: 10).

All of the above factors led to the failure of EWLP,

Schwana Tropp (a spokesperson for UNESCO) describes the program as "a startling and shocking waste in almost all respects" (as quoted in Kozol, 1978a:74). Perhaps, the most encouraging result of EWLP was that it has forced UNESCO to re-evaluate their policies: "EWLP thus has opened the door to a radical revision of the United Nations system's current operational approach" (1976:151).

The implications of EWLP for other Third World countries will be dealt with in the final chapter.

Chapter Five

CUBA'S LITERACY CAMPAIGN: CASE STUDY

A. Historical Background

Pre-revolutionary Cuba was oppressed in both the
forms that Freire speaks about--externally and internally.
Although Cuba had a greater percapita income than most Latin
American countries it exhibited gross social inequalities.
The country was characterized by high unemployment, economy
dominated by foreign capital and products, and gross
inequities in distribution of income and education. The
U.S. dominated its single export--sugar, the majority of its
infrastructure and its technology (Carnoy, 1979).

Primary and secondary education, particularly in the
rural areas, was underdeveloped in quantity and quality.
Although 50% of the population was located in the rural
areas, only one-third of the primary enrollments were com-
prised of rural students in the decade of the 50's (Carnoy,
1979).

University education was characterized more by its
irrelevance and imbalance than enrollment deficiency although
the latter was also a problem. The majority of college
students were enrolled in law, liberal arts and medicine.
The result of this was the mainstay of the economy--
agriculture--did not have sufficient manpower. Industry and

mining lacked engineers, technicians, scientists, and surveyors (Jolly, 1964). And the dependence on foreign expertise in those areas created a vacuum in indigenous technical leadership.

Adult education, the particular concern of this paper, was practically non-existent in pre-revolutionary Cuba. The minimum amount available was limited to on-the-job training for mechanics or skilled craftsmen.

B. Revolutionary Changes

In pre-revolutionary Cuba, schooling helped to maintain the status-quo. In Cuba today education is playing a key role in transformation of society. Cuba's political leadership recognized, however, as does Freire, that for education to be transformed structural changes must occur in the society. Therefore the major objectives of the revolutionary government have been as follows:

1. To expand and utilize fully the society's productive capacities and to transform the Cuban economy. . .into a rapidly growing system capable of ensuring increasing abundance for all.

2. To eliminate economic, political and cultural dependence on the United States. . . .

3. To replace the rigid class structure of capitalist Cuba with a classless and egalitarian society; to end the city's economic, cultural and political domination over the countryside;

4. To transform work into a challenging and creative activity for a new socialist man motivated by social consciousness and the desire for self-expression (Bowles, 1971:474).

The following steps have been taken in Cuba towards

fulfilling the above objectives:

1. Agrarian reform - (This is quite significant since before revolution Cubans were agricultural wage earners rather than landowners;)

2. the government adjusted salary structures to reduce the difference between the highest and lowest salaries;

3. full employment insures all persons able to work an income;

4. government rationing prohibits those with higher incomes from purchasing additional goods;

5. social services were redistributed in such a way to favor lower income Cubans. In addition, medical care transportation and recreational facilities have been made available to the masses (Carnoy, 1979).

University education did not experience the same rapid growth as primary and secondary education. Actually enrollment in 1960-61 declined due to mass mobilization for the literacy campaign and the army. Also as a part of the redistribution efforts of the Cuban leadership, adult education and primary and secondary education for the youth took priority over university training. However, higher education enrollments began to increase in 1966 (Carnoy, 1979:90).

Childcare which was totally nonexistent in pre-revolutionary Cuba is very progressive and expanding rapidly; Cuba spends a larger percentage of its national wealth on childcare than almost any other country. Children from forty-five days to five years old are taught, in addition to verbal and motor skills how to relate to work and each other.

"Schools in the countryside" demonstrate a concept

that is also emphasized by Freire the relationship between
work and study. The program involves youths from grades 7-10
spending 45 days each year in rural camps undertaking a
minimum of class work and a maximum of working with state
farms, private farmers and the military in agricultural
production (Simkins, 1977).

Adult education like the formal education system is
geared towards transforming Cuban values of all societal
levels to fit into the new social relations of production.
In fact, the adult literacy campaign occurring in 1961 only
three years after Castro's take over was instrumental in
setting the stage for socialist development in general and
with transformation of the educational system in particular.
Ideas that were born during the campaign would later serve
as the institutional and ideological framework for formal
and non-formal education. Although the Cuban government has
made important changes since 1961, the official acceptance
of Marxist-Leninist perspective and related efforts to build
a communist party, the literacy campaign remains as an
important basis of Cuban thought and action (Fagen, 1969).

C. The Great Campaign

   1. Policy and Objectives

        On September 26, 1960 Fidel Castro stood before the
General Assembly of the United Nations and made the following
announcement:

        Next year our people propose to launch an all out
        offensive against illiteracy, with the ambitious
        goal of teaching every illiterate person to read

and write.

- - -

Organizations of teachers, students and workers
the entire population are preparing themselves
for an intensive campaign and within a few
months Cuba will be the first country in the
Americas to be able to claim that it has not a
single illiterate inhabitant (Fagen, 1964:9).

The broad objectives of the revolutionary government
and the literacy campaign correspond due to the close
relationship between education and economics in Cuba. Thus,
the overall objectives of mass mobilization of the masses
for productive activities and the transformation of the
ideological base to a socialist perspective were among the
aims of the government and the Campaign. Therefore 1961,
"The Year of Education", or the Great Campaign was an
important stage in the Revolution, since it would serve as a
testing ground for many of the ideas, tactics, and organi-
zational devices later incorporated into the revolutionary
style of Cuba (Fagen, 1964; & 1969; Kozol, 1978a&b; Jolly,
1964; Huberman & Sweezy, 1969; Carnoy, 1979).

Besides the aims of providing basic skills and
raising political consciousness the campaign again corre-
sponding with governmental aims sought to close the economic
and educational gap between the rural and urban sector. Also
the campaign was to create a solidarity between previously
divided rural and urban segments of the population. This
would be implemented by the use of urban instructors in the
rural areas many of whom had never been exposed to the
deprivation existing in the rural sector.

The specific aim of the campaign was to provide basic

reading and writing skills to the participants of the program. The goal set for the campaign was the achievement of first-grade level. The Cuban government was aware that this minimum level was insufficient in enabling them to function productively. The campaign was only the first phase of mass adult education. The follow-up to the campaign--"The Battle of Sixth Grade"--would seek to bring the majority of the new literates to the level of the sixth grade (Kozol, 1978a&b; Fagen, 1964).

Though the start of the campaign is usually dated from Castro's speech at the U.N. its ideological and organizational roots date back as far as 1953 to Castro's trial for the attack on the Moncade Army Barracks. Part of his self-defense was an attack on the government for economic conditions of the poor particularly the rural poor and their inability to read and write. Later, Castro and his small group of guerillas adopted as part of their Manisfesto a resolution that the provisional government would launch an intensive campaign against illiteracy which would stress the rights and duties of citizens to their society (Fagen, 1969: 34).

The short time frame of one year was considered realistic, but it was going to take a tremendous effort to achieve the goal.

2. Planning and Strategies

Part of the revolutionary strategy was to make a

public pledge to eradicate illiteracy: though Cuban offi-
cials had not planned the project out in detail; they had
engaged in a pilot project which gave them ideas of the
obstacles they would have to face.

The organizational style that characterized the
Campaign grew out of the initial efforts in literacy by
guerillas in the Sierra Maestra. It was here that the
important concept that one does not have to be a professional
to teach literacy originated. A concept which many non-
formal educators have just realized in the decade of
seventies.

The Rebel Army in Sierra Maestra engaged in informal
literacy training and political education with the soldiers
and farm laborers in this area. Though few people were
actually taught to read by the Rebel Army their influence is
felt in the teaching materials, symbolism, and mobilization
tactics of 1961. Materials used by Castro and the Rebel Army
were drawn from the writings of José Martí the revolu-
tionary poet and soldier. His essay "Ser culto es el único
modo de ser libré (To be educated is the only way to be
free) written in 1884 was of philosophical importance in the
early literacy efforts (Fagen, 1969:38).

In 1959, the Comisión de Alfabetización (Literacy
Commission) was established in the Ministry of Education.
The Commission organized literacy centers and recruited
teachers, particularly in urban areas. The National
Institute for Agrarian Reform (INRA) began literacy work in

less populated areas as part of its larger program of rural development. The Rebel Army also continued its literacy work; and as a direct antecedent to programs that were later to become characteristic of the literacy campaign, brigades of students volunteers, after a period of training in the mountains, were sent to the remotest rural areas as literacy workers and primary school teachers. The official estimates of people taught by the above organizations in the period from 1959-60 vary from 60,000 to 100,000. If the maximum number is accepted this would only represent ten percent of illiterate population. But sufficient work had been done to determine the logistical, motivational, and organizational dimensions of the national problem (Jolly, 1964; Fagen, 1969).

During the experimental programs an incident occurred which became a symbolic spiritual force for Cubans especially the youth. A young Black Cuban was assassinated by counter-revolutionaries while teaching in the mountains of Las Villas. In a speech at the graduation ceremony of a group of voluntary teachers, Castro explained why he was killed. According to Castro, Conrado Benítez had not been "the son of a land owner, an industrialist, or a business man. He didn't go to Miami or Paris. He was an eighteen-year-old youngster who knew only poverty and sacrifice. . .He was poor, he was a Negro, and he was a teacher. There you have three reasons why the agents of imperialism assassinated him" (Castro, 1961 as quoted in Fagen, 1969:42).

In Cuba perhaps no other young Cuban who did not

participate in the struggle against Batista has been as widely eulogized as Benítez; school, factories, and recreation centers were named after him. His symbolic influence was of particular significance in the campaign where the youth brigades felt they were completing the work of Benítez (Fagen, 1969:242).

The major motivation appeal of those participating in the campaign both at the student level and instructor levels was a sense of national duty. Castro had told the youth instructors that it would be both a privilege and a duty to serve, live, work, and learn with the poor and humble of the island (Fagen, 1969:42). Also there was the hope among the youth instructors for a scholarship in 1962 (Jolly, 1964: 201).

When the Campaign officially ended on December 22, 1961, the Cuban government began a policy of scholarships for all ninety-five thousand members of the youth who were instructors in the campaign. In subsequent months, as Cuba grew into a full-scale socialist state the scholarship plan was expanded to include all people who could demonstrate competence and a sincere desire for university admission (Kozol, 1978a:59).

For the illiterates, besides the motivation to learn, there was the pressures of government publicity given the campaign and persuasive visits during the preliminary census. Since there was a census taken to determine those who were illiterate it was difficult for them to hide their inability

to read and write. An illiterate person could just refuse to learn, but few did and most of them were very old. Also there were incentives of fiestas, presentatives of certificates and television appearances added great prestige.

There was a proposal by the Trade Unions which expressed the desire to use more coercive means to make sure workers would participate: "By agreement of the Trade Unions, the Revolutionary Government was requested to enact a law effective from January, under which all those illiterate workers who have refused to be taught would not have the right to receive salary increases or promotions, or jobs if they were unemployed" (Trabajo, 1961 as quoted in Jolly, 1964:199). Jolly admits that he is "not sure whether this proposal was actually enacted into law or whether it merely suggests some additional pressures" (1964:200). He also suggests that it would be misleading to over emphasize the importance of legal obligation when special efforts had been made to erode lack of self-confidence in illiterates by well publicized approval of all who studied (1964:201). Moreover, it would have been quite incompatible with the broad objective of the campaign of creating a cooperative spirit, if such forceful measures would have been introduced. Also there is no other evidence in the literature that such a drastic break from policy occurred.

Part of the strategy of the campaign was to involve the total nation indirectly or directly in the campaign. National publicity was an important vehicle in this aspect

of the campaign. Advertisements in the newspapers, street dances, poetry contests were all utilized to encourage participation in the campaign. As the campaign got underway other creative activities were designed to keep the public involved in the literacy struggle: auto races, songfests, tree-planting expeditions, athletic contests, beauty pageants, literacy events, inspirational talks, radio and television programs, posters (Fagen, 1969:48 & 57). In 1961 certain major corporations still were permitted to manu-facture, sell, and advertise consumer goods in Cuba of which one was Coca Cola Company as Fagen points out, "showed the lily-white and well-manicured hand of the lady of the house-hold (with a coke bottle near by) guiding the darker and rougher hand of a domestic servant through the ABC's. The slogan read: "In 1961, the Year of Education, use your 'pause that refreshes' to teach reading and writing to whom-ever you have near" (Bohmia, 1961 as quoted in Fagen, 1969: 57).

A very popular record during the "Year of Education" was based on a man whose inspiration to become literate was to enable him to write a love letter to the woman he loved. Cuban educational officials jokingly use this as an example that everything they do is not political (Kozol, 1978b:371).

The newness of the experience for both the literacy workers and the illiterates was perhaps another motivational force especially those working in the rural areas. For the youth instructors living away from home must have been an

unique experience for them. And even for the adults working in urban areas there was the challenge for the first time of carrying out literacy instruction. As for the illiterates not only were they students for the first time in their lives but they were interacting with people from the urban areas, an experience quite different from their usual isolation.

Although all the above factors contributed to motivations behind the campaign, the prevailing factor to all those involved in the literacy struggle was the identification with a revolutionary effort (Kozol 1978b; Jolly 1964; Carnoy 1979).

3. Administration and Organization

The First Congress of the Municipal Councils of Education (local school boards) an arm of the Ministry of Education convened in October 1960. At this time they declared: "Death to illiteracy will be the number one goal of 1961" (Revolucion, 1960 as quoted in Fagen 1969:38). Also at this time the previously Literacy Commission was replaced by a new National Literacy Commission. The Literacy Commission originally as a part of the Ministry of education consisted of solely members of the Municipal Councils of Education. The Congress realized the Ministry of Education did not have sufficient resources to carry out the mass mobilization of the Literacy Campaign (Jolly, 1964:192; Fagen, 1969:38).

Another reason for the creation of the National Literacy Commission was the goal of revitalizing and "making

revolutionary" the Municipal Councils of Education, which according to one commentator were ineffectual during the first two years of the revolution because of their "professionalism, technicalism, verbal speculation as opposed to concrete work, and their conformism (to old teaching methods)" (Virgilio Gómez Fuentes, 1961 as quoted in Fagen 1969:39).

The National Literacy Commission was structured to incorporate as key members representatives of Cuba's most important governmental, quasi-governmental, and mass organizations and tying in at the municipal level to the councils of education, which in turn had substantial representation from the local branches of the same organizations. Thus, the new Commission represented a broadly based national organization with technical, financial, propaganda, and publication departments at the national, provincial, and local levels for information gathering, mobilizing, and teaching (Fagen 1969:39 and Jolly 1964:193).

The most important participating organizations, in addition to the Ministry of Education, were the Revolutionary Armed Forces, the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations, the Confederation of Cuban Workers, the National Union of Educational Workers, the National Association of Small Farmers, the Federation of Cuban Women, the Association of Young Rebels, the Federation of University Students, and the National Institute of Agrarian Reform. The Committees for Defense of the Revolution had just begun to organize in 1960 and therefore did not participate fully until somewhat later

(Fagen, 1969:39).

Armando Hart a close associate of Fidel and one of
the top revolutionary leaders was the Minister of Education
in 1961; he was directly responsible for coordinating efforts
of the campaign (Fagen, 1969). Dr. Paul Ferrer the current
Vice-Minister of Adult Education was the Vice-coordinator of
the National Literacy Commission. Ferrer was personally
appointed by Fidel as a literacy expert.

The coordination duties of the Commission included:
finance, publicity, publications. The duties of provincial
department and the municipal committees were similar to the
Commission but also included teaching techniques (Jolly,
1964:192).

An indication of the importance given the campaign by
government leadership was evident when the Minister of
Education left for six-week tour of Eastern Europe; Fidel,
himself, took over the Ministry of Education (Fagen, 1969:
43).

Much of the revolutionary spirit of the campaign was
due to the initial enthusiasm of Fidel which spread through-
out the country. This point is exemplified by Ferrer in an
interview with Jonathan Kozol, 'we must do it said Fidel,
with the whole people--and by a heroic rhythm': "Every one
with whom I spoke in schools, in public buses, in the various
bars and little cabarets, expressed the same excitement and
the same sense of heroic rhythm that Fidel had first
conveyed" (1978b:349)..

4. Participants and Results

The 1953 Census in Cuba reported that 23.6 percent of all Cuban adults were illiterate with a large gap between the rates for the urban and rural areas, of which the rates were respectively 11 and 41.7 percent (Jefferies, 1967:65). As to what the illiteracy rate was at the beginning of the campaign varies slightly: 20% (Kozol, 1978a), 21% (Jolly, 1964) and 23.6% (Huberman and Sweezy). The differences apparently stems from lack of valid statistics on the pre-literacy projects. Kozol and Jolly seemingly used different estimates of the results of the pilot projects. Huberman and Sweezy do not take into account at all the pre-campaign literacy activities.

The preparatory census for the campaign was started November, 1960, and attempted to locate and register all illiterates. By February, 412,000 were located; by April, 546,000; and June, 684,000. The final total of illiterates registered came to 979,207 (Jolly, 1974:199 and Kozol, 1978b:360).

Of the 979,207 illiterates a total of 707,212 successfully completed the program. This figure was verified by an investigation made by UNESCO. The 272,000 remaining were either semi-literates, senile, and 25,000 were Hatians whose inability to speak Spanish kept them from participating in the program (Fagen, 1964; Kozol, 1978a and Jolly, 1964). (See Table 5 p. 87).

The target population for the campaign was

Table 5

Adult Illiteracy Rates in Cuba

Year	Total Population	Illiteracy Percentage rate
1953	5,885,600	23.6
Jan. 1961	6,933,700	20.0
Dec. 1961	7,000,000	4.0
1977	9,600,000	2.0

Source: Kozol, 1978a. who compiled the figures for
1953 from a Cuban Census (1953), January
1961 figures are Kozol's estimates based
on pre-campaign literacy activities.
December 1961 figures are from UNESCO's
statistics, (1965) and 1977 figures were
obtained from Kozol's interviews with Cuban
educational officials.

illiterates of the age fourteen and above. There was no
maximum age limit set. The oldest participant was an
ex-slave woman who was 106 years old. Based on the 1953
census Jolly makes some rough estimates of demographic
characteristics of the participants." If we assume illit-
eracy was little changed since 1953, just over two-thirds of
the illiterates were of working age (fifteen-sixty-five)--68
percent of those in the towns and 70 percent of those in the
rural areas. "There were twice as many illiterates in the
country as in the towns, despite the fact that the rural
population was only two-thirds the size of the urban (Jolly,
1964:196). Jolly's estimate of twice as many participants
from the rural areas is supported by data collected by UNESCO,
231,057 in urban areas and 476,155 in rural areas. (See
Table 6 p.89).

Intensive literacy work in small groups was provided
for fishermen, charcoal burners, and others who for reasons
of isolation and mobility presented special logistical and
pedagogical problems.

5. Instructors

The massive mobilization required to instruct
approximately one million people is seldom experienced in any
societies except in war. A total of 271,000 instructors were
involved. Of this total 121,000 were called "Peoples
Teacher"--"Popular Alphabetizers: This group was composed of
adults who volunteered to teach in the urban areas, not far
from their homes. The "Conrado Benítez Brigadistas"

Table 6

Number of Participants in the Literacy Campaign

Provinces	Urban	Rural	Total
Pinar del Rio	14,754	50,717	65,471
Havana	71,712	19,749	91,461
Matanzas	14,218	20,670	34,888
Las Villas	46,559	84,921	131,480
Camaguey	21,075	62,611	83,686
Oriente	62,739	237,487	300,226
Totals	231,057	476,155	707,212

Sources: Lorenzetto and Neys, UNESCO, 1965:29.

accounted for approximately 100,000 volunteer youth instruc-tors. The Brigadistas were assigned to the rural areas. About 35,000 school teachers were involved who received their regular pay, all public schools were closed for nine months. The "Patria o Muerte Brigade--Fatherland or Death" made up the remaining 15,000. This brigade consisted of factory workers who were given paid leave from their jobs with the understanding that their work would be made up by fellow workers. The Patria o Muerte Brigade assisted the student brigadistas in the rural areas (Jolly, 1964:194).

More detailed statistics are available on the youth brigadistas than other instructors due to medical records kept on them during the campaign. The Literacy Commission reported in 1961 that forty percent of all student-volunteers were ten to fourteen years of age. Forty-seven percent were between fifteen and nineteen and the remainder under thirty (Kozol, 1978b:343).

Ideally, the Cuban government felt that a teacher/ student ratio would be one-to-two. They were prepared how-ever to settle for a ratio of one-to-four at the most. The actual average ratio was one-to-three. Since the ability of the youth varied a decision was made August 30, 1961, for the Partio o Muerte Brigade to assist the youth brigadistas with teaching and organization of supplies (Kozol, 1968a:5).

The youth brigadistas had received an extremely brief yet concentrated training session at Varadero Beach, an elegant ex-tourist spot about one hour from Havana. The

facilities at Varadero included nine separate dining rooms, three hundred cooks. Varadero housed 12,000 pupils at a time during the training periods (Kozol, 1968a:5).

The youth were instructed in the use of two essential teaching aids, Alfabeticemos (Let's Alphabetize) a book of oral readings which would also function as a teacher's manual, and the learner's primer, Venceremos (We Shall Overcome), both of which will be discussed in detail in the subsequent section.

Being urban oriented it was necessary to prepare the youth mentally for the unfamiliar surroundings of the impoverished rural areas. Also solidarity with people in the rural areas was stressed. The youth brigadistas were instructed to join in helping with daily work whether in the fields or in the homes.

In recognition of the brief preparation, the youth brigadistas were advised to meet in regional sessions, on a weekly basis with professional educators. As it turned out every Sunday morning the teachers held problem-solving sessions with the youth.

The time spent with the families varied in accordance with the abilities of the family and circumstances in the home. In some instances they spent eight months with one family. In other instances they were able to complete their work within two to three months or four to five months. During the early part of the day the brigadistas instructed the women and then they assisted with the daily chores and

instructed the men at night.

Physicians and nurses were mobilized by the National Literacy Commission to provide health care for those in the farthest mountainous regions because they were in physical environments that they were unaccustomed to, thus, it was feared they might become ill. Parents of students living in these remote areas were invited to visit these areas to quell fears of what might happen to their sons and daughters (Fagen, 1969:43).

Every youth of the Army of Education (as they were sometimes labeled) was given the following equipment: two pairs of pants, two shirts, a shoulder patch, a hammock and a badge symbolic of Conrade Benítez, whose work they were to complete. Each of the youth brigadistas also received a Coleman Lantern for travel from house to house on dark country roads also it was used for instruction since the rural houses had no electricity. The Lantern became symbolic of the literacy struggle (Kozol, 1968a:5).

In late August the statistics collected by National Commission reported a serious doubt on whether the Campaign would achieve its goal. Fewer than 120,000 former illiterates had been taught to read and write with 800,000 still untaught. The National Commission took four immediate steps. First, it was at this stage when the Patrio o Muerete--the workers brigades--were created to assist the youth brigades (Kozol, 1978b:355). As mentioned earlier there were representatives of major organizations involved in the National

Commission. But representation at the top was one thing and use of resources at the grass roots was quite another. It was at this stage of the campaign when the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations started to function as they had originally desired. This created a renewed surge. As more political resources and attention were added to the campaign, the bureaucratic structures began to operate more effectively and efficiently.

The third step was to increase the power of Municipal Education Councils to oversee all literacy workers in their jurisdiction (Kozol, 1978b:355-56).

Not certain that this would be sufficient, the government convened a second National Congress to determine if further measures were necessary. From this Congress came four additional steps: (1) a teachers draft was initiated to bring in those teachers who had not yet volunteered, (2) "Acceleration Camps"--In areas where large groups of people had fallen behind, a team organized a camp to provide instruction on an all day basis. The team was made up of expert educators, brigadistas and experienced People's Teachers. The camps were located in the urban and rural areas. Community organizers, neighbors and friends performed the work of the illiterates, whether farm work or industrial work. (3) The third step was to provide transportation either car pools or buses for People's Teachers who had heretofore instructed in cities to nearby rural areas. Lastly, "Study Coaches were identified by their expertise,

creative energy to act as dynamic catalysts in trouble spots where brigadistas had encountered resistance (Fagen, 1969:47-48; Kozol, 1978b:355-56).

Towards the end of the campaign in the month of November an incident occurred which again gave the campaign a special sense of urgency and solidarity. Just as Conrado Benítez had been used to motivate thousands of young people at the beginning of the literacy struggle, the assassination of Manuel Ascunce, a youth brigadista, was used to infuse the final three weeks of the campaign. According to Fidel, Ascunce and the father of a rural family were taken at gun-point and hung. Fidel suggested that this act was an attempt to frustrate the effort of the final stage of the campaign. For days afterward, revolutionary leaders gave speeches vowing to avenge the death of Ascunce by working harder and contributing more to the final weeks of the campaign (Fagen, 1969:52).

As the campaign came to a close and it was evident that the goal had been achieved, special trains began arriving into Havana from the provinces filled with returning brigades. Their victorious return was to Cuban citizens reminiscent to the triumphal entry of the guerilla troops only three years before.

On December 22, 1961 a massive rally was held to officially close the campaign which Jonathan Kozol vividly describes:

> In Revolutionary Square. . .95,000 student
> brigadistas and many of their teachers marched
> into the center of Havana beneath huge flags
> and banners that proclaimed their sense of
> victory and pride. In place of the banner,
> Venceremes, (We Shall Overcome) (emphasis
> mine). . .the brigadistas marched under a
> banner that proclaimed. . .iVencimos! (We
> Have Overcome) (emphasis original). The march
> began assembling at six a.m. . . .Five hundred
> brigadistas were selected to walk behind the
> flag of the campaign each with a book and a
> lantern. . .Some carried gigantic pencils
> molded from paper as a symbolic substitute for
> guns. It took four hours for the procession
> to come to its end. . .After Fidel had spoken
> the youth brigades began to chant: "Fidel!
> Fidel! What else have we to do?" Fidel replied
> in words that brought the literacy campaign to
> its official end. "Now you must return to
> school. . .When you are done, send me a telegram
> and tell me that you want a scholarship to go to
> the university. There you will gain the further
> skills our people need (1978a:58-59).

6. Curriculum, method and materials

As was determined earlier, the literacy struggle in Cuba was not viewed solely as a means of providing basic skills but also to raise the level of political conscious-ness of the citizens. This objective was implemented by the use of Alfabeticemos and Venceremos. Alfabeticemos was prepared by the National Literacy Commission. One million copies were printed in an inexpensive format by the govern-ment printing office. Venceremos was a work book designed to lead the illiterates in a step-by-step process through the particulars of reading and writing and the complexities of politics and the revolution (Fagen:14).

Basically there were two primary methods of instruc-tion. The first method was designed to enforce or reinforce

historical, ideological, and political images which reflected the new social order Cuba was attempting to establish. This was executed by teacher-student relationship (Fagen, 164: 12).

The second method involved interaction phases of recruitment, publicity and the teaching processes themselves. In this method the key element was participation--direct and indirect. The direct method was the reciprocal relationship between student and learner; each was to learn from the other. The indirect participation involved (at least potentially) the entire population. The citizenship in general was mobilized in the campaign against illiteracy, which instilled a national consciousness. The mass media and mass organizations played a key role in providing the necessary linkages for this process (Fagen, 1964:14).

The primer Venceremos was the key to the political approach to the Cuban literacy struggle. Their methodology was similar to work of Paulo Freire although there were some differences. There was a search made among the farmers and workers for "active words", emotional words associated with hostility or love. These generative words were used by technical experts to form fifteen lessons, each reiterating basic sounds and themes. Each lesson was presented as a story or discussion of one of the active topics and was preceded by photographs depicting Cuban lifestyles. This visual aid was useful in provoking discussions and clarifying the main theme of the chapter (Kozol, 1978b:350).

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The first word and also the first chapter was a three-letter combination, "O.E.A."--the Spanish-language version of the "O.A.S."--Organization of American States. Cuba by 1961 had already begun to experience economic isolation due to steps taken by the "O.E.A." This had a direct impact on farmers who could not obtain necessary farm equipment. Therefore the farmers could definitely relate to discussions centered around "O.E.A." The second active word, and chapter title was "INRA"--the initials of a revolutionary organization, The National Institute of Agrarian Reform which had initiated land distribution to the poor (Kozol, 1978b:352).

Subsequent chapters of the primary dealt with the following generative themes: "The Cooperatives of the Agrarian Reform, "The Land", "The Cuban Fishermen", and "The Peoples Store", etc. The earlier chapters were composed of simple sentences. By the sixth lesson sentences are longer and more complex (Kozol, 1978b:352).

Literacy instructors were in a brief guide book, Orientations for the Brigadista advised not to teach in an authoritarian style. They were to avoid the condescending manner of most teachers that they were exposed to before the revolution. They were to approach teaching as a shared relation. Yet, they were also cautioned not to permit a random, drifting atmosphere. As a means of achieving an organized format, Dr. Ferrer issued directives for a uniform sequence to be followed in all lessons:

First Step: Conversation
Conversation between the brigadista and the pupil
in regard to the photograph within the primer. . .
(a)   To find out what the pupils know about the
      subject of the photo.
(b)   To provoke oral expression.
(c)   To clarify the concepts.
Second Step: Reading
A complete reading of the text (block letters)
that appears beside the photo:
(a)   First, by the teacher: slowly and clearly.
(b)   Second, by the teacher and the pupil at the
      same time.
(c)   Third, by the pupil all alone. . .
Third Step: Practice and Exercise
(a)   Sight-recognition of a phrase or sentence that
      has been selected (Key).
(b)   Break-up of that phrase or sentence into
      syllables.
(c)   Examination of each syllable within an
      exercise (Kozol, 1978b:351).

Cuban officials felt that the above structure was
needed along with the sense of non-authoritation pedagogy to
provide a necessary balance.   Also the structured lessons
enabled the instructors to fill in for each other when neces-
sary.   Records were kept of every learner's progress and
attendance.   In addition, literacy workers were encouraged
to keep meticulous diaries of their reactions, emotions and
errors (Kozol, 1968b:351).

Alfabeticemos, the guide for literacy workers, began
with the necessity of eradicating illiteracy.   Three main
parts followed: (1) Orientations for the work of the
alphabetizer, (2) a series of themes which embrace the
fundamental subjects in Venceremos and (3) a vocabulary list
to clarify key words (Fagen, 1964:23-24).

The above methods of dialogue, use of generative
words and themes and photographs were used by Freire in

Brazil. According to Kozol, the similarities can be accounted for by the shared friendship and common struggle between Freire and Raul Ferrer--the vice-coordinator of the campaign.

> The similarity is no coincidence: Freire and
> Ferrer are warm and trusted friends. Their views
> have not been borrowed, each from each: rather,
> they have been inspired by a common viewpoint and
> a shared experience. Unlike almost all other
> educators of renown or power in the present day,
> Freire and Ferrer have forged their pedagogoic
> views among the people that they have been asked
> to teach. . .(1978a:19-20).

The differences can be explained by the circumstances of the Cuban campaign. "Freire's estimate of forty days of study to achieve a basic literacy skill became almost two hundred days in Cuba" (1978b:353). Kozol suggests that the main reason for the longer period in Cuba is because many of the Cuban instructors were youths where as Freire's teachers were adults. Freire's teachers were also much better pre-pared in comparison to the crash course received by Cuban instructors. Moreover, "the more explicit nature used in Cuba and the somewhat more directive role assumed by Cuban teachers (for example, the prior selection of a set of active words, rather than their slow discovery, as in Brazil) has to be explained, at least in part, by the embattled posture of the Cuban nation at the same time that the literacy program began" (1978b:353).

On April 15, 1961, the same day the literacy campaign officially began Cuba was attacked by Cuban exiles, resulting in many civilian casualties. Two days afterwards Cuban

exile pilots, trained in the U.S. and with the tactical sup-
port of U.S. Naval ships and aircraft, launched an invasion
at the Bay of Pigs. Cuban forces quelled the invasion
within seventy-two hours, seizing 1,200 captors. Subse-
quently, the U.S. declared a total embargo on trade with
Cuba. The OAS followed the U.S. in 1962 by excluding Cuba
from the Inter-American system (Kozol, 1978b:224-225).
Therefore, due to these military and economic actions, there
was a sense of urgency in Cuba during the literacy campaign.

7. Costs

Due to the nature of the massive mobilization which
the campaign required, it is very difficult if not impos-
sible to quantify the total amount of funds spent. Kozol,
in an interview with Dr. Ferrer, put forth this issue. Dr.
Ferrer admitted in an interview with Kozol that for some
expenditures estimates could probably be determined. "We
know, of course, the nation spent so many million pesos to
produce the primer and the manual. . .health and safety of
the brigadistas and their means of transportation. . .We
know the cost was great. . .I do not think that we could
ever make a proper compilation of that cost" (1968b:371).
Dr. Ferrer admits also that millions of pesos were spent in
the early phase of the campaign on eye-glasses and techni-
cians who fitted the eye-glasses. In addition, the salaries
of the professional teachers he informs us represented
another cost as well as supplies: ninety-five thousand

lanterns, uniforms, knapsacks and hammocks (1968b:371).

Some things, Dr. Ferrer suggests, would be impossible to quantify, such as the expense to the families of the youths that participated in the mountains and on the farms and traveling to visit their children. Although one could quantify the salaries of professional teachers, Dr. Ferrer feels that the salaries of the People's Teachers--the ordinary men and women of the country--cannot be put into figures (1968b:372).

Apparently, there has been no report made available of the total expenses of the campaign, even though the government had a commission working to compile them. Of the 1961 budget $12,300,000 of central funds were allocated to the campaign. According to Jolly if the salaries of the professional teachers are taken into account, it appears that the actual budgetary costs were roughly $52 million or about $73 per illiterate successfully taught, or approximately $58 for each person's study (Jolly, 1964:195).

Based on these figures and the fact that the new literates achieved for the most part a first grade level or at best second grade literacy level, may lead some observers to conclude that the campaign was not as successful as claimed. But as Fagen argues one cannot measure its success solely by academic criteria. "The campaign was intended to mobilize, and to change Cuban political culture. . .it was seminally important in the evolution of the institutional and political culture of the revolution. . .Even those who were

most cynical about the pedagogical achievements of the campaign would probably admit that the widespread cultural and psychological barriers inhibiting adult education in Cuba were broken during 1961, even if functional literacy were not achieved for very many of the so-called new literates" (Fagen 1969:55). ·Also as was mentioned, the campaign led to follow-up adult educational programs. Some details of the adult programs are discussed following the subsequent section.

8. <u>Evaluation Methods</u>

From the beginning of the literacy struggle, instructors were required to have every student fill out a questionnaire which explored the working career (present job, place of work, hours of work) of the new learner. Also the questionnaire sought to determine the extent of the student's formal education. Each student's progress was recorded by administering "initial", "intermediate", and "final tests". The tests and questionnaires served a dual purpose. First, they provided necessary information when instructors had to be replaced for various reasons such as illness or family difficulties, etc. Secondly, they were useful in providing Dr. Ferrer and his co-workers some early guidelines for revising their teaching methods. This information was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the follow-up adult educational programs (Kozol, 1978b:358).

The final evidence of the student ability to read and write was a letter to Fidel: As Kozol notes the letters

"provide a record of success which no statistic evidence could ever quite convey"(1978b:358).

> Finca el Naranjal
> November 12, 1961
> Year of Education
>
> Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz
>
> Dear Comrade:
>
> I write you this to let you know that now I know how to read and write thanks to our Socialist and democratic Revolution. That's why I'm writing to you, so that you can see with your own eyes. I take leave with a firm Revolutionary and democratic salute.
>
> I used to be illiterate.
> Patria o Meurte
> Teaching, we shall triumph.
>
> Felicia Carpio Barcelo
> (My literacy worker is Wilfreydo Neyra R.)
>
>
> November 14, 1961
> Year of Education
>
> Comrade Fidel Castro:
>
> I am very thankful because I know how to read and write. I would like you send me the Follow-up books to improve my knowledge more in the reading and writing. To be an educated people is to be free.
>
> Your Comrade
> Domingo Franco Mesa
> Venceremos! (Kozol, 1978b:359).

The Cuban government has 700,000 of these letters preserved in the Museum of Literacy. They are considered even more important than the series of three tests.

9. <u>Post Literacy Activities</u>

In most developing countries postliteracy discussions

evolve around providing reading materials to the new literate in order to improve their level of literacy and to prevent a relapse of illiteracy. In Cuba, however, as was mentioned briefly earlier, postliteracy developments resulted in large-scale adult education not only for participants in the literacy campaign but for those who had not yet completed primary school.

Adult education existed in pre-revolutionary Cuba, but on a very limited level--in the form of evening classes, and almost exclusively in the urban areas. These courses were for the most part non-technical, concerned mainly with teaching English. The revolutionary government has developed several kinds of adult education concerned with raising adults cognitive skills and their incorporation into the new ideology. In this sense adult education has the same objectives as children's education, to transform Cuban values at all societal levels to fit the new social relations of production.

In an effort to bring the majority of the 707,212 students who took part in the campaign to a level of functional literacy, several programs were initiated--Seguimiento ("follow-up"), then a program called "The Battle for the Sixth Grade." One-half million previously illiterate adults passed the sixth-grade qualification by the end of 1968 (Kozol, 1978b:362).

By September 1976, the Battle for the Sixth Grade had been made far more systematic and was under a new name,

Worker-farmer Education "EOC". At that time there were
300,000 men and women in the program (Kozol, 1978b:362).
The program was for all adults who had completed the first
three years of primary school but not the sixth grade.
Classes were held in the evenings and mornings for two hours,
five days a week. The curriculum included, Spanish, mathe-
matics, functional language (based on reading and writing
exercises) geography, Cuban history, and basic science
(Carnoy, 1979:77).

The Secondary Course of Worker Education (CSSO) is
geared to increasing the pupil's technical and moral quali-
fications for participating in industrial activities and
allowing them to improve their education at the secondary
level. This program maintains linkages with various training
sectors, although they also facilitate the access of worker
students to the university, their major energies are devoted
to the training of skilled manpower (Tapanes, 1972:6).

Worker-Farmer Faculty--"FOC" is for students who
desire to attend the university. Completion of a year of
basic secondary education qualifies the student to partici-
pate in this crash university preparatory course (Carnoy,
1979:78).

In 1979, the combined enrollment of FOC and EOC and
several smaller programs was 600,000. This figure does not
take into account those adults who have moved on to the
university level (Kozol, 1978b:363). There are resources
available to new readers whether or not they are partici-
pating in the adult educational programs. Radio and TV

programs included special programs designed to encourage continual reading. Also the magazine <u>El Placer de Leer</u> (The Joy of reading) is distributed free of charge. It is especially suited to new readers with national and international news (Huberman and Sweezy, 1969:31).

10. <u>Summary</u>

There are many lessons which emerged from the Cuban experience. In Chapter Two, we discussed the assertion by conflict theorists that in order for non-formal and formal educational programs to be effective, there must exist mechanisms for structural changes. This was one of the primary factors contributing to the success of the Cuban campaign, changes had and were occurring that complemented the literacy activities. Compulsory education for youth (very important in maintaining a literate society), a vast improvement in public health and childcare, rural technology and economic diversification were all a part of economic and educational changes geared to the redistribution of the wealth. In addition the laws on agrarian reform and other laws passed gave the educational system the required impetus both quantitatively and qualitatively so that with the increasing participation of the organized masses, education became closely linked with social practice and educational theory with productive work and basic vocational technological principles.

The political factor--the struggle for independence--

was a driving force in soliciting the cooperation of the population to sacrifice and to struggle to wipe out illiteracy. Also along with an ideology, there existed the necessary organization to implement the program and the realization that the work must be carried out by their own material and human resources. Thus, Cuba relying on its own resources did not have the intervention of foreign experts.

As to secondary factors that contributed to the success of the campaign let us examine the traditional reasons suggested by the non-formal educational literature for the failures of most literacy projects in developing countries: lack of motivation, lack of instructors, lack of resources, language problems, poor eyesight, lack of transportation to literacy centers, lack of government financial support, teaching methods geared for children, lack of children supervision and lack of follow-up (Jefferies, 1967; Harman, 1974; Oxenham, 1975; UNESCO, 1976).

Lack of motivation was not a problem in Cuba due to support from its citizenry, who perceived the literacy campaign as a struggle for economic and social emancipation.

The use of volunteer instructors increased available human resources. There are two points, however, to consider regarding this issue. Since the goal of campaign was only first grade level it made it possible to use youngsters to teach. Also one has to consider that the literacy rate in Cuba in 1960, whether 80 or 81 percent, was relatively high for a Third World country. According to data from the World

Bank the average literacy rate for low and middle income countries in 1960 was 29 and 51 percent respectively (See Table 2 p. 25). Therefore Cuba had more literate people available for literacy instruction.

Lack of resources other than instructors is related to lack of government financial support. In most Third World countries literacy is not a high priority. In Cuba not only was literacy a high priority, it was the first priority during the "Year of Education." Therefore, the government allocated a large amount of funds for the project. As was mentioned earlier, the 1961 budget allocated $12,300,000 to the campaign. The figure inflated to 52 million dollars when the salaries of professional teachers were included. This led some critics of the campaign to suggest that the cost was exorbitant. One could argue that had the schools been open the teachers would have been paid anyway. And since the literacy training was conducted by professional teachers, the youth were engaged in a learning process. Furthermore, the actual literacy process due to the emphasis placed on the use of dialogue was a learning experience for both literacy instructors and students. Also those too young or those who did not participate in the campaign, for other reasons, were provided activities by volunteers, albeit this was not well organized.

In many developing countries in addition to one or more national and official languages, a great number of vernacular languages are in use. This situation creates a

dilemma for literacy instruction. On the one hand, attempting to provide literacy instruction in vernacular languages poses problems of materials, instructors and other administrative tasks. On the other hand, utilization of national or official language--usually the language of their former colonizer i.e. English, French, Portuguese, etc.-- often creates a situation where by illiterate adults are being taught to read and write concurrently with learning a second language. Cuba did not have this problem since Spanish is spoken by all Cubans. The Haitian population in Cuba did not participate in the campaign due to their inability to speak Spanish. This raises the question of whether special arrangements could have been made to include the Haitians. Perhaps, given the short time table, energies and resources could not be directed toward such a small segment of the population. It would have been consistent with Cuba social policies and special efforts been made to accommodate the Haitians.

Due to lack of proper medical services, many illiterates have poor eyesight, which hampers their ability in learning to read and write. In Israel an attempt to use large type in printing materials failed, since the participant with sight problems still were not able to see the characters on the page (Harman, 1974:68). In Cuba, the eye-examination of the target population and the provision of eye-glasses for those in need alleviated this problem.

Lack of transportation and lack of child supervision

are related in the Cuban case. Since the instructors for the most part went to the homes of the students, there was no need to travel to a facility. Also there was no need for someone to babysit their children due to teaching in the home environment.

There are two basic approaches utilized in most literacy programs in the Third World. Since most literacy programs in these areas are primarily concerned with the inculcation of skills the reading instruction of the approaches emphasizes reading instruction rather than specific content. The Laubach Method consists of a series of charts in which letters are superimposed upon drawing of objects, so that each letter is identified by the shape of an object and the sound associated with it. Combinations of letters into syllables follow the instruction of the individual letters. This method is based on the ancient Egyptian system of hieroglyphics in which pictures representing objects were associated with syllables (Laubach and Laubach, 1960).

This method places strong emphasis in its initial stages on learning solely letters. For example, to teach the letter "K" a picture is shown of a man kicking one foot in the air, then the same picture is shown with the letter "K" on top of it. After learning the alphabet and syllables, the student begins his lesson in the primer. The following passage was taken from a Laubach primer used in an adult literacy program in India:

The shop keeper brings a cherry.
Grandfather brings a cherry.
Father's brother brings a cherry.
Mother's brother brings a cherry.

(Laubach and Laubach, 1960:15).

As is observable, this style is redundant and too simplistic. Laubach however stresses that literacy instruction should be kept extremely easy and should not attempt to make the material interesting:

The one great objective of the student is to learn to read as quickly as he can. If he can read the page without help he gets a tremendous thrill and he does not need any exciting story to add to that thrill. . .What a foolish thing it would be for our textbook writers for children to attempt to write an exciting story with a plot in the first lesson. . . .(1960:16).

Most educators today do not adhere to this type of logic for adults nor for instructing children (Ashton-Warner, 1963). It is now recognized that an adult cannot be instructed like a child. The life experiences of adults dictates that they bring to literacy classes a workable vocabulary. Also time is spent enunciating nonsensical sounds at a critical stage when their interest must be held (Harman, 1974).

The global or "Analytic" approach is based on the recognition of words or phrases with their meaning. By weaving words into stories or paragraph with meaning and constantly repeating them it is assumed that the learner will begin to associate written words with the objects or verbs they represent. The problem with this method is no time is spent reading. Users of this method complain that it is lengthy in application and a strain on the learners (Harman,

1974:65).

Both of these methods are limited in the extent of vocabulary acquired to a maximum of 300 hundred words. These instructional methods are not geared to sustain adult interest (Harman, 1974:65).

Cuba had used the Laubach Method in its earlier literacy programs but found it not adaptable to the current aims of the literacy campaign (Lorenzetto and Neys, 1965). The approach utilized in Cuba was more suitable to adults, with a vocabulary that was more relevant to their experiences.

All of the above factors, structural changes, revolutionary spirit and creative pedagogy, created the climate for the success of the campaign. The applicability of the Cuban campaign to other Third World countries is considered in the following chapter.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSION

LITERACY FOR EXPLOITATION OR LIBERATION?

This concluding chapter is divided into five sections. The first section summarizes the Cuban mass literacy campaign as it relates to the conflict paradigm. The implications of Cuba's mass literacy campaign for other developing nations is the concern of the second section. The third section summarizes EWLP in the context of the functional paradigm, followed in the fourth section by a discussion on the feasibility of functional literacy for Third World countries. The final section addresses future prospects for literacy activity.

A. Summary of the Cuban Campaign
    and its linkages to the Conflict
    Paradigm

Education in general and literacy in particular in Cuba has taken on the role prescribed for it by conflict theorists. It has become an instrument for transforming society on a more equitable basis. Consistent with the conflict perspective structural changes preceded the transformation of education. The radical reforms that had taken place prior to and during the campaign complemented literacy

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activities. Universal primary education achieved in post-revolutionary Cuba reinforces the maintenance of a future literate society.

In "Literacy Training and Mass Education for Development" (1976) Samir Amin sets forth three necessary conditions for any literacy or mass education to be effective:

> First condition, we should see to it that literacy or mass education campaigns closely combine theory and practice at various levels. In other words, universal scientific knowledge should be trans-mitted in a modern critical form, capable of providing for further enrichment. . .secondly, it should be aimed at all members of the population, in all rural and urban areas without distinction between those who have. . .work and those who are still jobless. . . .the third condition is to challenge openly all ideologies and traditional forms of education (1976:91).

These conditions were met in Cuba. The literacy campaign followed by mass education and reading materials provided an opportunity for adults to enhance their education either in a non-formal educational system or in a formal education up to and including university training. Materials were available for those who chose to engage in self-education.

That Cuba's campaign was aimed at the total popu-lation is evident in the results which reflect a higher degree of participation from the rural areas where illiteracy was more heavily concentrated. Involvement the rural sectors, in addition to pedagogical concerns, was important to create solidarity between the rural and urban areas.

Traditional education was not only analyzed but it
has been changed to meet the demands of a socialist Cuba.
Changes in teaching methods and content that were initiated
during the campaign were intended for transfer to the formal
educational system.[5] But Cuba has not been able to com-
pletely rid teachers of traditional teacher-learning methods.
This is evident in the view that many teachers hold that
their role is one of 'telling', simply presenting content to
the students, who in turn take notes and memorized these
notes for exams (Fagen, 1979).

In reference to challenging all ideologies, Amin is
concerned with not merely a critique of capitalist society
but also of local culture. Since the literacy campaign
shaped the basis of ideology in post-revolutionary Cuba, it
is perhaps understandable that in its initial stages it would
not be openly challenged. However, there seems to be evi-
dence that constructive criticism in Cuba is still either
being ignored or viewed as counter-revolutionary (Huberman
and Sweezy, 1969). Revolutionary non-Cuban socialists have
criticized the Cuban Revolution of paternalism, and authori-
tarianism (Huberman and Sweezy, 1969). Due to internal
problems and external criticisms Cuba has responded in a
positive manner by reassessing the political organization of
Cuban society. This led to decentralization of the political

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[5]For an analysis of education changes in Cuba see:
Cuba: Economic Change and Education Reform 1955-1974
(1979) Martin Carnoy.

and administrative bureaucracy (Fagen, 1969).

In addition to the above conditions Cuba had other factors that made its campaign successful and effective. A national government that had the will, power and resources to enforce its priority. This had positive effect on the programmatic operations: instruction, transportation, publicity, and materials, etc. All of these factors are common to all the major mass literacy campaigns (Soviet Union, China, and Viet Nam).

B. The Application of the Cuban
   Literacy Campaign to Other
   Third World Countries

Carnoy suggests that such a campaign as Cuba experienced cannot be transferred to capitalist dependent societies. "Because it is unlikely that the urban bour- geois and middle class would permit the enormous investment of time to reach poor illiterates in far off villages and teach them for nine months" (1979:138).

He also questions the ability of a capitalist society to mobilize (especially for nonmilitary purposes) the large number of people necessary to undertake such a plan. The Cuban government realized that to incorporate the poor into the campaign, there had to be better services, more educa- tion, and more food delivered by the Revolution. Thus, Carnoy argues that in absence of such change, a capitalist society cannot accomplish such a campaign:

> . . .to attempt seriously to mobilize poor
> peasants. . .in a dependent capitalist society,
> dominated by urban businessmen and rural land-
> owners and corporations, will never be

implemented because there is nothing to mobilize
them into (1979:139).

However, even for some socialist countries the Cuban
experience may not be feasible. Cuba had a relatively high
literacy rate at the onset of the literacy campaign: 76 to
80 percent in comparison to a current literacy rate among
low and middle income countries of 36 and 69 percent
respectively. Therefore Cuba had a vast source of available
instructors and a higher percentage already literate.

The one-year time-period for the Cuban campaign may
be unrealistic for other countries. The major mass literacy
campaigns were conducted in a much longer time. The
Russian campaign lasted for twenty years; the Democratic
Republic of Viet Nam started its struggle against illiteracy
in 1945 and thirteen years later in 1958, it achieved a 93.4
percent literacy rate. The more recent campaign in Tanzania
launched in 1973 is not expected to reach its goal of a
literate society until the early 80's.

Literacy campaigns over a time span of ten more
years increase the resource pool of potential instructors.
In Cuba the sense of urgency due to hostile forces and
carrying out the revolutionary objectives gave the campaign
a vigorous pace, which may not be obtainable in other
societies.

The decision by Cuba to close down the educational
system may be an act that perhaps other governments would
be unwilling to enforce - especially since education is
considered an investment in personal and national development

in most underdeveloped countries.

The goal of first grade which Cuba set for its literacy campaign is probably too low a standard for countries unable or unwilling to develop a mass follow-up adult education program to raise literacy levels as did Cuba. In such circumstances a higher level of reading skills would be more appropriate along with follow-up reading materials to prevent a relapse into illiteracy.

Also rather than a solely political curriculum many countries are interested in work-oriented materials. In fact, Dr. Ferrer suggests that if Cuba was currently involved in a literacy campaign, it would include both political and work-related materials:

> The active words, the generative themes, these
> are the things that we would alter with the
> years. We would speak, instead of, mechanized
> ways of bringing in the crops, of fibers, coffee
> production, polyclinics, or hydraulic systems.
> We would speak perhaps about Che's final letter
> to Fidel, the children of Viet Nam, or the
> struggle of the Cuban women for their equal
> rights (as quoted in Kozol, 1978b:369).

Lastly, another important issue is the cost of the Cuban campaign. Most Third World countries could not afford such a large expenditure. The expenses could be greatly reduced by not operating on such a broad scale and eliminating some of the services provided by the Cuban government. For example, uniforms, lanterns, sleeping equipment for the brigadistas could be eliminated. Eye care would be desirable but the expense could be shared by literacy students and the government. All of these factors should be considered

before a government attempts to emulate the Cuban campaign.

C. Summary of EWLP and its Limited
    Concept of Development

The functional literacy approach grew out of the
notion that development is mainly a quantitative problem
(insufficient GNP) requiring a mainly quantitative solution.
Since development was viewed as economic growth it followed
that literacy should be utilized as an instrument for econo-
mic development. In theory literacy was to be integrated
into the total socioeconomic development; however in prac-
tice notions of economic development dominated the EWLP.

Another concept that makes up the basis for
functional literacy is the notion of selectivity. In order
for EWLP projects to be effective they must involve only
illiterates who had been integrated into the mainstream of
economic development and they should be concentrated in
order to cover a limited zone and a select group. The
projects for the most part consisted of work-oriented
literacy instruction.

These restrictions of selectivity and of limiting
functional literacy to economic development were two basic
factors in the failure of EWLP projects. There were other
factors but they are inter-related with the restrictions.
Many of the countries desired mass campaigns and/or political
related literacy instruction, both of which were considered
contradictory to EWLP policies. This created conflict
between the government officials and UNESCO officials, which

was part of the reason for lack of governmental support which had a negative effect on programmatic concerns.

Tanzania was exceptional in that it did not limit its functional literacy to economic growth but broadened it to cover the total spectrum of development. But even Tanzania has faced criticism for not placing enough emphasis on creating a critical awareness amongst its participants. Kassam points out that President Nyerere and Freire hold a similar viewpoint on this matter. In the words of Nyerere the first objective in adult education in Tanzania is "to shake Tanzanians out of a resignation to the kind of life they have lived for centuries past" (as quoted in Kassam, 1979). Kassam suggests that the awakening of critical awareness should be given initial attention and more emphasis should be placed on it.

Tanzania provides evidence that the concept of massiveness is compatible with functional literacy. UNESCO readily admits in retrospect that functional literacy in order to be effective does not have to be selective.

D. The Implications of Functional
    Literacy in Developing Countries

The growth of functional literacy has spread throughout the Third World in addition to the eleven countries that took part in EWLP. Other countries which have initiated functional literacy projects are: Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Niger, Togo, Afghanistan, Thailand, Kenya and Laos and many others (Cairns, 1970).

The experience of EWLP has provided UNESCO with lessons to enhance the potential of functional literacy and to increase its ability to relate overall development. "Literacy will no longer be seen as a preoccupation to be pursued in isolation solely for its own values but as an integral part of all systems of education: adult education will not be restricted. . .but will be pursued as a major strategy in achieving responsible economic, social and political development (Kidd, 1975:1).

If future functional literacy programs are carried out in this context their chances of succeeding are greater. But there is still a critical issue that is yet to be resolved by literacy research. The main objective of the UNESCO's EWLP was to:

> . . .provide valuable information on the rela-
> tionship of literacy with social and economic
> development; to ensure that the programme will
> make a considerable impact on economic develop-
> ment (UN, 1964 as quoted in UNESCO, 1976:9-10).

However, EWLP was unable to provide conclusive ideas on this issue, perhaps due to a weakness in their evaluation methods. But it is more likely that due to their limited viewpoint of development they did not ask themselves the necessary questions, such as, what are the factors that go hand-in-hand with literacy and development? and what are the 'interrelationships' that link literacy and development. Moreover in order for this issue to be resolved it would have to be implemented in a context in which functional literacy was aimed not only at economic but also at social development.

This is an issue that future research on literacy will have to explore in more specific terms.

E. Future Prospects for Literacy

In 1975, representatives from forty countries met on the issue of literacy in Iran. The Persepolis Symposium addressed very critical issues surrounding literacy. It approved a Declaration (see Appendix) that dealt with the question of why some literacy programs fail and others succeed. They specified the most favorable structures for literacy to take place:

> Those that, from the political point of view, tend to bring about the effective participation of every citizen in decision-making at all levels of social life: in economic, politics and culture;

> Those that, from the economic point of view, aim at an endogenous and harmonious development of society, and not at blind and dependent growth;

> Those that, from the social point of view, do not result in making education a class privilege and a means of reproducing established hierarchies and orders;

> Those that, from the professional point of view, provide communities with genuine control over the technologies they wish to use;

> Those that, from the institutional point of view, favour a concerted approach and permanent co-operation among the authorities responsible for basic services (agriculture, welfare, health, family planning etc.).

Illiteracy is a structural problem and must therefore be linked with other structural problems and dealt with from the perspective of changing existing social structures in order to transform society to a more equitable level. It

is the major conclusion of this study that unless literacy activities are carried out along these lines it is not a liberating but a dominating process.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM FOR LITERACY
DECLARATION OF PERSEPOLIS

The number of illiterates is constantly growing. This
reflects the failure of development policies that are
indifferent to man and to the satisfaction of his basic
needs.

In spite of the progress made in some countries as a result
of far-reaching social changes, there are close to one
thousand million illiterates in the world, and many more
under-nourished people.

In many cases, moreover, even people who have become
literate have not yet acquired to a sufficient degree the
means of becoming aware of the problems of the societies
in which they live and of their own problems, nor the means
of solving them or of playing a real part in their
solution.

There is even a tendency to a decline in literacy in the
industrialized countries.

Successes were achieved when literacy was linked to meeting
man's fundamental requirements, ranging from his immediate
vital needs to effective participation in social change.

Successes were achieved when literacy programmes were not
restricted to learning the skills of reading, writing and
arithmetic, and when they did not subordinate literacy to
the short-term needs of growth unconcerned with man.

Tribute should be paid to those mass campaigns that have
already brought about the complete or almost complete
eradication of illiteracy in certain countries and to
regional or more limited experiments, which have helped to
prepare innovative methods with regard to the programming,
means and organization of literacy activities linked to
development aims. These experiments, and in particular
functional literacy programmes and projects, have made a
valuable contribution to the common stock of practical
methods in the field of literacy and basic education.
Greater use should be made of them in future efforts.

The International Symposium for Literacy, meeting in
Persepolis from 3-8 September 1975, in unanimously adopting
this Declaration, considered literacy to be not just the
process of learning the skills of reading, writing and arith-
metic, but a contribution to the liberation of man and to his
full development. Thus conceived, literacy creates the
conditions for the acquisition of a critical consciousness
of the contradictions of society in which man lives and of
its aims; it also stimulates initiative and his partici-
pation in the creation of projects capable of acting upon
the world, of transforming it, and of defining the aims of
an authentic human development. It should open the way to a
mastery of techniques and human relations. Literacy is not
an end in itself. It is a fundamental human right.

It is true that all social structures give rise to the type
of education which can maintain and reproduce them, and that
the purposes of education are subordinated to the purposes of
the dominant groups; but it would be incorrect to conclude
that there is nothing to be done within the existing system.

Literacy, like education in general, is not the driving force
of historical change. It is not the only means of liberation
but it is an essential instrument for all social change.

Literacy work, like education in general, is a political act.
It is not neutral, for the act of revealing social reality
in order to transform it, or of concealing it in order to
preserve it, is political.

Consequently, there are economic, social, political and
administrative structures that favour the accomplishment of
literacy projects, others that hinder them. The most
favourable structures would be:

--Those that, from the political points of view, tend to
  bring about the effective participating of every citizen
  in decision-making at all levels of social life: in
  economic, politics and culture.

--Those that, from the economic point of view, aim at an
  endogenous and harmonious development of society, and
  not at blind and dependent growth.

--Those that, from the social point of view, do not result
  in making education a class privilege and a means of
  reproducing established hierarchies and orders.

--Those that, from the professional point of view, provide
  communities with genuine control over the technologies
  they wish to use.

--Those that, from the institutional point of view, favour a concerted approach and permanent co-operation among the authorities responsible for basic services (agriculture, welfare, health, family planning, etc.).

Experience has shown that literacy can bring about the alienation of the individual by integrating him in an order established without his consent. It can integrate him, without his participation, in a foreign development model or, on the contrary, help to expand his critical awareness and creative imagination, thereby enabling every man to participate, as a responsible agent, in all the decisions affecting his destiny.

The success of literacy efforts is closely connected with national political will.

Ways existing of attaining the objectives which result from the definition of literacy on which the Symposium based its work.

The ways and means of literacy activities should be founded on the specific characteristics of the environment, personality and identity of each people. True education must be rooted in the culture and civilization of each people, aware of its unique contribution to universal culture and open to a fertile dialogue with other civilizations.

Literacy is effective to the extent that the people to whom it is addressed, in particular women and the least privileged groups (such as migrant workers), feel the need for it in order to meet their most essential requirements, in particular the need to take part in the decisions of the community to which they belong.

Literacy is therefore inseparable from participation, which is at once its purpose and its condition. The illiterate should not be the object but the subject of the process whereby he becomes literate. A far-reaching mobilization of human resources implies the commitment of literacy students and teachers alike. The latter should not form a specialized and permanent professional body, but should be recruited as close as possible to the masses undergoing literacy training and should belong to the same or to a related social and professional group in order to make dialogue easier.

The effectiveness of this mobilization will be increased if greater respect is paid to the initiative of the populations concerned and to consultation with them, instead of abiding by bureaucratic decisions imposed from outside and above. The motivation of those involved will be stronger if each community is itself given the opportunity of carrying out the literacy project.

The methods and material means should be diversified, flexible and suited to the environment and needs of the new literates as opposed to a uniform and rigid model.

Literacy work of this kind would constitute the first stage of basic education designed to bring about the individual development of men and women through continuing training and to improve the environment as a whole. It would permit the development of non-formal education for the benefit of all those who are excluded by the present system or are unable to take advantage of it. Finally, it will imply a radical reform of the structures of the education system as a whole.

The importance of audi-visual aids for literacy was fully recognized. However attempts to take over these aids on grounds of technical necessity by economic or political force beyond the control of the peoples concerned, and their use as instruments of cultural colonization, should be rejected. Uses of audi-visual aids that would hinder active participation and human dialogue should be banned. Programmes should be drawn up in consultation with those concerned, through an exchange of information on significant experiences.

Literacy work should encourage the participants to acquire a wide range of communication skills.

The accomplishment of these tasks calls for a priority claim on national and local financial and human resources. In certain situations, the appeal of countries for complementary international financial co-operation supplied, <u>inter alia</u>, by international and regional institutions, may be justified in the light of special needs, particularly with regard to equipment and to the training of personnel. The use of complicated equipment which the recipient community could not fully control should not be encouraged, and such assistance should under no circumstances be allowed to influence national policies.

Literacy work is of world-wide concern, requiring that ideological, geographical and economic distinctions be transcended.

While its primary field of operation is in the Third World, the new international order gives it a universal dimension, through which the concrete solidarity of nations and the common destiny of man must find expression.

Source: <u>A Turning Point for Literacy</u>, Leon Bataille (ed.), 1976.