A status report on the TICCIT project

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In September of this year, two TICCIT systems installed at Phoenix College and the Alexandria Campus of Northern Virginia Community College will be operating with students in mathematics and English courses. This will begin the first phase of a two-year study involving the evaluation, improvement, and the demonstration of the concepts of learner-controlled courseware administered by a low-cost computer-controlled television system.

The TICCIT system, unlike other CAI systems produced by manufacturers or engineering-oriented laboratories, is designed around a set of educational goals and instructional principles. Goals for institutions, including low cost, reduced time to complete material, and increased enrollment, influenced the design of TICCIT. The goals also include content goals related to the mathematics and English content programmed for the system. Perhaps the most innovative goals are those for students, which include mastery, efficiency, improved learning strategies, improved attitudes of approach rather than avoidance, and responsibility. Other goals relate to creation of some new roles of teachers and other educators who will be involved with this complex system. For computer-assisted instruction to survive in existing educational institutions, it must serve the needs of teachers, as well as the needs of students.

Developmental versions of the TICCIT system have been in operation at Brigham Young University for more than a year. During the last few months, software became available so that editing, debugging, and student tests could be accomplished on the system. Preliminary generalizations from the authoring process, student tests and from other experiences using this evolving system are the subjects of this paper.

The presentation was organized around the goals described above. First of all, the hardware and software were briefly described and their relationship to the institutional goals were delineated. Second, experiences with the system as an innovation in courseware authoring, inputting, debugging, and evaluating student data were discussed. While it was still too early to discuss data from student tests, which had barely begun as this conference convened, an informal description of students' early reaction to a learner control command language was given.

One result of the TICCIT project has been to develop an implementation plan describing, among other things, the proposed new roles of teachers in the new system. Progress toward the definition of teachers' roles in this system was briefly described.