

1968

## Methods of Communicating with and Relating to the Parents of Migrant Children

Marian I. Hines  
*Central Washington University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#), [Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education Commons](#), and the [Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Hines, Marian I., "Methods of Communicating with and Relating to the Parents of Migrant Children" (1968). *All Master's Theses*. 836.  
<https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/etd/836>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Master's Theses at ScholarWorks@CWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@CWU. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@cwu.edu](mailto:scholarworks@cwu.edu).

61

METHODS OF COMMUNICATING WITH AND RELATING TO  
THE PARENTS OF MIGRANT CHILDREN

---

A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education

---

by  
Marian I. Hines  
August 1968

LD  
5771.3  
H662m

**SPECIAL  
COLLECTION**

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON LIBRARY  
CAMPUS BOX 355000  
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98195

1967  
1968  
1969  
1970  
1971  
1972  
1973  
1974  
1975  
1976  
1977  
1978  
1979  
1980  
1981  
1982  
1983  
1984  
1985  
1986  
1987  
1988  
1989  
1990  
1991  
1992  
1993  
1994  
1995  
1996  
1997  
1998  
1999  
2000  
2001  
2002  
2003  
2004  
2005  
2006  
2007  
2008  
2009  
2010  
2011  
2012  
2013  
2014  
2015  
2016  
2017  
2018  
2019  
2020  
2021  
2022  
2023  
2024  
2025

172426

**Library  
Central Washington  
State College  
Ellensburg, Washington**

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

---

Donald J. Murphy, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

---

Kenneth R. Berry

---

Daniel Hallstrom

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For their assistance, guidance and time so graciously given to her in the preparation of this thesis, the writer wishes to express her gratitude and appreciation to her committee chairman, Dr. Donald J. Murphy, and committee members, Dr. Kenneth Berry and Mr. Dan Hallstrom.

Acknowledgement and appreciation is extended to the interviewees who so willingly gave of their time, experiences and knowledge with regard to the problems discussed here.

The writer wishes to express appreciation to her family who encouraged her to complete her Master's program with patience, understanding and assistance, and to her sister, Mrs. Vivian Brown, who so kindly gave her time in typing this thesis.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED . . . . .	1
The Problem . . . . .	3
Statement of the problem . . . . .	3
Importance of the study . . . . .	3
Definitions of Terms Used . . . . .	4
Culture . . . . .	4
Culturally deprived or disadvantaged . . . . .	4
Culturally different . . . . .	4
Middle or average economic group . . . . .	5
Low socio-economic groups . . . . .	5
Migrant . . . . .	5
Agricultural migrant . . . . .	5
Compensatory education . . . . .	6
General Information . . . . .	7
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE . . . . .	9
Literature on Cultural Deprivation . . . . .	9
Two Types of Compensatory Education . . . . .	11
Related Research in Methods of Communication with Parents of Culturally Deprived Children . . . . .	13
III. DESIGN OF THE PAPER . . . . .	16
Literature Reviewed . . . . .	16
The Interview Technique . . . . .	17

CHAPTER	PAGE
IV. RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEWS . . . . .	20
Results of Interviews with College Professors . . . . .	20
Results of Interviews with School Personnel . . . . .	22
Results of Interviews with Parents . . . . .	24
V. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	26
Summary . . . . .	26
Recommendations . . . . .	28
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	30

## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Introduction. One of the major problems of education today is relating to and communicating with the families who come from low, or below average, socio-economic homes.

Much research has been done to determine more effective means of giving these children background experiences which will place them upon an equal basis, linguistically and socially, with the children from average socio-economic homes.

Many proposals have been made regarding the child and his curriculum, and in many situations, much has been accomplished. However, since in our great cities the ratio of these children is one in three at this time, and by 1970 the ratio will have risen to one in two, (21:3) there is apparent great urgency in analyzing and accepting all avenues of approach to possible solutions.

The school, with its enforced attendance by the children of all socio-economic groups, is the only medium which reaches every family. Therefore, the lack of communication now existing between the school and the low socio-economic home must be overcome.

The home and the school are the most important influences upon the child, (14:16) and since the low socio-economic home is unable to provide the child with background experiences equal to those of the middle-class socio-economic home, it is then the duty of the school, which exists for the purpose of aiding the home in the formal aspect of



the child's rearing, or education, to find a means of removing the barriers set up by cultural differences.

Adapting education to meet the needs of these cultural differences is not a current educational fad, but is of increasing importance, a "must" for our country's survival, both within itself and within its world.

It has been a general consensus among school personnel that in most cases, parents must take an active part, become involved personally with the school, if the child is to obtain the maximum benefits offered him. (14:27)

This involvement includes visiting classrooms, attending Parent-Teacher conferences, attending Parent-Teacher Association meetings, attending "Open House", discussions of curriculum (in some instances) and other functions, many of which are in academic areas.

These functions are, in many cases, of little interest, or perhaps beyond the comprehension of some non-English speaking parents, or those who have not, themselves, had the opportunity to attend school beyond the intermediate grade level. Working parents may not, in the multitude of demands already made upon them, take time from their already over-loaded day to "go back to school".

Parents under these circumstances communicate very little with school personnel, whether the reason is lack of interest, the time element, because of personal embarrassment stemming from one of the above mentioned situations, or from former unpleasant experiences with school people.

## I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It is the purpose of this study to (1) determine the present status of efforts, techniques, and materials used by school personnel to communicate with parents of migrant and culturally deprived or disadvantaged children, and (2) identify ways and methods of improving the presently used efforts, techniques, and materials.

Importance of the study. Since the ratio of these "culturally different" children is so high, and the rate of increase is, at this time, so rapid, immediate corrective steps must be taken. We must find a method of channeling and training the minds of those culturally different children from our low socio-economic areas which we have not been able to hold in our schools.

This paper investigates existing conditions of relating and communicating with the parents of these children.

Since a review of the literature proved there was a sparsity of pertinent literature on the problem, a limited interview technique was also used.

It is not within the purpose or scope of this research to evaluate the materials contained here-in, but rather to present a variety of situations and techniques which may, in the future, prove valuable in solving some of the problems of communicating and relating with parents of migrant and socio-economically deprived children.

"For our national survival, the most important fact about our low economic groups is that they include more pupils with high I.Q.'s than do the middle economic groups." (1:10)

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Culture. "Culture is a way of living for a certain people which is begun at birth and provides the basis for living. It penetrates all behavior from the fundamentals to the development of a value system." (54:296)

Culturally deprived or disadvantaged. The youth or child who arrives at school with a limited background is culturally deprived, or disadvantaged. Included are children who come from uneducated families, bookless families, families where English is seldom spoken, families where children are not cherished or protected, or where high ideals are different from those of the great achievers and achievements of the world. (17:8)

Culturally different. The culturally different child is a child who has not had the same childhood background or experiences as the majority of the children with whom he will be associating in his learning or school situation.

Children who come from migrant or non-English speaking homes are not without culture. The culture, however, is of the group to which this particular child belongs. Many migrant children have a culture which consists of a background in only their own nationality,

or culture. The literature which does enter the home, since the parents cannot read, write or perhaps even speak English, is generally printed in the native language of the parents. (17:8)

Middle or average economic group. Families whose total income reaches a yearly level adequate to meet the important basic demands of the family, such as food, clothing, shelter, and also allows the family some of the luxuries of modern day life are in the middle or average economic group. These groups place value on music, literature, and find a necessity for education of the children, as well as taking an interest in world situations. (17:1-2)

Low socio-economic groups. These groups are families or units whose income is insufficient to accommodate the necessities of life for the family. These children are many times without lunches, proper clothing, and school supplies. The supervision of the younger children may be left to the older children while both parents work, usually at unskilled low-paying jobs. Usually the home shows very little evidence of middle-class cultural values such as those alluded to above. (17:44)

Migrant. A person who moves to another region with the change in season. (28:344)

Agricultural migrant. (Also alluded to as migrant in this paper.) There are three types of migrant which concern the schools. The first type is a semi-stable unit, which locates in an area. The

family group or groups move about freely in the summer months. However, they move back to the community in the fall, so the children are able to attend school regularly. The parents obtain work on nearby ranches or in warehouses until the work season ends. The family finds odd jobs and is eligible to draw State Unemployment Insurance Benefits until the next season.

The members of this group are usually Anglo with little formal education, but have high aspirations for their children.

The second type of migrant follows a particular pattern and moves when the type of work the parent has been accustomed to doing has been completed. This usually means moving two or three times during the school year.

This group also has little formal education. They may be either Anglo or of the Mexican-American or Indian groups. A value is placed upon education of the children, but other values are more important to this group.

The third type of migrant follows a circuit of work, often moving at an hour's notice. The family group lives in camps and moves to new work when the situation changes. Their values center around providing for the family group. The children attend school erratically. (50:5)

Compensatory education. Compensatory education is any program designed to overcome specific, identified handicaps to learning which came into being because of those handicaps. Some such handicaps are little or no conversational contacts with adults, a background in music,

and other middle-class media in learning. Summer education programs for pre-school children also fall into this category. (54:296)

### III. GENERAL INFORMATION

Generally the migrant worker and his family live in what are called "Berry Shacks". There are one or two rooms, with no sanitation except the "outdoor" type and all family groups share the one central water supply. No refrigeration is available, so all fresh food must be used at once.

The father is the only authority in the family group, with the mother having no voice in family affairs.

Children age eight or ten are left with the care of the younger children and exhibit very close sibling ties.

Children may not attend school, even though someone goes out to take them, until the teacher has gained the confidence of the family. The mother is very loving and possessive of the children.

The teacher should go to the migrant; they do not ever go to the school. Language used by the teacher should be very discreet and the contact should be a very sensitive person or the trust of the group may be lost.

The migrant's values are not generally concerned with the schools, though in a few cases, there is limited concern for the education of the children.

A unique factor seems to be that in many cases, children do not know to whom they belong, specifically. For instance, this one or that one may be a brother or sister; the child is not sure of family

group limits. Children born out of wedlock are accepted and referred to as "extended family". This, perhaps, is the reason for this sibling uncertainty.

Children, being linguistically deprived, use the language they hear most often, so the contact worker should show no surprise or shock at any language expressions. Change comes very slowly to these groups, and criticism or reproof could very well mean loss of the entire group.

Frequently the children are not fully clothed, and have had no food upon arrival at school. If they have had food, it is anything they found to eat, since both parents are already in the field when the child arises. (This information was obtained from interviews with people who had first-hand experience in the field as volunteer committee workers, and on State Boards For Migrant Education, and wished to be anonymous.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Each of us possesses a sense of self which inspires us to change those around us who are not the same as we. This is the ambivalent ego of man, which sees itself at the same time both superior and inferior. (17:4) This same self is in those who are culturally not like us. Man finds it very difficult to admit that, for one reason or another, there are those above him. Therefore, the culturally different resist and resent all changes if indications of disapproval and degradation are present. The culture they possess should be accepted and built upon, if they are to be best helped. (17:8)

American principles of democracy demand that we work to improve the lives of our people who are on a lower economic, social, and educational level than the great middle-class majority. (17:2)

#### I. LITERATURE ON CULTURAL DEPRIVATION

Volumes of material have been published in regard to the prevalence of culturally different children in our society. Areas surveyed become irrelevant, though the "difference" may vary. Wherever there is poverty, the culturally different are to be found.

Poverty is ubiquitous; the problem of trying to overcome these differences, therefore, gains in magnitude.

The child from the lower socio-economic family learns to fear hunger and eviction or homelessness, but sees no connection between education and evasion of these fears.



The parents are likewise more concerned with the present problems of food, clothing, and shelter for the family group.

Society is strataized and as such, the culture of the strata should not be forced to change. Forced education tends to force strata culture change and raises the question of the right of one culture to force goals upon another. When cultural patterns undergo a rapid change, learning seems to cease. The new patterns seem to destroy the former sense of security. (41:1-20)

What the low socio-economic culture really wants is consumer power. It should be brought to the realization that education is a means of obtaining this end. Its most important goal is economic security. Education for its own sake, self-expression or even status, is not a value. Vocational improvement for the family group may be a value, however.

Research has found many successful methods for raising the cultural level of the culturally deprived child, but there is a desperate need for more extensive research in fields connected with the migrant culturally deprived.

Communication with the parent should be of primary consideration when the school is first aware of children from migrant families who make frequent moves in the district. However, these consist, for the greater part, of people who do not readily speak or understand English, and this presents a language barrier.

When the family makes frequent moves, the child necessarily changes schools often and there are great variations in scholastic

standards and requirements at each grade level. Therefore, the student who moves frequently is faced with the serious problem of trying to fit himself and his experiences into the new learning situation. Many excellent students are able to adjust to these moves, but the average, or below average, student falls far behind the class average.

Therefore, many problems arise at this point. Language many times becomes a means of preserving self; self-concepts, self-attitudes, and the individual. The language should not be suppressed nor ridiculed. These are destructive ways. (17:3) Language is an integral part of the human being, and should be respected as such. (53:37) The individual should be encouraged to understand, and to learn English as a second language. (17:3)

"One of the dangerous by-products of the attempt to raise the 'cultural' and the educational levels of those who are different is that in the attempt to make them over, our teachers strip them of dignity, of individuality, and of self." (30:2)

## II. TWO TYPES OF COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

Bloom reports on a program of "compensatory" education for the culturally deprived child. (14:67) Compensatory education covers a wide scope of education. However, the primary purpose is to enable the pre-school, or primary level child, to overcome certain handicaps to learning which rise from his lack of middle-class culture in his background.

"If deprivation is not overcome in pre-school or primary years, a learning deficit occurs which limits his (the child's) current and future rate of intellectual development. This is a cumulative condition. He is then less

able to profit developmentally from new ideas and levels of environmental stimulations. With age his intellectual development becomes increasingly more differentiated and differentiation is based on the ability to profit from new experiences which are increasingly specialized and complex." (14:67)

The culturally deprived pupil lacks the home experiences which the middle-class child takes for granted. This lack of early experiences in the home contributes to the child's lack of motivation and to perception and linguistic handicaps. These children have little ability to use language to compare, differentiate, and abstract their thoughts and emotions.

The "Head Start" program places emphasis on perceptual and linguistic usage skills, along with giving the child experiences in art, music, dramatic and role play, and manual manipulation of objects and toys. He hears stories read to the group and learns to sit quietly and listen, then to act out the simple story, or to draw a picture about the story. He is introduced to media which are totally new to him, but which may be found in the average middle-class home.

"Operation Head Start" has met with success in most culturally different groups, as well as has the "Day Care" program for younger children.

The "Day Care" program has been used successfully with migrant groups. The younger children are left in the care of especially trained teachers, where a program similar to "Head Start" provides the background experiences which are lacking in the low socio-economic groups.

### III. RELATED RESEARCH IN METHODS OF COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS OF CULTURALLY DEPRIVED CHILDREN

Read suggests a group orientation conference for all parents when the school year begins. (40:13)

Migrant groups regularly fail to attend such programs. Language barriers inhibit communications; such a group, in some areas, would encompass several different cultures. The migrant group may also move into the community after the opening of school.

Some areas provide bi-lingual programs, informing the Spanish speaking Americans of school and community functions. These programs are produced over such media as radio and television at an hour when parents are likely to be at home. The programs are a special public service program of the facility used.

Sunnyside, Washington is an area where there are many Spanish speaking Americans, and the bi-lingual radio program there has met with success.

Research suggested a variety of community activities which included social gatherings of many kinds.

Allport suggests the best techniques are person-to-person contact, small group activities which include utilization of community resources, with interviews and talks by persons from different cultures, field trips and social travel, visiting other cultural groups in their homes on an intergroup exchange basis. (2:281)

Allport's suggested program was carried out in Chicago and

involved only those who expressed a desire to participate.

Some of the criteria suggested by Storen to educate parents in culturally deprived areas are:

1. A School social worker to counsel children who have school adjustment problems.
2. A home economist to help parents with sewing, budgeting, and other related problems.
3. A youth activities director who would direct the children into interesting education oriented programs of activities.
4. A parent education counselor who would make home visits and act as a liaison between parents, teachers, and principals. (46:29)

In areas where the prime concern is the culturally different and low socio-economic groups which are found in our large cities' slum areas, research has authenticated the above, and also listings presented by Nelson (36:8), Bloom (14:67), Ware (53:37), Mc Cleary (35), and many others. However, research has not delved into the problem of the non-English speaking migrant as deeply.

The Education Research Information Center Handbook was found to be a valuable source of abstracted information concerning the migrant laborer's working, living, and health conditions (22:585-600) However, comment was made in every instance that a lack of research existed in educational areas.

Bigelow gives a "formula for remedy":

"Maximize situations in which the individual can participate fully and on terms of equal status in projects of joint concern to him and his associates." (12:8-27)

Educators agree that parental attitude toward and involvement

with the school projects great influence on the classroom learning situation. (14:9)

Beatty, in his report on a study of farm laborers in Fresno County, Fresno, California, recommended that further studies be made of a school program aimed at changing value-attitude systems of farm workers' children, and a pilot program of educational scholarships be instigated. (22:599-600)

Before education can adequately meet the needs of these culturally different people, methods and techniques must be learned by teaching personnel which will enable them to communicate and emphasize to the parents of these children the future influence education will have on their lives.

## CHAPTER III

### DESIGN OF THE PAPER

The principal purpose of this study was to determine the techniques, methods, and materials now being used by school personnel to communicate and relate to the parents of migrant children, and to conceive new ideas or combinations of ideas which might be more effective than those already in use.

The scope of the research was limited beyond expectations by being concerned with the communicating with, and relating to, migrant groups. With few exceptions, literature dealt with existing conditions and the observations of those who reported them. Very little material has been published by the field representative who has carried out a careful, systematic study and investigation in this area.

#### I. LITERATURE REVIEWED

The research materials used included books, periodicals, abstracts, reports of government committees, reports of school district committees, newspaper items, guides for public instruction, "Fact Sheets" covering laboratory programs, pamphlets, curriculum guides, the Microfische file, UNESCO reports, and the Educational Research Information Center Handbook, all of which are enumerated in the Bibliography at the close of this paper. Each source made its contribution, though primarily in the area of background information.

Because of a paucity of related materials, a limited interview technique was used.

The criteria used for selection of interviewees was their connection in some manner with either a program of cultural enrichment for migrant and deprived children, or a relationship to schools where some of the children enrolled were classified as culturally deprived or migrant.

The interviewees were composed of three different groupings or types, each with a separate, though related set of guide questions. A set of six questions was composed for college professors, eight questions were asked of school personnel, and fourteen questions were asked of parents.

Because the migrant Indian and Mexican-American families had gone from the area at this time, only two Negro and six Anglo families were interviewed.

## II. THE INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE

Guide questions were composed for each of the three different types of interviews. The nine college professors interviewed were carefully selected to represent highly educated persons who have had experience teaching in a culturally deprived or a culturally different setting. Guide questions for this group are as follows:

1. Where and on what level have you been teaching?
2. Have you taught children who came from culturally deprived homes?
3. What were your methods of communicating and relating to the parents of your pupils?
4. Do you think these methods were adequate?



5. How could you improve upon these methods?
6. What new means can you think of for the schools to communicate with and relate to parents, especially those of migrant or culturally deprived children?

A second group of eight school personnel were asked the following questions. These personnel included two teachers and six principals of schools where some disadvantaged or culturally deprived students attended. The following questions were used:

1. What are your present methods of communicating with parents?
2. How effective have these methods been and what evidence do you have of this effectiveness?
3. Describe techniques in your parent orientation program which are designed especially for parents of the culturally deprived children.
4. What ideas could you suggest to promote better school-parent communications, especially with parents who are migrants?
5. How could a co-ordinated effort between public facilities and schools be more effective in promoting better communications?
6. Do you believe it is necessary, for the best interests of the child, for the parents to communicate and relate with the school?
7. Is there a "group unity" feeling among the parents who do attend school functions?
8. What are some methods of promoting a "group unity" feeling among all parents whose children attend your school?

The third group consisted of fourteen questions. These questions were used to interview the eight parents, a cross section of parents from a variety of schools. All of these schools were attended by some culturally deprived or culturally different students. Three

of the parents were middle-class Anglo, two were Negro, three were culturally deprived Anglo parents. The following questions were asked:

1. What forms of communications have you received from the schools?
2. Why were these communications sent?
3. What were your reactions to these communications?
4. What do you, as a parent, expect from the schools regarding communications?
5. What parts of the school program do you think have been most successful in helping your child's, or children's, development?
6. Do you think you have been adequately informed regarding your child's progress academically?
7. Do you think you have been adequately informed respecting the school programs in which your child has been participating?
8. Do you feel that the schools should communicate with parents more often?
9. Do you think that schools should keep parents better informed regarding behavior growth and disciplinary measures?
10. How, specifically, could the schools improve communications with the parents?
11. On an average, how often have you attended your child's school in the past?
12. If you attended, why did you attend?
13. If you did not attend, what were your reasons for not attending?
14. What was your reaction to these meetings? Did you have a feeling of "group unity"? If your feeling was not one of group unity, why do you feel that it was not?

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEWS

Due to the variance in response to the questions asked, the information obtained does not readily lend itself to a graphic type of reporting. Therefore, results have been tabulated in terms of numbers of people interviewed. Individual quotations have also been inserted in some instances where a great variance in response was obtained.

#### I. RESULTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH COLLEGE PROFESSORS

Of those interviewed, five out of nine had taught at the elementary school level, and four out of nine had taught at the junior high school level. When asked whether or not they had taught children who came from culturally deprived homes, all of them answered in the affirmative. When asked what methods had been used for communicating and relating to the parents of their pupils, four out of nine replied that they had used form letters, notices, notes, report cards and personal letters. Five out of nine stated they had, in addition to the above mentioned, made home visits and telephone calls, as well as person-to-person conferences held at the school. All indicated they did not feel the methods used were adequate. Inquiry regarding improvement brought forth diversified replies. The consensus was that educators should not force middle-class values upon these migrant groups. We should meet them at their value level in their homes, and by so doing, gain their confidence.

New means of communicating and relating to parents of migrant children were as follows:

"A "grass-roots" leadership, where parents were asked to set up the program." (Grass-roots, meaning originating among or carried on by the common people.) (28:238)

"Use a social worker as a liaison. A lay-worker should also be involved, one who is of the same culture as the migrant people."

"Set up a program of parent education where parents are paid for each class taken, and use of an ungraded classroom for the children."

"Home visits should be made and parents invited to take part in school-community projects."

"Use of pre-school programs to widen their range of experiences, as well as school sponsored "Day Care" programs for children still too young for the "Head Start" programs."

"Radio and television stations should sponsor bi-lingual public service type programs featuring school news, menus, and special school functions each morning, once at six o'clock and again at seven o'clock."

The school district should purchase several small tape recorders which the child could easily carry home. Tapes could then be utilized for reporting to parents. The school administrator, or the teacher, or the teacher-child made tape could relate to the parent more readily than written notices.

In the area of the non-reading parent or the non-English speaking parent, an off-set press machine could picture the need in a pict-o-gram, or a school-o-gram. With potential dropouts, these picture messages could be used to depict sports events, social offerings, as well as part-time job openings.

A general reporting program should be made over radio and television by school personnel (this need not be done by the same person each time) to report the general progress of the school as a whole. A video tape of this should be made accessible at a central location in the community so those missing the television production could get the information at this center."

## II. RESULTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL

When teachers and principals were asked, "What are your present methods of communicating with parents?", three out of the eight interviewed admitted they actually had very little communication. Five out of eight sent notices, letters, forms, poor-work slips, report cards, personal letters, school bulletins or monthly progress reports and newsletters, and made home visits and telephone calls.

In answer to the question, "How effective have these methods been, and what evidence do you have of this effectiveness?", the five who were able to communicate indicated these methods seemed successful. Generally the parental response was good. Effectiveness was judged by a behavioral change in the student.

Only one school principal of those interviewed indicated a parent orientation program. Since his school area had a heavy influx of migrant people, a visit was made to the home of each family new to the area. This visit was made by the principal and the school nurse. An effort was made by both visitors to welcome the new family, and an "Open Door" policy toward all parents was explained. All parents were welcome to visit the school at any time, and were also invited to stay for lunch.

To promote better school-parent communications, especially with migrants, a variety of suggestions were offered. It was suggested by one interviewee that evening classes could be offered to parents. However, it was also pointed out that due to the distances from the school which the parents would need to travel and the wide diversity

of parental interests, the cost of such a program might become prohibitive.

An effort should be made on the part of the school personnel to understand and appreciate the culture of the migrant, visit his home, and involve him in any type of school or classroom activity which could lend itself to his talents. If the parent has time, one principal found migrant people travel so widely, they have a wealth of experiences to share with a class, after the initial "ice is broken".

School personnel felt generally that wider use of public media should be made, such as bi-lingual programs and school bulletins which should be both printed in local papers and announced from local radio and television stations, but they also emphasized public use of school facilities during summer months. School personnel supervised use of gymnasiums and other school recreational equipment is desirable.

All personnel agreed that the child benefited greatly from a good relationship between parents in the community and school personnel.

Five out of eight of those interviewed felt there was a "group unity" feeling among the parents who attended school functions, and three out of eight felt there was no "group unity" feeling to any great extent. These people also felt there was no way to bring about this feeling until school personnel were able to understand parental values, needs, and concerns of these cultural groups.

The areas where these three people taught contained a large population of culturally different people who seemed to be very little concerned with schools at this time, which may account for the above stated attitude.

### III. RESULTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS

All of the parents interviewed stated they received notices, letters, schedules, report cards, health notices, permission slips, and various other types of printed materials from the schools, usually sent home with the child. Only in one family did the school regularly call the parent to report progress.

Most of the communications sent were routine notices. In a few instances, the parent was asked to come for a conference because of the child's behavioral patterns.

A general feeling of apathy was felt toward the notices. One family from a low socio-economic area felt they were good, however, because the parent was kept informed regarding school activities.

Seven out of eight of the parents interviewed felt they had been adequately informed regarding the child's academic progress, his school programs, his behavioral growth and disciplinary measures, and were satisfied with school-parent communications.

Parental attendance at school during the past year ranged from "three or four times" to eleven times. The reasons for attending were also as diversified. Five out of eight attended Parent-Teacher Association meetings regularly, six out of eight attended "Open House", Christmas and other programs featuring their children, and seven out of eight attended sports programs in which their child participated.

The reasons given for not attending were also varied. Some parents listed previous engagements, others stated they had not received the notice early enough to make arrangements, or a lack of transportation.

A majority of interviewees stated that they felt school personnel made them welcome and comfortable. One family from a minority group stated that they felt the group was cliquish and they felt unwelcome, ill at ease, and as though they were being "discussed behind their backs".



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

A review of the literature pertinent to communicating with and relating to parents of migrant children revealed a desperate need for research in this area. Research dealing with the cultural deprivation of our cities is producing fantastic results in some areas, and simply "re-arranging" the problem in others. However, the migrant, with his frequent moves, poor living and working conditions, and sometimes starvation diet, is difficult to "reach" educationally.

Of the twenty-five people interviewed, a preponderance of college professors agreed that face-to-face contact should produce the best results in communicating with these migrant parents, and that the contact should be at the homes of the people. If school personnel are to communicate and relate to these culturally different groups, they must meet these parents on the parent's own cultural basis.

Interviews with school personnel also showed a general trend toward (1) home visitation by the teacher, or the teacher and school nurse together, and (2) a gradual involvement of the parent in school affairs.

Interviews with people who have worked with "Head Start" and the "Day Care" programs showed the interest of these migrants to be the present. They do not project themselves into tomorrow, nor do they find a connection between education and provisions for their families

today. The future is far away; they must supply the needs of their families now.

Parents of migrant children find it hard to relate with school personnel. Their lack of education, their inability to converse on the level of the teacher, and even their difference in dress or appearance produces a situation which hinders a relaxed relationship and rapport that is necessary for good communications. Because of former unpleasant experiences with school personnel, many migrant parents will not put their trust in them, and become inhibited and uncooperative due to their own lack of understanding of the purpose and intent of the teacher, principal, or perhaps both. (14:9)

The middle-class socio-economic group places value on learning, as it produces a developmental and environmental change in the child's behavior pattern. This value is not, however, understood or cherished by the migrant. His values stem from his day-to-day needs, and those of his family group. In isolated groupings, there is concern for the education of the children, but generally speaking, the values are for the needs of the day, and the preservation of their culture. Any rapid change is met with resistance; therefore, all progress must be made slowly.

Their values are as different as their culture, and both are equally difficult for middle-class Americans to understand.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer recommends that the following concentrated efforts should be made:

1. Provide in-service training for teachers and other school personnel to prepare each with a working knowledge of the cultures and value-attitudes of these migrant groups to enable them to meet the parent on his own cultural level.
2. Visit the home of each migrant family where an attempt is made by the visitor to realize and understand the parental concerns.
3. Gradually draw the parent into some form of community projects, preferably child centered, or child-parent centered.
4. Instigate an "Open Door" policy at the school where the parents are welcomed at all times, so they are assured that the school cares about their problems and those of their children.
5. Make revisions in curriculum wherever necessary to include the different cultures, so that the parents of the culturally different child will feel that the school has something to offer his children which concurs with his own culture and values.
6. Make more extensive use of public facilities to produce bi-lingual programs and news items of interest to parents who are non-English speaking. These should feature school lunch menus, announcements of social functions, conference schedules (where feasible), "Open House" and sports events, or other items of special interest to the parents.
7. Experiment with curriculum ideas and communication ideas relating to technology, such as the use of individually tape recorded messages in the parent's own language, cassettes and a tape recorder which the child can carry home so his parents can hear the teacher, the teacher and child, or the principal-teacher-child conference and record his reply on the child-operated tape recorder.
8. Improve written communications. These should be made attractive, eye-catching and colorful. Messages should be bi-lingual in areas where non-English speaking parents will be receiving them.

9. Experiment with non-language materials such as pictograms and the development of other non-language communication media.
10. Set up a community center where printed materials (bi-lingual), taped bi-lingual radio announcements and video tapes presented earlier, could be utilized by parents who missed them when they were presented.
11. Experimentation with supervised child-presented reporting programs as a public service feature for radio and television stations.
12. That supervised use of school recreational equipment be made available to parent-child groups during non-school usage periods. This should include all school vacation periods, though emphasis should be placed on summer programs.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Allison, Davis. "Society, The School and The Culturally Deprived Student". Social Class Influence Upon Learning. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1948. p. 10.
2. Allport, Gordon W. The Nature of Prejudice. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1954. p. 281.
3. Allport, Gordon W. The Nature of Prejudice. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1954. p. 359.
4. Arensburg, Conrad M., and Solon T. Kimball. Culture and Community. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1965. Chapters 6, 11, 12.
5. Arnold, Richard. "English as a Second Language". The Reading Teacher, Vol. 21, No. 7, April, 1968. pp. 634-639.
6. \_\_\_\_\_. "A School for Rebels". Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. 48, No. 8, April, 1967. pp. 402-403.
7. Bautwell, William D. "Happenings in Education". P.T.A., The Parent-Teacher Magazine, Vol. 62, No. 9, May, 1968.
8. Baynham, D. "Great Cities Project". National Education Association Journal, 1963. (4) 17-20.
9. Beatty, William C. A Preliminary Report on a Study of Farm Laborers in Fresno County from January 1, 1959 - July 1, 1959. Fresno, California: Fresno County Rural Health and Education Committee, July, 1959.
10. Berstein, B. "Social Class and Linguistic Development: A Theory of Social Learning". Education, Economy and Society. A. H. Halsey, J. Floud, and C. A. Anderson, Editors. Glencoe: The Free Press, 1961. pp. 288-314.
11. Bettelheim, Bruno. "Teaching the Disadvantaged". The Disadvantaged Learner, Knowing, Educating. Staten W. Webster, Editor. San Francisco, California: Chandler Publishing Co., 1966. p. 423.
12. Bigelow, Karl, et al., Director of Conference. Cultural Groups and Human Relations. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1951. pp. 8-27, pp. 179-189.

13. Bledsoe, J. C. "An Investigation of Six Correlates of Student Withdrawal From High School". Journal of Educational Research. 53:3-6.
14. Bloom, Benjamin S., Davis Allison and Robert Hess. Compensatory Education for Cultural Deprivation. New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, Inc., 1965. pp. 9, 16, 27, 67.
15. Blum, Albert A., and Charles T. Schmidt. "Securing Skills Needed for Success: Community Job Training for Negroes". Management of Personnel Quarterly, 5 (3), Fall, 1966. pp. 30-35.
16. Borrie, W. D. The Cultural Integration of Immigrants. Paris, France: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, April, 1959. pp. 117-130.
17. Calitri, Charles J. "The Nature and Values of Culturally Different Youth". A Look at the Problem. Hempstead, Long Island, New York: Hofstra College. (Office of Education, Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D. C.) pp. 1-4, 8, 44.
18. Cholden, Harriet B. "Making the Most of a Parent Conference". The Instructor, Vol. 78, No. 7, March, 1968. pp. 87-88.
19. Ciotti, Rita, and Ida Kravitz. "Techniques for the Teaching of Spelling". Great Cities School Improvement Program, District of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Washington, D. C.: Office of Education, Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare.
20. Daugherty, Louise G. (Director, Special Project; Superintendent District 11, Chicago Public Schools). "Working With Disadvantaged Parents". National Education Association Journal, December, 1963.
21. Druding, Aleda E. (Superintendent of Public School District No. 5, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania). Improving English Skills of Culturally Different Youth. Arno Jewett, Joseph Mersand and Doris V. Gunderson, Editors. Washington, D. C.: Office of Education, Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare. p. 3.
22. \_\_\_\_\_ . Educational Research Information Center Handbook. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, June, 1967. pp. 585-600.
23. Edwards, Arnette. "Teacher-Parent Communication: An Approach". The Disadvantaged Learner, Knowing, Educating. Staten W. Webster, Editor. San Francisco, California: Chandler Publishing Co., 1966. p. 609.

24. Elam, Sophie L. "Acculturation and Learning Problems of Puerto Rican Children". The Disadvantaged Learner, Knowing, Educating. Staten W. Webster, Editor. San Francisco, California: Chandler Publishing Co., 1966. p. 296.
25. Ells, Kenneth, et al. Intelligence and Cultural Differences. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1951. pp. 120-161.
26. Gordon, Margaret S., Editor. Poverty in America. San Francisco, California: Chandler Publishing Co., 1965. Chapters 4, 9, 10, 11.
27. Grindeland, William D. "The Community Can Be Your Classroom". Educational Screen A V Guide, March, 1968. pp. 26-27.
28. Guralnik, David B., General Editor. Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language. New York: The World Publishing Co., 1959.
29. Havighurst, Dr. Robert J. "Social Class Influence on Learning". Great Cities School Improvement Program, 453 Stinson, Detroit, Michigan. p. 344.
30. Jewett, Arno, Joseph Mersand, and Doris V. Gunderson, Editors. Improving English Skills of Culturally Different Youth. Washington, D. C.: Office of Education, Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare. p. 2.
31. Jordan, William C. "How to Put Parents to Work in the Classroom". Nations Schools, Vol. 81, No. 2, February, 1968. pp. 76-77.
32. La Brant, Lou. "The Goals For Culturally Different Youth". Improving English Skills of Culturally Different Youth. Arno Jewett, Joseph Mersand, and Doris V. Gunderson, Editors. Washington, D. C.: Office of Education, Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare.
33. Lewis, Phyllis A. "Working With the Disadvantaged - Getting the Most for Your Money". The Instructor, March, 1968. pp. 38-39, 144-150.
34. Morrisseau, James. "Schoolhouse in the City". Saturday Review. March 18, 1967. pp. 58-59.
35. Mc Cleary, Lloyd E. "Communications in Large Secondary Schools, A Nationwide Study of Practices and Problems". The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Vol. 52, No. 325, February, 1968.

36. Nelson, Robert. "A Different Way To Go To School". Project Interchange, Washington Education. May, 1968. p. 8.
37. Osborne, Ruby. "Practical Ideas for Building Better Relationships With Parents of the Disadvantaged Kindergarten Learner". The Disadvantaged Learner, Knowing, Educating. Staten W. Webster, Editor. San Francisco, California: Chandler Publishing Co., 1966. p. 605.
38. Paige, Joseph C. "Disadvantaged Children and Their Parents:.". The Disadvantaged Learner, Knowing, Educating. Staten W. Webster, Editor. San Francisco, California: Chandler Publishing Co., 1966. p. 600.
39. \_\_\_\_\_ . Public Affairs Program. Ford Foundation, New York. Published by: Conference on Curriculum and Teaching In Depressed Areas - Teacher's College - Columbia (Ohio) University.
40. Read, Alma. Suggestions and Ideas to Use in Parent-Teacher Conferences. Ellensburg, Washington: Central Washington College of Education, Summer Session, 1955. p. 13.
41. Riessman, Frank. Action Approaches to Low-Income Culture. New York: Mobilization for Youth, Inc., 1962. pp. 1-20.
42. Robinson, Mildred, and Elizabeth Muhlfeld. "Parents as Teachers and Learners in a Parent Cooperative". Childhood Education, Vol. 44, No. 9, May, 1968. p. 541.
43. Schenbeckler, Harmon L. "The Use of Parent Conferences as a Means of Reporting and Guiding Pupil Progress in the Elementary School". 1952. (Thesis).
44. Schwab, Hon. Herbert M., Chairman, Committee on Race and Education. Race and Equal Education Opportunity in Portland's Public Schools. A Report to the Board of Education, Multnomah County School District No. 1, Portland, Oregon. 1964.
45. Sexton, Patricia. Education and Income. New York: The Viking Press, 1961.
46. Smiley, Marjorie. Research and its Implications. New York: Office of Instructional Research, Hunter College.
47. State Committee on Human Relations. Our Greatest Challenge: Human Relations; Guide to Intergroup Education in Schools. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Department of Public Instruction, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



48. Storen, Helen F. Readings in Intergroup Relations. National Conference of Christians and Jews. p. 29.
49. Tacoma Public Schools. "Staff Communications on Public Education for the Tacoma Public Schools". Tacoma, Washington: Scope, Vol. VI, No. 8, April, 1965.
50. \_\_\_\_\_ . Teaching Children Who Move with the Crops. Fresno, California. Published by: Walter G. Martin, Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, Fresno, California. September, 1955. p. 5.
51. The Report of the President's Commission on National Goals. Goals for Americans. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960. p. 3.
52. Unified School District 259. A Supplemental Social Studies: Human Relations Guide. Wichita, Kansas. 1967.
53. Ware, Priscilla. "It Worked for Me". Grade Teacher, Vol. 85, No. 9, May-June, 1968. p. 37.
54. Webster, Staten W. (Editor). The Disadvantaged Learner, Knowing, Understanding, Educating. San Francisco, California: Chandler Publishing Co., 1966. p. 296.
55. Wilson, Robert M., and Donald W. Pfau. "Parents Can Help". The Reading Teacher, Vol. 21, No. 8, May, 1968. pp. 758-761.
56. Warner, W. L., Robert Havighurst, and Martin Laeb. Who Shall Be Educated? New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962.
57. Zwerdling, Philip. "Student Human Relations Workshops". Journal of Secondary Education, Vol. 43, No. 2, February, 1968. pp. 74-87.