Creating community through communication: The case of East Desert Unified School District

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CREATING COMMUNITY THROUGH COMMUNICATION: THE CASE OF EAST DESERT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

by
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ABSTRACT

It is projected that by the year 2050 one quarter of the inhabitants of the United States will be of Hispanic origin. Researchers warn that this population is vulnerable to disenfranchisement due to low levels of educational and socioeconomic attainment. The population served by East Desert Unified School District (EDUSD) is 97.3 percent Latino and live in rural, isolated and impoverished neighborhoods. The children served by EDUSD are at risk; however, the district has created a community/district system geared toward building the capacity of the community. The communication processes and channels that create and maintain this system were the focus of this study. Ethnographic and survey methods were employed to discover its inner workings.

The community/district system is functional because its communication processes and channels work together to create and sustain relationships between the community and the organization; these allow the system to pursue the goal of empowerment. Communication processes transmit messages of district accessibility, care and interest to the community and arise from the organization’s culture. EDUSD’s culture generates attitudes and actions that value
and respect employees and parents. The culture is extended to the community through inside connections, use of Spanish, cultural awareness and empathy, and dedication to empowerment. Ideally, this system could be supported and maintained through open internal and external communication channels. In the case of EDUSD external channels were functional while internal channels were truncated. The establishment of internal communication channels would only enhance the accomplishment of the district’s motto: “Together we build the future”.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The East Desert Unified School District (EDUSD) serves approximately 13,800 students kindergarten through twelfth grade and 300 preschool students. The district’s communities are surrounded by over 70,000 acres of irrigated farmland. “The area is rural and extremely isolated . . . Because of its proximity to Mexico, the area is also the point of entry for many undocumented residents” (EDUSD Head Start Community Assessment, 2002, p. 3; EDUSD Website, 2003). In general, Mexican immigrants new to the area first settle in the rural unincorporated areas of the district. As they become more acculturated and affluent they move west into the district’s cities. Eventually, families may choose to move out of the district’s service area, consequently EDUSD serves many immigrant, migrant, and first generation students. EDUSD students are 97.3 percent of Hispanic descent and 98 percent of these are of Mexican origin. The area served by the EDUSD is the fifth lowest in income for the state of California with 89.8 percent of the district’s students enrolled in Federal Free or Reduced
The population served by EDUSD would be described as "at risk" by García (1992) due to poverty, racial isolation, low proficiency in English, teen parents, family breakups, and mothers working full-time outside of the home. The unfortunate outcomes of these risk factors are dropout, high rates of unemployment, lower tax revenues, increased need for government services, disenfranchisement, and higher crime rates (García, 1992; Pollard, 1989; O. Reyes & Jason, 1993).

Many researchers have written about the urgent need to empower the Latino population in the U.S. Huge demographic shifts are well underway in America and Mexican-Americans, the largest subgroup of Hispanics, are increasing in numbers at a rate nearly ten times that of the rest of the population. "The U.S. population is not only becoming older, poorer, more linguistically diverse, but also less White" (P. Reyes & Valencia, 1993, p. 260). Chapa and Valencia (1993) warn that the consequences of minority failure may soon become apparent as the baby boomers begin to retire and make demands on the social security system which the young underemployed public

Price Meal Programs (California Department of Education Website, DataQuest, 2003; EDUSD Website, 2003).
cannot bear. Social and political consequences could also be stark as the already stratified society develops a more “hourglass” shape with older, more educated, relatively wealthy White people on one end and young, poorly educated, impoverished, minorities on the other (Chapa & Valencia, 1993; García, 2002).

Latinos will account for 25 percent of all American youth in 2020; by 2050 one in every four Americans is projected to be Hispanic (García, 1992; Hispanic Literacy Taskforce, 2000). Their future and the future of this country “lies in understanding how a diverse population, with many of its members placed in . . . contexts of risk and vulnerability, can achieve social, educational, and employment competence” (García, 1992, p. 70). The Council of Economic Advisors (1998) claims:

. . . . educational attainment is one of the most important indicators of lifetime economic opportunities . . . Higher educational attainment is associated with improved socioeconomic status, higher wage rates, and better health. In addition, parents’ education is associated with better health, development, and educational attainment for their children (pp. 13 - 14).
To date, the education of Latino youth has been less than successful. Reported percentages of Hispanic students who drop out of high school vary from 30 percent as a country-wide estimate (Cooper, Denner & López, 1999) to 60 percent in large cities (P. Reyes, Scribner & Paredes-Scribner, 1999) with many researchers reporting a 40 to 50 percent overall dropout rate (Chapa & Valencia, 1993; DeBlassie & DeBlassie, 1996; Fernandez, Paulsen & Hirano-Nakanishi, 1989; García, 2002; Meece & Kurtz-Costes, 2001). Additionally, The National Center of Educational Statistics (cited in Meece and Kurtz-Costes, 2001) indicates that only 12 percent of Latino students enroll in college and of the total population of 25 to 29 year olds, 36 percent of Whites, 17 percent of African Americans, and 14 percent of Hispanics have completed a bachelor’s degree or higher. A multitude of studies have explored the probable causes of school failure in Latino and minority youth. Many factors have been implicated: socioeconomic, socio-cultural, societal/psychological, and institutional. While each factor has merit, one single factor cannot be said to be more important than any other. Moreover, it is difficult to separate socioeconomic influences from cultural influences.
Chapa and Valencia (1993) argue "the best chance to have impact on the college-aged population and graduating classes of the near future is to focus on the health, child care, and educational needs of Latino infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children today" (p. 182). López, Scribner, and Mahitivanichcha (2001) found that successful Hispanic serving districts realized the survival needs of families must first be met before any parental attention could be focused on education. Similarly, McDonnell and Hill (1993) found local governments do not help immigrant parents adjust to American economic, civic, and educational life. Consequently, schools have been the one of the few places openly helpful to immigrants. "These public schools become more than simple purveyors of instruction; they are general resources for parents. Their ultimate goal is to ensure parental support for the educational process, but they approach parents by building community" (McDonnell & Hill, 1993, p 76).

Two departments in the EDUSD operate as community service organizations within the school district. These departments, the Parent Resource Service Center and Children and Family Services, receive no general education
funds from the district; they are entirely grant driven and exist as independent entities outside of the budget of the EDUSD. Both of these departments offer outreach services to parents and community members. These programs are socially oriented and provide "extra" services in addition to those mandated by federal programs. The goal of the Parent Resource Service Center is to educate and empower the adults in the community; Children and Family Services helps to provide for the basic survival needs of families and attends to the education, health, and development of the neediest children from infancy through preschool.

EDUSD is committed to building the capacity of adults in the community and to addressing the basic survival needs of the population because by doing so there is a greater probability that children will arrive to school ready to learn and return home to adults who can support their education. EDUSD, in reality, is engaged in social marketing. Kotler (1975) describes social marketing organizations as dedicated to changing the "beliefs, attitudes, values, or behavior of a target public" (p. 282). The ability to successfully educate and empower the predominately Mexican and Mexican origin population in the
district requires the incorporation of new beliefs, values, and behaviors. The district’s ability to communicate effectively with the community and to establish a relationship of trust is essential if social change is to take place.

Purpose of Study

The objective of this thesis is to identify the communication processes and channels used by EDUSD in its relations with the Spanish-speaking community that it serves. Organizationally, the interactions between the district and its communities will be studied from a systems perspective. Intercultural communication theories and organizational communication theories provide lenses for examining the communication processes occurring between the community and the district. Three research questions will be addressed:

RQ1: What are the communication processes used by EDUSD employees in their relations with the community?

RQ 2: What communication channels are being utilized by the EDUSD community outreach programs? And
RQ3: How do these communication processes and channels function to create and maintain the community/organization system?
These questions will be explored qualitatively using interviews, survey data, and field observations.
Ethnographic data was collected throughout the 2003 - 2004 school year. The researcher attended classes and events sponsored by EDUSD for parents; interviewed program directors and participants; and made field observations. Surveys were solicited from parents and district employees in the spring.

Exposing the manor that EDUSD communicates and introduces new ideas in order to encourage empowerment while maintaining positive community relations is significant because in so doing EDUSD may serve as a model for other districts seeking to offer social services in similar communities. Additionally, the process of outlining the district’s communication channels allows the researcher to assess their efficiency.

Terminology

Throughout this study the researcher has sometimes chosen to use the word “Hispanic” when referring to
organizational or governmental statistics about persons coming from Mexico or other Spanish or Portuguese speaking countries. The term Hispanic is an adjective that has been foisted upon a diverse group of people by the U.S. Census in order to "track population growth, as well as trends in education and socioeconomic levels" (Garcia-Preto, 1996, p. 142). For EDUSD, the classification of the district's population as Hispanic is important because it allows the district to access many grants and special programs. However, Garcia-Preto (1996) claims that being referred to as Hispanic symbolizes a loss of identity and is a source of conflict amongst Latinos. Cisneros (cited in Granados, 2000) finds the word Hispanic objectionable because it is a "colonistic term, a disrespectful term, a term imposed on us without asking what we wanted to call ourselves" (p. 42). The imposition of the label Hispanic on a diverse group of people by the dominant culture is one of the main arguments against its use. However, Garcia-Preto (1996) points out that the term Hispanic can be used to promote unity of purpose and can help in accessing political power.

Some researchers prefer "Latino/a" because it, like other Spanish adjectives, is gender indicative (Garcia-
Additionally, "the word Latino traces its roots back to ancient Rome and some say it’s more inclusive, encompassing Latin American countries such as Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and others" (Granados, 2000, p. 42). However, Tezcatlipoca (2003) asserts "Latino just means Latin in the Spanish language. Latinos are the Latins: Southern Europeans" he argues against the use of Latino because it implies continuing colonization (¶ 3). Other researchers have identified term preferences among various segments of the Spanish origin population. Conejo (2003) notes "that west of the Mississippi the term Latino is preferred and east of the Mississippi the term Hispanic is preferred" (¶ 2). Granados (2000) cites differences in age and acculturation to be indicative of label partiality; people preferring the term Hispanic were younger, more assimilated and conservative while those choosing Latino were liberal, older, and more radical.

Interestingly, a presidential tracking poll taken in 2000 by Hispanic Trends Inc. found that of 1,200 registered Latino voters polled, "65 percent preferred the term Hispanic, and 30 percent chose to identify themselves as Latino" (Granados, 2000, p. 41). Granados claims that
"choosing one term over the other means taking a political, social, and even a generational stand" (p. 40). Both "Latino" and "Hispanic" strip the national identity of the population and obscure the cultural specificity of the ethnic groups being clustered together. "If people were given the choice among several terms they would not pick either Latino or Hispanic, but a term closer to how they think of themselves" (Fernández cited in Granados, 2000, p. 42). Since both terms homogenize the identity of the population and neither is unanimously preferred nor accepted, they will be used alternately only when reporting statistics reflecting the entire, undifferentiated Spanish speaking population.

When referring to themselves, community members used the words Mexicano (Mexican), Chicano, and Mexican-American. The term Chicano was used to distinguish immigrant Mexicans and American born persons of Mexican descent. As one community member explained to me: "When I was little we would call ourselves Chicano because we felt superior and didn’t want to be associated with the Mexicans who worked the fields; now I refer to myself as Mexican but my daughter refers to herself as Mexican-American" (personal communication, September 3, 2004).
Community members only used the term Hispanic when referring to the larger Spanish speaking population. Because the community, for the most part, does not use the term Hispanic in reference to itself the terms “Mexican”, “Mexican origin/descent”, and “Spanish-speaking community” will be used interchangeably when referring to the community. It should be noted that all of the community members who the researcher was in contact with were of Mexican origin however; two percent of the district’s Spanish speaking population are from other Spanish speaking countries.

The school district studied in this thesis is located in the Coachella Valley of Southern California. The names of all persons and the district itself have been assigned pseudonyms in order to protect their confidentiality. All quotations, survey instruments, and district generated materials contained in this document were altered to reflect the fictitious names.

Positionality of the Researcher

The researcher was employed as a teacher in the EDUSD for the 2001 - 2002 school year. As such, she is currently an outsider to the organization, but is familiar
with the organizational culture and with the community served. Prior to working professionally, the researcher spent eight years working in the service industry and living in blue collar neighborhoods. She is familiar and has lived within the cultural norms of the working class. The researcher speaks and can read and write in Spanish. She lived in Mexico for two summers, in El Salvador for two years, and in Guatemala for three years. Ethnically, she is white. Her mother is a first generation American of French Canadian origin and her father’s family is of English descent and has been in the country since colonial times. Her mother’s native language was French; her grandmother spoke both French and English, her grandfather spoke mostly French. The researcher grew up in a middle class urban neighborhood, but her mother grew up in a small boarder town with her parents struggling to make ends meet on a regular basis. From the time the researcher was six years old her Grandmother lived with her family. While the researcher is not of the same ethnic origin as the community being studied she has lived in the culture, understands the cultural norms, and can communicate in Spanish. The years spent working in the service industry generates a sense of connection through
shared experiences with many of the East Valley residents. Additionally, her family background creates empathy and understanding for the immigration phenomenon not through direct experience, but through family stories and experiences.

As a researcher she was accepted by school district employees of all positions and by the community members. Employees, for the most part, were open and very welcoming to the researcher. Community members were excited to be asked to take part in the study and freely offered their opinions and observations with the researcher. In the end the researcher formed close bonds with the School Readiness office where she was based and with the community members who participated in this study. The researcher does not feel that there were any significant barriers impeding her ability to conduct this study.

Organization of Thesis

Exploration of the communication processes and channels utilized by EDUSD in interactions with the community will be accomplished in this thesis as follows. Chapter Two is a review of the literature relevant to this study. The literature review includes information on the
changing demographics of the U.S., measures of social and economic well being of Latinos in the U.S. and the population served by EDUSD, theoretical explanations of systems theory and applications, organizational culture as it affects communication, intercultural communication theories, and empowerment. Chapter Three describes the methods employed in this study including field entry, data collection, and data analysis. Justifications for the methods chosen in this study are provided. Chapter Four presents the analysis of all data gathered for this project. Findings are outlined, interpreted, and discussed. The final chapter summarizes the findings and makes conclusions.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter is divided into eight sections. Each section contributes to the development of the conceptual framework that lends support and justification for the study of EDUSD’s communication processes and channels. The first section explores the changing demographic trends in the U.S. as related to immigration. The impact of immigrants on EDUSD is examined in this section as well. The second section reports the social and economic wellbeing indicators for Hispanics in the U.S. and Latinos living in the EDUSD service area. Next, systems theory is studied in relation to internal and external communication and information exchanges between organizations and their environments. Flow of information is identified as the key to being a responsive organization. The forth section highlights the impact of organizational culture on the ability to provide social services. Communication preferences, cultural norms, and values found in Hispanic populations are surveyed in the fifth section. Suggestions for effectively communicating with this
population are also detailed. The sixth section talks about the need for empowering Latinos in the U.S. and the role of schools in creating empowered communities. The last two sections relate the literature to the current study and discuss what the researcher hopes to accomplish.

**The Changing Face of the U.S.**

A record 53.4 million children are expected to enroll in K–12 U.S. schools in the fall of 2005 (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). These children are ethnically and racially more heterogeneous than ever before. Twenty years ago nearly 75 percent of all children in public schools were White. Today, minorities make up almost 40 percent of the student body. Additionally, it is projected that by the year 2020 the national youth population will increase 17 percent; however, this increase will not be evenly distributed among ethnic groups. The White population is projected to decline 13 percent, the African American population is expected to increase by 3 percent, while the Latino population is expected to triple in size. By 2020 more than two thirds of the school age population will be African American, Asian, Hispanic, or Native American,
with Latinos comprising 25 percent of all American youth. (Chapa & Valencia, 1993; Meece & Kurtz-Costes, 2001).

Diversity in the nation's school children has its roots in immigration. Over the past 30 years, the pace of immigration has steadily increased. From 1981 through 1990, more than 7.3 million people immigrated to the United States accounting for over two million immigrant youth entering U.S. schools (García, 2002; McDonnell & Hill, 1993). This level of influx has not been seen since the turn of the century when 9 million immigrants entered the country between 1900 and 1910. Although these new immigrants represent a smaller portion of the population, they are far more diverse than past immigrants. Two thirds of the new foreign born population, in descending order, come from Mexico, the Soviet Union, the Philippines, China, Vietnam, and India. Today, almost one fifth of U.S. households speak a language other than English; three-fourths of these speak Spanish (Conchas, 2001; Chapa & Valencia, 1993; Fuligni, 1997; García, 2002; McDonnell & Hill, 1993; Meece & Kurtz-Costes, 2001).

Patterns of immigration show that new arrivals frequently settle where others from their home country are already established; as a result foreign born population
varies from region to region (Meece & Kurtz-Costes, 2001). California is home to 48 percent of all immigrant youth. The US Census 2000 reports that Hispanics, both immigrants and American born, make up 32.4 percent of California’s total population. Seventy-seven percent of California’s Hispanics are of Mexican origin. Vega (1990) describes the majority of Mexican Americans as being born in Mexico or first generation Americans born to Mexican parents.

Mexicans voluntarily migrate to the U.S. in hopes of improving their economic condition. In Mexico “there is little likelihood of improving their economic status . . . There are an estimated 98,000,000 people living in Mexico, of these, about 66 percent live in poverty” (Kemp, 2004, ¶7). Educational and economic opportunities are far greater in the U.S. than they are in Mexico. Additionally, the U.S. is dependant on the inexpensive labor Mexican immigrants provide in the agricultural and service industries. These complementary needs have created what Falicov (1996) calls “a historical rollercoaster, with periods when the United States recruits workers, encourages relocation, and legalizes migration, and periods of avoidance, when immigration is discouraged, made illegal and punished with repatriation”
Currently, the U.S. is experiencing a surge of illegal immigration from Mexico due to rumors about a guest worker visa program proposed by President Bush and to beat tighter security measures that are scheduled to be in place in June of 2004. The U.S. Border Patrol reports a 25 percent increase in detainees, totaling 535,000, in the past six months ending March 31, 2004 (Rodriguez, 2004). Many illegal immigrants and undocumented migrant workers come to the southern and eastern areas served by the EDUSD because they can find jobs in the agricultural sector of those communities (EDUSD Head Start Community Assessment, 2002).

The population served by EDUSD, as mentioned earlier, is predominately Latino and of Mexican origin. Immigrants, defined as students enrolled in K–12 schools who are foreign born and have been enrolled in the U.S. within the most recent three school years, account for 12.68 percent of EDUSD’s total student population. National origins of these students are as follows: 1,759 students are from Mexico, 26 are from Ecuador, 6 come from the Philippines, and 1 each come from China, Germany, Greece, Japan, and Thailand (Student National Origin Report, 2004). The district’s population of migrant
students, defined as students who have moved during the last 36 months because they or members of their family were trying to obtain temporary or seasonal employment in agricultural, dairy, fishing, or logging activities, fluctuates throughout the year. The 2002 - 2003 school year from 3,600 to over 4,000 migrant students attended schools in the district. Migrant students, 98 percent of whom are from Mexico, account for 26 - 30 percent of the total district enrollment throughout the school year (EDUSD Yearly Service Agreement with Riverside County, 2003; N. Cruz, personal communication, April 28, 2004).

Generally, over 40 percent of the district’s student body is composed of migrant and immigrant students (California Department of Education Website, ed-data, 2003; EDUSD Head Start Community Assessment, 2002). The remaining portion, approximately 57 percent, of EDUSD’s Hispanic students are comprised of American born children from first to fourth generation and immigrants who have been in the U.S. for over 3 years. The ethnic composition of the rest of the district’s students, roughly three percent, include: American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, Filipino, African American, and White
English Learner (EL) students make up 69.94 percent of the district’s population; Spanish is the native language of 99.5 percent of all EL students in EDUSD (California Department of Education Website, DataQuest, 2003). EDUSD is growing rapidly with an anticipated increase of three percent, or 408 students, for the 2004-2005 school year and another three percent gain of 420 students projected for the following year. There is no indication that these increases will slow and they may accelerate if current rates of population growth and immigration trends continue (EDUSD Website, 2003; EDUSD Budget and Multi-Year Projection, 2003).

Social and Economic Wellbeing of Latinos in the U.S.

Other changes in the characteristics of this new wave of American immigrants are found in educational background and economic status. Previous immigrants arrived during a time of industrial expansion which offered the opportunity for upward mobility. In today’s highly technological society the unskilled worker is stuck with little chance for social advancement. García (2002) describes the
situation as an hourglass. Highly skilled and educated immigrants are able to move into well compensated positions while untrained laborers are trapped at the other end of the hourglass. Educationally, "fewer than 25 percent of Mexican immigrants and 46 percent of Central American immigrants have the equivalent of a high school diploma. In contrast, 77 percent of native-born adults and almost 60 percent of other immigrants do" (Meece & Kurtz-Costes, 2001, p. 1). García (2002) points out children from well educated families achieve at much higher levels than children whose parents have little education. This is especially significant for Mexican immigrants since they are the largest and fastest growing immigrant group in the U.S.

In 1998 The Council of Economic Advisors compiled the Changing America report for the President’s Initiative on Race. This report compares indicators for population, education, labor markets, economic status, health, crime and criminal justice, and housing and neighborhoods by race and Hispanic origin. This report found that "race and ethnicity continue to be salient predictors of wellbeing in American society. On average, non-Hispanic whites and Asians experience advantages in health,
education and economic status relative to blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians" (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998, p. 2).

Population

As noted previously, the Latino population in the U.S. is growing at a much faster rate than other segments of society. Between 1970 and 1980 the Hispanic population grew 61 percent as compared to an 11 percent increase in the general population (Garcia, 1992). Changes in immigration laws and "higher-than-average birth rates" have contributed to the phenomenal population increases in the U.S. Latino population (Institute for Latino Studies, 2002, p. 1). Two immigration policy changes resulted in increased numbers of immigrants. These were the 1965 Immigration Act which eliminated national origin quotas and the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act that legalized undocumented persons living in the U.S. "Immigration has lowered the relative socioeconomic status of the U.S. Hispanic population, since Hispanic immigrants tend to have lower levels of education and income than the Hispanic population as a whole" (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998, p. 5).
Demographic characteristics of the Latino population that effect social and economic status include age distribution and household structure. Increases in children living in poverty can be related to rising levels of single-parent families. Twenty-six percent of Hispanic households are supported by single-parents. Latinos are younger than other segments of the U.S. population; 25.7 percent of non-Hispanic whites are below the age of 18 as compared to 35.0 percent of Hispanics. The average age of the Latino population is 25.9 as compared to 35.3 for non-Hispanics while Mexicans had a median age of 24.2 (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998; Institute for Latino Studies, 2002; U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Lower age distributions reflect observed differences in death rates, fertility rates, child poverty, and rates of criminal activity between populations (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998).

The United Way of the Inland Valleys published a Community Profile in 2002 outlining health and human service needs in Riverside County. The service area of EDUSD was identified as a region in this report; however, one city was included that only has one school in the district's service area. This city is on the western edge of the district and is slightly more affluent, but still
predominately Latino and working class. Moving to this city is widely considered “making it” amongst the East Desert population.

According to United Way of the Inland Valleys (2002), The East Desert has grown by 28.4 percent between 1990 and 2000. In the same period of time the state of California only grew 13.8 percent indicating an accelerated level of population growth in this area. In the East Desert 35.8 percent of the population is under the age of 18; 40.4 percent of the population is 18 – 44; and 23.9 percent are 45 and over. Seventy-eight percent of the total East Desert population is Hispanic; however, a population shift is underway as indicated by the under five population which is 90 percent Latino. Age of birth mothers indicates that 19.5 percent of all live births were to adolescents 19 and under; 71.6 percent were born to mothers between the ages of 20 and 34; and 9 percent were to women 35 and over. The EDUSD Head Start Community Assessment (2000) notes that “because the area has the highest teen pregnancy rate in Riverside County, there are many women in their early 20’s with two or three children” (p. 7).
Education

The Council of Economic Advisers (1998) claims educational attainment to be “one of the most important indicators of lifetime economic opportunities” (p.13). Improvements in Hispanic educational achievement have been made slowly over the past 15 years. Native-born Latinos complete high school at the same rate as non-Hispanic blacks (87 percent), which is nearly as high as the rate for non-Hispanic whites (93 percent); however, the total 25 - 29 year old Latino population high school completion rate has grown little and remains at 62 percent (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998). Other educational issues plaguing Hispanics include: being held back at least one grade (35 percent); 47 percent are over-aged by grade 12; 85 percent attend urban schools; 70 percent attend segregated schools; and Latinos score significantly below national norms in tests of math, reading, science, social studies, and writing (García, 1992).

Academic performance in the EDUSD is low as indicated by statewide testing. All district schools scored in the bottom ranks of the Academic Performance Index (API). School wide scores of 800 or above is the goal for the state of California. EDUSD elementary schools averaged
An interesting trend is noted in test scores across the district; the lowest scores are found in the southeast end of the district (504) which is a predominately agricultural community with a high percentage of immigrant and migrant families while the highest district scores (650) are found in the only school located on the western edge of the district (California Department of Education Website, DataQuest, 2003). Parent levels of educational attainment in EDUSD are self reported by parents at school sites. Level of education is ranked as follows: 1 = Not a High School Graduate; 2 = High School Graduate; 3= Some College; 4 = College Graduate; 5 = Graduate School. Levels of parental education reflected student API scores with the southeastern end having the lowest levels of parent education (1.2) and the school farthest to the west having the highest (2.08). EDUSD has a low student drop out rate of three percent, however; fewer than three percent of high school graduates have taken classes that would make them eligible to enter either University of California schools or California State University schools (California Department of Education Website, DataQuest, 2003).
Labor Markets and Economic Status

The Council of Economic Advisers (1998) states that unemployment rates for Latinos and blacks are higher than for those of whites and are more susceptible to economic fluctuations. The median income of white and Asian families is almost two times that of blacks and Hispanics and the ratio of Hispanic family income to white family income has fallen considerably since the early 1970's. Latino wage differences can be explained by educational attainment and occupation. Today there is an increasing need for highly educated workers and Latinos, especially immigrants, tend to work in low-skilled "blue collar" jobs (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998). "The modern workplace is continually introducing new technologies and methods that demand from workers, even low-paid ones, more advanced quantitative and analytical skills than in the past" (Institute for Latino Studies, 2002, p. 45). Homeownership contributes to financial wellbeing and 66 percent of U.S. residents own homes, but less than half of blacks and Hispanics are home owners (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998).

According to the EDUSD Head Start Community Assessment (2002), "the areas served by EDUSD are
agricultural, sparsely populated, and home to many low-income farm and service workers who provide the manual labor for the resorts, hotels, golf courses, and large agribusiness efforts" (p. 1). EDUSD Head Start Community Assessment (2002) reports that 74 percent of parents enrolled in Head Start earned less than $14,000 annually, “which is considerably below the Riverside County and California median incomes of $36,368 and $39,595 respectively” (p. 4). The Farm Workers and Family Service Center found the average income in the district’s rural and unincorporated areas to be $7,100 a year (personal communication, September 18, 2003). The Coachella Valley Housing Association has encouraged growth in these areas by building low-income housing developments and apartment complexes; however, “many families in the outlying areas live in dilapidated trailers . . . [for] low-income families, finding another place to live and amassing first and last months’ rent and a security deposit are extremely difficult” (EDUSD Head Start Community Assessment, 2002, p. 7).

Poverty rate is defined by the Hispanic Literacy Taskforce (2000) as “the proportion [of a population] who lack the economic resources needed to purchase a minimally
acceptable standard of living” (p. 33). As of March 2000, 16.8 percent of immigrants were impoverished, 11.2 percent of U.S. natives lived in poverty, however Mexicans showed poverty rates of 25.8 percent (Hispanic Literacy Taskforce, 2000). This has serious implications for Mexican origin children since poverty is associated with “inequity of opportunity, risks to health and child development, and long-term economic disadvantage” (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998).

Health

Health status is an important economic indicator because those in poor health must expend resources on medical care, have reduced earning potentials, and a lower quality of life. In the U.S., blacks have the worst health status of all groups with American Indians and Latinos showing disadvantages as compared to whites (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998). Research on the causes of differences in health status between races has indicated socioeconomic status as a leading factor:

On average, white Americans have better access to the social and economic resources necessary for healthy environments and lifestyles and better access to preventative medical services ... To the extent
that access to medical care can prevent the onset of disease or ameliorate its effects, the portion of the population without health insurance will be correlated with ill health. Especially among men, Hispanics and blacks are less likely to have health insurance than non-Hispanic whites (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998, p. 41).

In a representative-sample survey administered by the California Endowment, almost 32 percent of male agricultural workers had never been to a doctor’s office or clinic, 48 percent had been to a doctor in the past two years, and 18 percent of those surveyed had two out of three risk factors for chronic disease. Hispanic women are less likely to receive routine gynecological screening than white or black women and suffer the highest rates of invasive cervical cancer in California (California-Mexico Health Initiative, 2003).

Health insurance is an ongoing problem for Latinos in the U.S. In California 33 percent of Hispanic children and 41 percent of adults do not have health insurance. Nationally, 30 percent of Latinos are uninsured as compared to 17 percent of blacks and 11 percent of whites (California-Mexico Health Initiative, 2003). Changes in
welfare policies have affected the healthcare coverage of impoverished immigrant Hispanics. In 1996 congress passed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) which made wide reaching changes for all welfare recipients. At that time immigrants made up five percent of the welfare roles, after PRWORA was passed new immigrants were ineligible for welfare benefits including Medicaid, food stamps, and cash assistance. To receive aid immigrants needed to become U.S. citizens, a difficult task for Latino immigrants with limited English abilities and little formal education (Institute for Latino Studies, 2002).

Rick Brown, Director Children and Family Services, estimates that 1/3 of children in the communities served by the district lack health insurance. From experience the district has found that 1/3 of their students have health insurance; 1/3 are eligible for insurance but not connected to the health care system; and 1/3 are undocumented. Until recently undocumented children were not eligible for any type of state or federal insurance programs, but in September of 2002 Riverside County launched the Healthy Kids program to cover uninsured children regardless of legal status. The program is the
result of extensive public and private collaboration between Riverside County, First Five of Riverside County, the Inland Empire Health Plan, and the Riverside Community Health Foundation (Proposition 10 tobacco money). The program has enough money to insure 6,000 children; 4,000 of the 6,000 children registered are from EDUSD. Rick notes that although undocumented children now have access to health care, 30 percent of the district’s children remain uninsured due to new families arriving from Mexico who are not oriented to the available programs or because parents let coverage drop when they cannot afford the monthly premiums (Child and Family Coverage Technical Assistance Center, 2004; Rick Brown, personal communication, April 28, 2004).

Environmental Exchange and Systems Theory

The mission statement of EDUSD is “A District that promotes education, pride and progress” and believes that “a positive relationship between school, parents, and the community is a keystone to student success”. The motto “Together we build the future” flows from the mission and beliefs of the district (EDUSD Website, 2003). Communication of the mission and beliefs internally to
employees and externally through the employees to the community is critical to their achievement. According to Allvine (1987), an organization should strive to establish mutually beneficial exchange relationships with its environment. To achieve these relationships the organization must communicate information about its products and services.

The study of relationships between an organization and its environment is based on systems theory. Ludwig von Bertalanffy published this theory in 1968. He believed that the systems concepts used in biological sciences could be applied to the social sciences. The late 1960's through the 1970's many researchers utilized and expanded upon systems theory as a way to interpret organizational behavior and communication (Miller, 2003).

Systems theory looks at organizations as ecosystems. First the components that make up the system must be identified. There are three important concepts related to the relevant components: 1) hierarchical ordering; 2) interdependence; and 3) permeability. Miller, (2003) describes hierarchical organizations as having a large super-system that the organization fits into and subsystems throughout the organization. In the
case of EDUSD, Children and Family Services and the Parent Resource Center are subsystems within the larger bureaucracy of the school district.

Interdependence means that each component or subsystem is dependent on the functioning of other components in the system. Permeability gauges the ease of flow of information and materials between the subsystems of the organization and between the organization and its environment. Permeability can vary from restricted to unrestricted, but a system and its component parts must allow some exchange with its environment in order to survive. Permeability is a key concept because if a system does not exchange information with its environment it enters into a state of negative entropy or systemic breakdown (Miller, 2003). For EDUSD communication channels must be created and maintained by each subsystem. Children and Family Services and the Parent Resource Center must communicate internally with other subsystems within the school district in order to get referrals and they must communicate with the community so that those in need of services know the services are available, who to contact, and where to go.
System processes examine the interaction of the system with its environment as reflected in input, throughput, and output. Both input and output require an exchange with the environment outside of the system. The degree of permeability can facilitate or prevent these exchanges from occurring. To successfully transform input into output the components of the system must function in concert. Feedback helps to facilitate this interdependent functioning of the components in a system. There are two types of feedback: 1) Negative, which corrects an action allowing for the maintenance of steady functioning; and 2) Positive, which changes the functioning of a system allowing it to grow and adapt to new conditions in its environment (Miller, 2003).

Kotler (1975) describes bureaucratic organizations from the standpoint of environmental responsiveness. A bureaucracy, he explains, “is the tendency of organizations to routinize their operations, replace personal judgment with impersonal policies, specialize the job of every employee, create a rigid hierarch of command, and convert the organization into an efficient machine” (p. 39). Organizations have the tendency to, over time, become very efficient at meeting the original market
purpose; however, that purpose may no longer be what is needed by the community. Kotler (1975) refers to this as a "creeping tendency toward organizational unresponsiveness" (p. 39). From a systems standpoint the bureaucratic propensity toward unresponsiveness can be combated by maintaining permeable boundaries and accepting feedback from the changing environment.

Systems theory has implications for all organizations, including EDUSD. In order for any organization to survive and thrive it must, as Allvine (1987) noted, have positive and responsive exchange relationships with its environment. The only way to achieve this is through open channels of communication. It is difficult, if not impossible, to effectively provide services to a community if the organization does not know what the community needs and the community does not know what services are offered. If communication channels are not carefully maintained the system begins to break down.

Organizational Culture and Communication

Hofstede (1980) was one of the first researchers to relate the concepts of societal culture with organizational behavior. The culture of an organization
has been described as operational on both the conscious and unconscious levels; it provides structures to reduce uncertainty, outlines behavioral norms, and provides values that people discuss, promote, and work by. Organizational artifacts are described as the architecture, décor, the clothing people wear, the rituals, stories, symbols, and celebrations of that particular corporation (Hagberg & Heifetz, 2000; Sackmann, 1990). Wallach (1983) describes corporate culture as “the shared understanding of an organization’s employees - how we do things around here” (p. 29). Deal and Kennedy (1982) profiled nearly eighty companies in order to find commonalities amongst outstanding companies. They found that high performing companies had a strong corporate culture which the founders and/or directors of these companies “worked obsessively to create” (p. 8). Companies with strong cultures have readily identifiable values, heroes, rites and rituals, and a communication network to sustain the culture and to pass it on. A strong culture helps employees know how to behave and cultivates a feeling of shared purpose (Deal & Kennedy, 1982).

The culture of a service organization can make it accessible or seemingly inaccessible to its clients.
Since EDUSD is serving a predominately Mexican community with low levels of educational attainment and high levels of poverty, its organizational culture will either encourage or discourage communication exchanges with the community. Additionally, since EDUSD is engaged in efforts to alter certain beliefs, values, and behaviors of the community it is essential that the district employees have “a deep understanding of the needs, perceptions, preferences, reference groups, and behavioral patterns of the target audience . . . to maximize the ease of adopting the idea” (Kotler, 1975, p. 282). Children and Family Services and the Parent Resource Center are presumably “acting in the interest of the target group”; however, the community may not see these services in this light (Kotler, 1975, p. 284). These programs, more so than others offered by the district, must communicate effectively with their clients so that social and personal change may take place leading to the empowerment of the community.

The EDUSD employs approximately 1500 full-time employees, making it one of the largest employers in the East Desert (EDUSD Website, 2003). The district makes an effort to hire and promote employees from within the
community and the organization. Latino teachers make up 47.1 percent of the teaching staff, 40.5 percent of administrators are Hispanic, and classified employees are 86.8 percent Latino (California Department of Education Website, DataQuest and Data & Statistics, 2003). Cultural distance between the organization and the community could potentially be reduced by hiring community members and professionals of Mexican descent. However, Taylor, Serrano and Anderson (2001) caution "it is possible that the improved status [of the employee] can move [him/her] away from the target population and closer to the agency . . . thus reducing the peer advantage" (p. 290).

EDUSD promotes Anglo health and education values and many of these values are new to the community served. In order for these ideas to be accepted they must be communicated in ways that will be embraced by the community. It is crucial that district employees develop a deep understanding and empathy for the community members; communication must be approached with a sense of cultural understanding (Taylor et al., 2001).

Communication, Culture, and Values

Lipson (cited in Kemp, 2004) defines culture as:
... a system of symbols that is shared, learned and passed on through generations of a social group.

Culture mediates between human beings and chaos; it influences what people perceive and guides people’s interactions with each other. It is a process rather than a static entity and it changes over time (¶ 3).

The attempt to define “Hispanic” cultural norms is indeed difficult. Garcia-Preto (1996) explains, “Hispanic or Latino are adjectives used to describe people who come from different countries with different cultures and sociopolitical histories, and who in their countries of origin would never describe themselves in that way” (p. 142). Garcia-Preto (1996) further asserts that Latinos have a strong sense of national identity and pride, however, when they arrive in the U.S. they are labeled “Hispanic” by the government; this method of group identification negates national identity. Colon (1996) notes Latino populations are highly complex and diverse. “They can be characterized by ethnicity, nationality, levels of acculturation, generation, socioeconomic status, race, legality of residence, and language differences, to name the most obvious differences” (p. 87).
While Hispanics in the U.S. are a truly diverse population, what host nationals notice "are their similarities. They speak Spanish . . . most are Roman Catholic, and they have in common values and beliefs rooted in a history of conquest and colonization" (Garcia-Preto, 1996, p. 142). In spite of differences in national origin, education, class, and generation there are some commonalities, although dynamic and changing, that can be observed and must be taken into account when providing services to Latino populations. One of the first considerations is communication. According to the CIA World Factbook (2003) 92.2 percent of Mexican citizens over the age of 15 are literate, meaning they can read and write. However, Kemp (2004) notes literacy does not imply use of reading and writing as common forms of communication, especially not among those of lower socio-economic and/or rural backgrounds. "The most commonly encountered books in many Hispanic homes . . . are required schoolbooks, pictorial novelettes, and the Bible" (¶ 13).

Since reliance on written information is not a cultural norm service providers must adapt how directions and information are provided to Latino populations. Kemp
(2004), notes that written instructions should be accompanied by "personal instruction that is directive, active, and visual" (§ 18). Additionally, Hispanic cultures accept a high level of power distance. This manifests itself as a respect for authority which sometimes prevents Latinos from questioning, speaking up, or asserting their rights (Garcia-Preto, 1996). Professionals working with Hispanic populations should recognize that most patients will not question instructions, even when they do not understand. Service providers need to assess client understanding by asking clients questions that reflect their comprehension (Kemp, 2004).

If the client's primary language is Spanish all written communication should be translated. Interpreters may also be needed if the service provider is not bilingual. Kemp (2004) warns that:

... using children to translate puts the parent and child in a difficult reversed power and authority position, also care should be taken in the use of other family members if the topic is especially sensitive ... In general, it is best to have
Spanish-speaking staff or volunteers to translate ($16$).

Verbal and nonverbal communication among Latinos is defined by “respeto”, which connotes “more emotional dependence and dutifulness” than does the English word “respect” (Falicov, 1996, p. 175). Hall (1983) would describe Hispanic culture as a high context culture. High context cultures value and maintain extensive communication networks among established and trusted persons such as family, friends, colleagues, and clients. Nonverbal clues, social status, and the relationship of the communicators may be more important than the information communicated (Caziani, 2003; Williams, 2002). In contrast, U.S. culture is low context, communication “relies more heavily on the literal meaning of the words used... written and spoken communication are more explicit” (Williams, 2002, ¶ 26). Falicov (1996) observes that verbal communication between Mexicans tends to be indirect, implied, or concealed. “Assertiveness, open differences of opinion, and demands for clarification are seen as rude or insensitive to others’ feelings” (p. 176).

Latinos value formality in their interactions with each other, especially early in relationships. Hispanic
populations tend to be less comfortable with unpredictable events and people than people from the U.S. "They develop elaborate formal and informal systems to control their environments and have strict behavioral norms" (Williams, 2002, ¶ 14). For organizations that serve Latino populations continuity of care providers, outreach workers, and staff is important for the establishment of trusted relationships and for the feeling of stability. (Jenswold & LaMont, 2003; Kemp, 2004). If a service provider is curt Hispanic clients will rarely complain, but will not be likely to return due to the value placed on "personalism, or building personal relationships" (Falicov, 1996, p. 177, Kemp, 2004). Quality care is viewed as "not just correct diagnosis and treatment, but also the way in which the treatment is provided" (Kemp, 2004, ¶ 15).

Garcia-Preto (1996) describes Latino populations as sharing an "importance placed on family unity, welfare, and honor. The emphasis is on the group rather than on the individual. There is a deep sense of family commitment, obligation, and responsibility" (p. 151). Because of family interdependence there is a low reliance on institutions and outsiders making it essential for
service providers to establish "inside" community connections (Colon, 1996; Falicov, 1996). Colon (1996), claims that the establishment of "confianza", or mutual trust, is crucial in convincing Hispanic clients to utilize a service. He maintains that communication must be egalitarian in order for confianza to be established. However, in order to gain input from this population it is essential that they be trained in leadership and introduced to egalitarianism, empowered, and given a voice.

Health, scientific and technical information should flow from professional providers to the community and information about the community's cultural mores, attitudes, and understandings should flow from the community to the professional service providers. Colon (1996) suggests that two-way communication flow between the community and the organization can be established by recruiting classified staff from the community, talking to these workers, including them in staff meetings, and creating an atmosphere of open communication. Classified staff should be consulted and treated as experts regarding community matters and feel comfortable asking the professionals for technical information. The organization
must integrate itself into the community that it serves.

Colon (1996) maintains:

An open egalitarian system should help to inspire trust within the client population. One index of egalitarianism is how employees are treated. Another index is, of course, how clients are treated. Clients are much more likely to discuss . . . problems with professionals if those professionals have a reputation in the community for knowledge and compassion, and they have been recommended by someone they trust (p. 94).

Williams (2002) observes that information about "national cultures are generalizations rather than hard-and-fast rules that apply to every individual at all times" (¶ 8). For organizations in the U.S. that are working with Latino clients, understanding of national cultural norms is critical for communication to be received and accepted by the target population.

Empowerment and the Future of Hispanics in the U.S.

The pressing need to empower Latino populations in the U.S. has been argued by many researchers (Colon, 1996; Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; Delgado-Gaitan
& Trueba, 1991; García, 1992; Pollard, 1989; O. Reyes & Jason, 1993; P. Reyes & Valencia, 1993). These arguments have been based on emotional appeals, moral appeals, and appeals to the self interest of the country. The fact is that in the U.S. the Hispanic population, the Mexican population in particular, is growing at a phenomenal rate and the children of this population are at risk (Garcia, 1992). One of the results of these risk factors is poor educational attainment, which is a concern as higher educational attainment is directly related to improved quality of life (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998). Some policy makers believe that low socioeconomic status of Latinos is a temporary condition and that they, like other immigrants before them, will move into the middle and upper classes of society. Nevertheless, many third generation Hispanics remain impoverished and actually show declines in economic measures. The overall socioeconomic situation of Latinos and low educational attainment ultimately limits their opportunities and wellbeing (Chapa & Valencia, 1993). García (1992) suggests that the future of Hispanics is the future of our country.

De Vos and Suárez-Orozco (1991) claim "it is the role of the school to be an educative service to the community
into which it has been placed" (p. 8). Further, community action must be sustained by the communities themselves. Social outreach programs must be owned by the community, trained outsiders cannot stay forever. If empowerment is to occur then interaction between the specialists and the population they serve must take place; this interaction must be initiated and encouraged by the specialists. Hispanic minorities must attain an “inner sense of empowerment necessary to parents, and to the ethnic community generally for effective interactions with . . . institution[s]” (De Vos & Suárez-Orozco, 1991, p. 8). Colon (1996) observes:

    One purpose of the provision of health and mental health preventions and treatment programs is the empowerment of the community . . . empowerment includes two aspects: capacity and equity. Capacity is the ability to use power to solve social problems. Equity is the appropriate distribution of available resources (p. 93).

    Researchers argue if the trend of Latino disenfranchisement is to change then the population must be helped to develop their own sense of capacity. To empower this population, researchers suggest adult
education and attention to the needs of families and children. Successful Hispanic serving school districts recognize that they cannot educate children in isolation from their communities. Family members must be valued, respected, invited to participate, and trained to become full partners in the education process. Through their involvement with the school districts parents learn how to interact with U.S. institutions and develop confidence which, ultimately, leads to empowerment (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; P. Reyes et al., 1999).

Summary of Ideas

Garcia (1992) argues “Hispanic children in particular are representative of the ‘at-risk’ status of minority populations, displaying a portrait of unrealized social, educational, and employment success” (p. 69). Results of these failures are apparent when indicators of social and economic wellbeing are compared by race. Latinos in the U.S. have shown a decline in relative economic status combined with rapidly increasing population size over the past 25 years. Immigrants with lower levels of education and income have contributed to these declines in average social and economic wellbeing (Council of Economic
Advisers, 1998). In order to change this trend the U.S. must attend to the needs of this population.

Chapa and Valencia (1993) argue the only way to truly improve the educational, economic, and social status of Hispanics is to focus on the health, childcare, and educational needs of children under five. Other researchers contend the basic survival and educational needs of Latino parents must be addressed before they can support their children’s education (López et al., 2001; McDonnell & Hill, 1993; P. Reyes et al., 1999). Both positions advocate increased levels of educational attainment in the Hispanic population. Higher educational attainment is associated with improved socioeconomic status, better health, and increased wellbeing (Council of Economic Advisers, 1998). Additionally, an educated and successful Latino community could have greater influence on the political, social, and educational policies of this country (P. Reyes et al., 1999).

In order for social change to take place agencies serving Hispanic populations must convince them to incorporate new values, beliefs, and behaviors. This process, called social marketing, is difficult because “persuasive efforts are most likely to reinforce positive
opinions, crystallize neutral opinions to become more positive, and neutralize negative opinions . . . Persuasion likely must take place in increments . . . change will take time" (Austin & Pinkleton, 2001, p. 284).

In addition to taking time, social marketing consumers do not pay money for services; rather their costs are perceptual in nature and include things like time, energy, guilt, and reputation. Finally, the products, services, and ideas offered by the social marketer are often not valued by the target audience (Austin & Pinkleton, 2001). If the community is going to embrace these new ideas, the manner in which they are presented is critical.

Taylor et al. (2001) stress the importance of communicating in ways that are empathetic and with a sense of cultural understanding. Kemp (2004) suggests that written communication is not a commonly used form of communication among Latinos of lower socio-economic backgrounds. Additionally, translation and interpretation of all communication is essential. Other researchers point out the importance of communicating with respect, the need to establish personal relationships in the community, and to develop trust (Colon, 1996; Falicov, 1996; Kemp, 2004).
In all contacts and interactions with the community service providers must be responsive and aware of the needs and preferences of their clients. The only way to ensure this type of awareness is to allow communication and information to flow freely back and forth between the community and the organization; the organization must have permeable boundaries. Researchers argue that if a sense of equality is established and if the community is truly included as a partner then empowerment is possible (Colon, 1996; De Vos & Suárez-Orozco, 1991; Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; P. Reyes et al., 1999).

Rationale for this Study

EDUSD serves predominately Mexican and Mexican American communities that exhibit all of the social, economic, educational, and health risk factors indicated in the literature. Researchers maintain that in order to change the trend of Hispanic disenfranchisement this population must develop a sense of empowerment. Researchers have also suggested the way to empower this population is through adult education and attention to the needs of families and children. The EDUSD houses two departments which are dedicated to these goals: Children
and Family Services and The Parent Resource Center. Additionally EDUSD has improved and expanded the services of its adult school, which is now a flagship in the Coachella Valley and attracts students throughout the valley and surrounding areas. Theoretically, EDUSD’s commitment to these programs should result in empowerment amongst the community members who participate in them.

EDUSD was given accommodations and special mention in their last Coordinated Compliance Review. The California Department of Education Website, Testing and Accountability (2004) explains the Coordinated Compliance Review as follows:

State and federal law require the California Department of Education to monitor the implementation of categorical programs operated by local educational agencies. This state oversight is accomplished . . . by conducting on-site reviews . . . once every four years . . . to verify compliance with requirements of each categorical program (§ 1).

In this report the Adult Education program was commended for reaching out into the community to serve the educational needs of the adults served (Coordinated Compliance Review, 2003). Additionally, Linda Baker,
Director of Special Education, related that in the last verification review by the California Department of Education the Special Education Department was commended for their positive community relations and for making district-wide Special education meetings accessible to and convenient for the parents by providing transportation, offering incentives to attend, having childcare available, having translators, and providing food. These comments followed the first step of the verification process which was a parent meeting facilitated by the State Reviewers. Parents with children in the Special Education program were invited to attend and the reviewers asked scripted questions to gauge parents’ interactions with and impressions of the program. This meeting ran over two hours and parents were asked about their meetings with school personnel, about their comfort level, how the school kept in contact with them, and about language issues. Parents indicated that they were comfortable interacting with the district, they felt free to respond to the State Reviewers questions, and at the end of the meeting they clapped for Linda. The Reviewers commented that the district truly created a welcoming atmosphere and
the level of parent appreciation was exceptional (L. Baker, personal communication, December 19, 2003).

In addition to being recognized as community oriented by state evaluators, the researcher experienced this commitment to community first hand through comparative experiences. The researcher worked for EDUSD and also for another school district that serves communities similar, although not identical to the communities served by EDUSD. Her experience as an employee at these two districts was distinct. From the standpoint of organizational culture the other district did not instill in employees the idea that community members were of value and although teamwork was an organizational goal, it was not emulated by the district’s employees. Her experience in the other district was one of strained relations with the community and poor relationships amongst employees.

The positions that she held in both districts were very similar. She worked with seventh and eighth grade Special Education Students teaching them math and science. Federally mandated annual Individual Education Program (IEP) meetings must be held with the student’s parent(s), the Special Education teacher, and a district representative. In the other district the researcher was
entirely responsible for calling parents, arranging translators, and setting up meetings. Parents frequently did not show up for these meetings and the researcher went out to many of the homes of her students to fulfill the meeting requirement. In their homes, many of the parents shared with the researcher that they did not understand the meetings, they could not really talk to the teacher, and they just quit coming. Parents in this other district felt alienated and left out so they quit cooperating with the district. In contrast, EDUSD has employees who are dedicated to arranging the IEP meetings, providing translators, and arranging transportation for parents if needed. Very seldom did parents not show up for these meetings. If a parent was late the translator would call the parent find out what was going on and either arrange another meeting or go and pick them up.

Parents in EDUSD know and trust the district translators because they have been working in the district for years. Because parents are treated so differently at EDUSD they take time off of work and make it a priority to attend their children’s IEP meetings. The interaction between parents and district personnel as exhibited at IEP meetings was completely different between the two school
districts and reflected the orientation of the organizations themselves. These two different approaches yielded two different results. Parents at EDUSD have a mutually respectful relationship with the district and generally respond when the district calls them. Parents at the other district sense that they are working with an impersonal bureaucratic institution and they often do not make an effort to respond when the district calls them.

EDUSD was chosen for this study because the population that it serves is widely recognized in literature as being poorly served and alienated from the public school system, yet this district has been identified by independent evaluating agencies as being accessible and community focused. Additionally, the researcher's experience as an employee in the district is consistent with these evaluations. Their approach must be different.

The purpose of this study is to outline the communication processes used by these programs and by the school district employees, to identify communication channels, and to evaluate the outcomes of district communication on the community. If the district is successful in helping community members to embrace new
ideas and become empowered, then their communication processes are worthy of attention. This research has been designed to discover the underlying structure, ingredient, and method by which EDUSD relates to its community.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

Data collection for this study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase data was collected ethnographically; in the second phase survey information was collected. At the beginning of the project the researcher met with Mr. Reid Brewer, the superintendent of EDUSD to discuss her project. Mr. Brewer granted the researcher an interview and recommended contact people to begin the study. He also offered to contact key people and/or write a letter of introduction asking the EDUSD employees to cooperate with the researcher. The researcher felt a letter was unnecessary, but kept the option open.

Contact with school district personnel began with Rick Brown, Director Children and Family Services. After explaining the nature of the project Rick put the researcher in touch with Marley Adler, Coordinator Healthy Start, which is in the process of changing over to the new School Readiness program funded by First Five of Riverside County. The Healthy Start Program is a "major infant
health initiative managed by the Department of Public Health. Started in 1985, Healthy Start promotes early, comprehensive and continuous prenatal care for low-income, uninsured pregnant women" (Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Public Health Website, 2002, ¶ 1). "Healthy Start is designed to serve children, their family members, and the community" (California Department of Education Website, Learning Support, ¶ 4). Similarly, the First Five program is based on brain development research indicating a child's environment has a profound effect on his/her ability to function in school and later on in life. The program is designed to serve at risk families with children from prenatal to five years of age by delivering "health care, quality child care, parent education and effective intervention programs . . . [to provide] the tools necessary to foster secure, healthy and loving attachments" (California Children and Families Commission Website, 2004, ¶ 1). Marley opened her office to the researcher to serve as a base and a place where she could work and have access to equipment and resources such as phones, computers, and a copy machine.

Marley directs three programs: Sonrisitas (meaning little smiles) dental education outreach, coordinated by
Adriana Fuentes; the Saul Martinez Dental Clinic, managed by Christina Diaz; and Latino Family Literacy, facilitated by Aida Morales. She also organizes the semi-annual Flying Doctors and Coachella Valley Medical Volunteers event which provides free medical exams, dental visits, vision exams, gynecological exams, immunizations, counseling, information on health insurance, and community based organizations are on hand to answer questions and offer services.

Sonrisitas was designed by Beatriz Barraza-Roppe to “improve the oral health of Latino children and their families, to facilitate prevention of dental disease, and to increase access to dental care” (B. Barraza-Roppe, personal communication, October 17, 2003). Sonrisitas uses a peer educator model. Community members are recruited and trained to be “promotoras de salud dental” (promoters of dental health). The promotora model has been used successfully to reach and educate remote and culturally isolated communities. Benefits of using peer educators are “community members embrace the peers and, as a result, the programs themselves [and] it is thought that peers may have a unique understanding and empathy for the
audience that is limited for nonmembers” (Taylor et al., 2001, p. 285).

The dental clinic is located in Saul Martinez Elementary school and is a collaboration between the community, the district, and Loma Linda University School of Dentistry. The district houses the clinic and provides the staff to manage it, a local dental supply company donated the chairs, and Loma Linda provides the dentists. Dr. Young, the Dental School Professor, drives six to eight dental students 80 miles to reach the clinic every Tuesday and Thursday. The dental students first complete dental screenings and outline needed services for EDUSD students. Once a treatment plan is in place and parents authorize treatment the dental students perform extractions and fillings. On Tuesdays the dental students are joined by hygiene students who do x-rays, sealants, and cleanings and go into classrooms for half hour after lunch to teach children how to brush and floss their teeth in addition to the restorative work that is accomplished in the clinic (Young, personal communication, October 9, 2003).

At the beginning of the year Christina sends out packets asking parents to provide insurance information
and requesting permission to see their child at the dental clinic. This packet also contains information on how to sign up for insurance if the family does not have any. Two grade levels are targeted each year. By January the school nurses have completed dental screenings. Students without insurance and in need of dental care will be referred to the clinic. The nurses contact the parents. The parents come in or mail in a form giving permission for treatment. Christina also calls parents of students without insurance and asks them to come in on Wednesdays (non-clinic day) so that she can get them signed up for MediCal. On Wednesday both Christina and Vanessa, promotora and dental office assistant, call parents to update them on treatment plans, to ask for missing information on the charts, to request treatment authorization, and to help them sign up for insurance (C. Diaz, personal communication, October 9, 2003).

The Latino Family Literacy Project is a bilingual/bicultural literacy program designed for Spanish speaking parents and their children. First Five of Riverside County funds this parent outreach program. It is open to parents whose children are enrolled in Head Start, State Preschool, or State Childcare. The teachers
of these programs invite all of their parents to participate at the beginning of the school year. The goal of this program is to encourage pre-literacy activities, reading in the home, and to teach parents about brain development. Parents are taught to read the title of the book, the author, the illustrator and look at the front and back covers before they begin to read it. They are also taught the correct way to hold and treat a book, and how to ask the child questions on each page. The activities that go with the books are designed to reinforce whatever the book teaches. Teachers emphasize the following: Let parents know that it’s Ok to picture read if they cannot read; Give parents ideas for starting a home library; Make sure the books are in a place where the children can reach them and have access to them whenever they want; and that Reading should be fun and interesting for the children (A. Morales and M. Adler, personal communication, September 20, 2003). All of these programs were completely open to the researcher for data collection.

The next contact made was with Lucia Quintero, the Director of the Parent Resource Center and also the district’s Parent Liaison. Lucia opened all of the parent
education classes and events to the researcher and shared her written materials and parent publications. Similarly, contacting Angelica Trujillo, Migrant Resource Teacher, made the Migrant program accessible to the researcher.

Ethnographic data was collected from all of these programs from September 2003 through June 2004. The researcher attended Sonrisitas meetings, trainings, and classes for community members. A Head Start Parent meeting was attended to observe implementation of the Latino Family Literacy program and to talk to parents. Aida Morales, the program facilitator was interviewed and a half day training session for the Latino Family Literacy teachers was attended. Two days were spent in the dental clinic observing the program, looking at forms, and observing communication with parents who came into the clinic. Additionally, interviews were conducted with the coordinating dentist, Dr. Young, and Christina Diaz, clinic manager. The researcher was a participant observer in the six-week Home School Connection classes offered by the Parent Resource Center. She was also able to observe and participate in both the fall and spring Flying Doctors events as a volunteer. The community “Day of the Child” was attended and the researcher helped to run the School
Readiness table with Christina, Adriana, and Aida.
Lastly, a Migrant Parent Advisory meeting was attended where she was able to talk to migrant parents and teachers of migrant students.

Parent trainers and participants in the Home School Connection classes were interviewed as a group and audio taped on the last day of class. The promotoras for the Sonrisitas program and their coordinator, Adriana Fuentes were also interviewed as a group and audio taped at their last meeting of the regular school year. These interviews were predominately unstructured; the researcher asked participants about their impression of the school district (accessibility, level of concern for the community), how involvement in these classes has personally affected their lives, and any other comments about the programs. Both of these parent group interviews were conducted in Spanish.

Directors of programs that worked closely with parents were contacted and interviews were requested. Interviews were conducted with Reid Brewer, Superintendent; Rick Brown, Director Children and Family Services; Angelica Trujillo, Migrant Resource Teacher, Jackie Salbach, Coordinator Early Head Start; Sergio Marquez, Adult School Principal; Sandra Wagner,
Coordinator Children and Family Services; Lucia Quintero, District Parent Liaison; Nicholas Aguilar and Araceli Sanchez, Coordinators 21st Century program and Community Based English Tutoring; and Marley Adler, Coordinator School Readiness. These interviews were also mainly unstructured. The researcher asked four structured questions, but allowed the participant to expand upon the questions and direct the interview as they pleased. Questions included: an overview of their program, their impression of the district's commitment to the program, why their program is unique, and the program's relationship with the community. All interviews were conducted in one session with the exception of Lucia Quintero and Marley Adler who the researcher interviewed twice. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes to one hour.

Fiscal Services employees were interviewed for information on program funding and the researcher had a brief conversation with Linda Baker, Director Special Education. Most interviews were recorded through notes taken by the researcher during the interview. Interviews with Jackie Salbach, Sandra Wagner, Marley Adler, and Lucia Quintero were audio taped and transcribed. Many
other informal observations and conversations with people who the researcher was in contact with or working with while in the field were recorded using field notes. Through the months of participation the researcher became a part of the functioning of the School Readiness office; on days that she was present she helped with the preparations for events and/or activities sponsored by School Readiness through First Five. During these times the researcher was able to ask questions and compile field notes from conversations between employees. Over 150 pages of notes were collected while in the field.

The collection of survey information began in April. The week prior to the district’s Spring Break the researcher visited every school in the district and met with principals to obtain permission to survey employees. There are 19 schools in the district on a total of 16 campuses. There are 13 elementary schools: eight K - 6, one K - 3, one 4 - 8 and three K - 8. There are two junior high schools serving seventh and eighth grades, one 7 - 12 school, and three 9 - 12 high schools, one of which is an alternative school. Of these schools the researcher was granted access to the employees of all with the exception of one campus, which houses three schools: an
elementary, a middle school, and a high school. Thus, 16 of the 19 schools' employees were surveyed for this study.

Four schools allowed the researcher to attend their staff meetings in order to pass out surveys and ask the school employees directly if they would fill them out. Two of these schools gave employees time during the meeting to complete the surveys, the researcher returned to the other two schools to collect the surveys later in the week. Two schools requested that the researcher attach a note to the surveys with information about the study and where and when to turn them in and place them in employees' boxes. The principals at the remaining ten schools agreed to explain the surveys to their employees at a staff meeting, hand them out, and collect them for the researcher.

A total of 960 surveys were distributed and 281 were returned for a 29.3% rate of return. All returned school employee surveys were valid. The researcher was interested in obtaining survey responses from both classified and certificated school site employees who were in contact with students and their families, unfortunately at some of the schools where the researcher left surveys to be distributed only teachers were surveyed. As a
result 87.2 percent of respondents are teachers; 5 percent are classroom aides; 2.8 percent are administrators; 3.9 percent are office staff; one nurse and one librarian responded. There were no responses from counselors, school site aides, maintenance, or cafeteria workers. Due to the inability to access three schools all employees were not given the opportunity to respond to the survey and survey results cannot be considered representative. However, 245 teacher surveys were returned making this a sufficient sample of the district’s teachers, but not of other school site employee positions.

Parent surveys were written in English and then translated into Spanish by a professional translator. Surveys were administered in English or Spanish depending on the respondent’s preference. Surveys were collected at the “Day of the Child” which is an annual community event held in a community Park. The researcher administered surveys to parents in English; Camila and Sylvia, promotoras for the Sonrisitas program, administered surveys in Spanish. Surveys were administered to parents while the School Readiness table was not too busy. Camila took home 150 surveys to administer at the apartment buildings where she lives and Aida, Facilitator Latino
Family Literacy, took 100 surveys for Head Start teachers to administer.

After Spring Break, the researcher met with Sergio Marquez, Adult School Principal, to request permission to survey the adult school students. Mr. Marquez consented to surveying the ESL and Citizenship classes for a total of nine teachers and ten classes. The researcher met with the teachers of these classes to arrange times to administer the survey. Two teachers allowed the researcher to administer surveys that evening. One teacher asked the researcher to come back the following week. The remaining six teachers agreed to administer the survey in their classes and the researcher returned the following week to pick up the completed surveys.

Surveys were solicited at a Migrant Parent Advisory Committee meeting held at an elementary school. The researcher attended the meeting and asked if it would be possible to administer her survey after the meeting. Since the agenda was not very full the Vice President of the Migrant Parent Association agreed to allow the researcher to administer the survey during the meeting. Vanessa, a promotora for the Sonrisitas program, was in
attendance and volunteered to read the survey to the parents, which facilitated the survey completion process.

In total 610 surveys were distributed, 465 in Spanish and 145 in English, 272 were returned for a response rate of 45 percent. Of the 272 surveys 30 were thrown out because they were incomplete, and 59 were put aside because they were filled out by community members who were not parents in the district. After removing surveys that could not be used in the study the researcher was left with 183 valid parent surveys. These surveys were not drawn from a random district-wide sample and cannot be considered representative of all parents in the EDUSD service area.

The surveys were designed to gauge the respondent's awareness of EDUSD sponsored community outreach programs. Question format was varied and included the following response types: "Yes/No", Likert-type scales, "select all that apply", or open ended. Both employee and parent surveys were divided into three sections. Section A assessed knowledge of the Parent Education Program run by Lucia Quintero; Section B measured familiarity with the Children and Family Services programs observed by the researcher i.e., Latino Family Literacy, Sonrisitas, the
Saul Martinez Dental Clinic, and the Flying Doctors;
Section C asked the respondent’s impression of the
district’s dedication to the community and demographic
information. Section C of the employee surveys asked
additional questions about willingness to disseminate
information and interest in receiving program information.
The Parent Survey may be found in Appendix A; the Employee
Survey is presented in Appendix B.

Data Analysis Procedure

The researcher transcribed all ethnographic data,
i.e. interviews, observations, parent and employee survey
comments and field notes. Additionally, she translated
interviews that were conducted in Spanish and all survey
comments written in Spanish. A professional translator
reviewed the Home School Connection group interview
translation for accuracy. The grounded theory protocol,
developed by Glaser and Strauss in 1967, was used to code
the data. Grounded theory was chosen because, according
to Turner (Cited in Lindlof & Taylor, 2002) “the
qualitative researcher has no real alternative to pursuing
something very close to grounded theory” (p. 218). The
first step in coding involved the development of open and
in vivo codes. Open codes were developed by cutting text, i.e. all interviews, field notes, parent and employee survey comments, and observations into chunks by meanings. All chunks were compared to other chunks and grouped until patterns emerged that suggested categories. In vivo codes were developed using the terms that the participants themselves used.

The next stage in data analysis using grounded theory is to integrate the data, which is a way "of reshaping the categories and producing deeper meanings for them" (Lindlof & Taylor, p. 220, 2002). Axial coding was used at this step to make connections between the categories. Each category was examined and compared to others. Categories that seemed to be related were placed together. The relationships between the categories were arranged and rearranged until core themes emerged from the data allowing the formation of theoretical constructs.

The last step in grounded theory is dimensional analysis. In dimensional analysis each construct is examined and the key variations, or dimensions, are "teas[ed] out" (Lindlof & Taylor, p. 222, 2002). In this step a few categories (dimensions) were identified. These dimensions formed a central descriptive narrative found in
the ethnographic data that related each one to the rest of the notional categories developed in step two.

The second set of data analysis was the surveys. All data was entered into SPSS, a statistical analysis program, and analyzed using mainly descriptive statistics. Frequencies were run for all questions and some comparisons were made via crosstabs which are two variable chi-square ($\chi^2$) tests. These were selected to examine "differences in the distributions of the categories created from two nominal independent variables" (Frey, Botan & Kreps, 2000, p. 340). Degree of employee program knowledge was compared to position held in the district. Percent of employees willing to disseminate information and interested in learning more about these programs was examined. Suggestions for effective means of disseminating this information were compiled. Suggestions for improved dissemination of information were also gathered. Parent and employee survey responses for participation or awareness in Latino Family Literacy, Sonrisitas, the Saul Martinez Dental Clinic, the Flying Doctors, and Parent Resource Center programs were aggregated to determine if program awareness and
participation created differences in the respondent’s perception of the district.

The last step in data analysis was to triangulate the interviews and field observations with the survey data. Qualitative data allowed the voices of those who were interviewed or observed to form the structure for examining how EDUSD communicates concern for the community and the community’s reaction to these strategies; while survey data indicated the communication processes and channels that were recognized by employees and parents and their overall impression of the district’s efforts. The use of several different research methods “enables us to gain a deeper and clearer understanding of the setting and people being studied” (Taylor & Bogdan, cited in Hogelucht & Geist, 1997, p. 5).

Verification of Findings

In September of 2004 the researcher returned to the field in order to verify her thesis findings. She met with every employee and every parent whose words or ideas were quoted and interpreted by her. Each participant read what the researcher had written and were asked to make suggestions, changes, additions or deletions to insure
that what was written was an accurate and valid reflection of their ideas. During this verification phase the researcher also consulted Hilario Dueñas, Coordinator of Special Projects, regarding the Migrant and Parent Education programs. Hilario provided additional information and clarification regarding these programs and their relationship with the community. The researcher asked each participant once again if they would like to have their thoughts used in the study. All participants were enthusiastic about being a part of the study and were very willing to have their words and ideas used. There is a sense of satisfaction and pride that is shared by both parents and employees about their own accomplishments and the accomplishments of the school district.

Methodological Assumptions

A variety of research methods were employed in this study. Interviews, survey data, and field observations were collected. Each method has different strengths and weaknesses; each offers something unique to the project. Ethnographic research "does not imply any single method or type of data analysis, although participant observation is a strategy that nearly all ethnographers employ" (Lindlof
Taylor, 2002, p. 16). Participant observation “involves the researcher ‘getting to know’ the people they are studying by entering into the subject’s world and participating in that world” (Livesey, 2003b, p. 20). On the other hand, survey research “stresses the importance of the researcher not becoming ‘personally involved’ with the respondent, in the sense of the researcher maintaining both a personal and social distance between themselves and the people they are researching” (Livesey, 2003a, p.1).

According to Frey et al. (2000) survey research is used to “ask questions about the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors for the purpose of describing the respondents and the population they were chosen to represent” (p. 198). Surveys are particularly useful when the target population is too large for every member to be studied (Frey et al., 2000). Because the research goals for this project included assessment of program knowledge, degree of familiarity, behavior, and interest surveys were designed to gauge these factors.

Livesey (2003a) outlines the advantages and disadvantages of survey research. Advantages include: the ability to contact large numbers of people quickly; ease of creation, coding, and interpretation; ease of
standardization; and ability to explore personal subjects due to anonymity. Limitations include: difficulty in exploring complex issues and opinions; the participant may not understand the questions; low response rates; and the problem of self-selecting sample.

According to Livesey (2003b), researchers use participant observation in order to "discover the nature of social reality by understanding the actor’s perception/understanding/interpretation of the social world" (p. 20). This method allows the voices of the participants to tell their own story. Participant observers must empathize by participating in a social group while simultaneously "retaining an observer’s eye for understanding, analysis and explanation" (Livesey, 2003b, p. 20). This method of research was chosen because the researcher wanted to understand what actually goes on in the district’s programs, not just the "official line". She also wanted to get a sense of how the participants reacted to and felt about the programs and the district. Personal changes that occurred as a result of participating in the program were also of interest to the researcher.
Advantages of ethnographic methods include: quality and depth of information about people and their behavior; flexibility to follow leads as they come up; understanding and insight into the causes of behavior. Disadvantages are: limits to the possible level of participation by the researcher; studies lack scope and scale meaning they represent only one group and generalizations are unlikely; the researcher must be skilled and adaptable to fit-in and communicate with the people being studied (Livesey, 2003b, p 23).

The combination of qualitative and survey methods allows for the weakness of one to be compensated for by the other. Although this study is limited to EDUSD, surveys expanded the scope of the investigation while ethnography increased the depth of the information obtained. The choice of these methods provide data with both breadth and depth and created a more complete picture of the functioning and the effects of the communication processes used by the district, by the Parent Resource Center, and Child and Family Services.
Reflexivity of Fieldwork

Although the researcher is an outsider to the organization, as time went on EDUSD employees began to relate to her as an insider. During the months of fieldwork, she formed personal relationships with many of the employees and community members who worked with the School Readiness program. This closeness facilitated the exchange of personal and organizational information with the researcher. She was invited to events outside of the office such as lunches, birthday parties, baby showers, and she tutored one employee’s daughter. The formation of these relationships helped the researcher as she entered into new situations for observations. For example, as a participant observer in the Home School Connection classes she was introduced as a friend of Camila’s; this allowed the parent presenters and the parents taking the class to see her as an insider and as trustworthy. Likewise, when she attended the Migrant Parent meeting Vanessa, who is a very active migrant parent in addition to being a promotora, introduced her to the parents making it easier for the researcher to gain permission to survey and to talk with the parents. When she spent time in the dental clinic Christina did not worry about the researcher’s
presence and went about her job as usual. These close bonds increased the researcher’s ability to blend into the environment and to establish trust and acceptance in new situations. While in the field, the researcher forged friendships with many employees and community members which allowed her the freedom to observe without being noticed. Being an accepted participant observer helped her to switch back and forth between these two roles.

The researcher was well accepted into the EDUSD/Community system; however she was still an outsider to both the community and the organization. Being an outsider shielded her from being included in the day-to-day organizational difficulties; although she observed them, she was not involved on a personal level. Remaining an outsider allowed the researcher to maintain a higher degree of objectivity in her observations. The researcher was not, however, entirely objective. Having taught for ten years for a variety of organizations including EDUSD her impressions of the district cannot be completely unbiased; she observed the district through the lens of comparative experiences. While observing she took note of the positive and the negative and attempted to capture the spirit of participants’ words and actions. Additionally,
the validity check gave her the chance to insure that her interpretations were correct by returning to the participants and verifying what she had written with them. The researcher also recorded both the positive and the negative comments and impressions and strove to report them fairly. Although she could not be completely objective, she did endeavor to maintain her objectivity as a researcher.

Injecting an outside element into a system always changes the system in some way. The observer and the observed are both subtly changed. The researcher can only speculate as to what affects her presence had on those who she observed and interacted with, but at the very least, she knows that she gave voice to a group of people whose input is not usually sought. When the researcher asked community members if she could use their thoughts and their words in her study many participants were excited and enthusiastically replied, "Yes, use them!" These community members wanted their opinions to be heard. Adriana, Coordinator Sonrisitas, let the researcher know how much it meant to the promotoras when she attended their classes. Adriana said that they would always call her the next day to let her know when she had been there.
Adriana told the researcher that the Promotoras were honored to be a part of the study. In addition to being a part of the study many of these community members actually helped in the collection of survey data, interpretations, and translations. These women were not just exposed to research; they became involved in the research process. Additionally, when the researcher needed insight into the community she would ask employees at the Healthy Start office and the promotoras. These women were included and considered by the researcher to be the experts. The researcher will never truly know the extent of her effect on those she came in contact with.

The effects of doing this study on the researcher were profound. She learned a lot about studying minority populations, about surveys, and observations. She found that personal contacts and trust were indispensable in doing this type of research. However, the biggest effect on the researcher was not learned, it was felt. She had the opportunity to see with her own eyes the power of attitudes and belief in human beings. She saw women who were lifting themselves up and moving forward with their lives simply because someone believed in them. She saw the recognition of oppression and with that recognition
came the expectation for better treatment and for more from life. It was an honor for the researcher to be given the opportunity to observe such powerful transformations; they indicate the strength and the capacity of the human spirit. Believing in people can be life changing; that, more than anything else, is what the researcher carries away from this experience.
CHAPTER FOUR
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis

In the first phase of data analysis all interviews, field notes, parent and employee survey comments, and observations were reviewed and pertinent meaning units were extracted and grouped by similarity. The second phase involved sorting each group by its apparent function. In this phase five functional categories emerged from the data: Organizational Culture; District/Community Interactional Relationship; Community Access; Concern for the Wellbeing of the community; and Empowerment. These categories are interrelated and work together to form an operational system as shown in Table 1 (page 91). The top of the chart shows the culture of the organization. The organizational culture is what sets the tone for and dictates employee attitudes and behaviors. Employee behaviors and attitudes encourage the establishment of interactional relationships between community members and district employees and, by extension, with the organization itself. The Community/District Interactional Relationship is the
second level found in Table 1. The Organizational Culture and the ability to encourage and form Relationships with the community is the base of this system. This base positively influences community members' perceptions in three key areas: their ability to access the organization, the organization's concern for their wellbeing, and the organization's interest in their empowerment. Community members' perception of Access, Wellbeing, and Empowerment is the third level of Table 1. Thus, community members' perception of accessibility and of the organization’s care and interest in them are based on the organization’s ability to form relationships with the community which begins with the organization’s attitude toward the community which is established by its culture.

After identifying these five functional categories, the researcher looked for common patterns between the perceptual categories of Access, Wellbeing, and Empowerment. The functional categories forming the base for these perceptions, i.e. organizational culture and community/district relationships, were not included as they are overarching and form the basis for these perceptions. Four common factors were found in the perceptual categories (see the first 4 column row of Table
1). Commonalities are: District Attitudes, District Actions, District Financial considerations, and the resulting Effects on the community. Each factor contributes to the establishment of the category. The functioning of these categories and factors is illustrated in the following example. A cultural value held by EDUSD is to work together with the community. This cultural value expresses itself in employees who extend themselves to the community members in order to include them in their programs. The inclusion of community members allows for the formation of relationships between employees and family members. From this base the four common factors contribute to the perception of Access as follows: 1) Attitudes: Employees who are empathetic and who exhibit cultural awareness encourage community access. 2) Actions: The district hires bilingual staff and employs large numbers of outreach workers to form bridges between the parents and the organization. 3) Financial: The district offers parent classes free of charge and provides childcare for all functions; services are offered at minimum or reduced cost. 4) Effects: The result of district efforts is a reduction in cultural distance between the community and the district.
Table 1. Formation of Perceptual Categories and the Resulting Effects on the Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptual Categories</th>
<th>Common Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District Attitudes + District Actions + District Finances → Community Effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access:</strong></td>
<td>Cultural awareness &amp; empathy Outreach workers &amp; language Minimal or no cost to parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Community to EDUSD)</td>
<td>Reduced cultural distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wellbeing:</strong></td>
<td>Desire to give back to community Programs that promote health Maintain services after funds expire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(EDUSD's concern for community)</td>
<td>Orientation and use of U.S. systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empowerment:</strong></td>
<td>Recognize community members' abilities Offer programs promoting capacity Fund empowerment behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(EDUSD's interest in community)</td>
<td>Educated parents and new behaviors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After categorizing the ethnographic data, survey data was integrated into each category as appropriate. Survey findings supplemented the categories of Community Access, Concern for Wellbeing, and Empowerment. The categories and common factors identified represent the district’s communication processes. Communication processes are the unique ways that EDUSD establishes its organizational culture, encourages relationships with the community, and transmits its accessibility, concern, and interest in the development of the community. This chapter will answer Research Question One by outlining and giving examples of the communication processes, functions, and effects that create the functional categories identified: Organizational Culture; District/Community Relationship; Community Access; Concern for the Wellbeing of the community; and Empowerment.

Communication channels are the means by which a message is conveyed. Research Question Two looks at the internal and external channels used to convey information about the programs offered by the Parent Resource Center and Children and Family Services. These channels were outlined and evaluated using both ethnographic and survey data. Communication channels, their effectiveness,
communication needs, and preferences will be investigated as well. Discussion of findings as related to the literature follows data analysis. Lastly, Research Question Three addresses the way in which the communication processes and communication channels work together and create a community/organization system. The way in which this system functions will be addressed in the summary section.

Research Question One

Research Question One asks: What are the communication processes used by EDUSD employees in their relations with the community? The following section explains the communication processes, functions, and the effects of communication used by the school district that create and maintain the organizational culture, mutual relationships with the community, and the perception that the district is accessible, interested in the wellbeing of the community, and that it is dedicated to the empowerment of the population.

Organizational Culture

Reid Brewer, the superintendent of EDUSD believes "the community must be involved in order to reach
educational goals" (personal communication, June 19, 2003). The district’s values, priorities, and outlook are introduced in his “Welcome” message found on the EDUSD Website. He chooses words such as “we”, states that the community possesses “family feelings” about the district, and refers to children served as “our students”. “We are family” is a memorable message that permeates EDUSD.

Structurally, memorable messages are one or two sentences long and orally transmitted by a senior member of the organization. The content of the message is either action oriented (how to behave) or sense making (information about the culture). These messages become words to live by for employees (Stohl, 1986). By choosing to present itself as a family the organization encourages family values such as dedication, care, inclusiveness, and cooperation. Evidence of family values will be explored in this section.

When asked about the district’s interactions with and attitude toward the community Sergio Marquez, Principal of the Adult School, mentioned the district’s motto in his response: “The last superintendent coined the motto ‘Together we build the future’ and Reid, the current superintendent, expanded it. Reid really lives these
words; family orientation is truly a part of the district's thinking" (personal communication, October 3, 2003). Having a family orientation implies that the district values and is committed to the community, the way family members are committed to each other; they are in this together. The district does not serve the community as an independent entity; it must be a part of the community. Marley Adler, Coordinator School Readiness, observed the connections between the district and the community encourages a high level of care and concern:

I feel people have more of a sense of a heart here in our district and really care about the people that they work with and work for and the community, we have a unique situation in which so many of the community members have been born here and raised here and now work for the district; I think that makes a big difference, it really helps. And those of us who are new to the district can see that sense of loyalty and pride in the district and so it spills over. You pick that up and you want to do just as much for them [the community members] as the employees from the community are (personal communication, April 2, 2004).
Expressing similar sentiments, Lucia Quintero, referred to the community/district association as a family:

I think we’re lucky in the district, we have people who live and work in the community and they bring their children to the schools in the district. They have a higher level of commitment and they are very aware of that commitment. They try to truly work for the community . . . We have directors who are very dedicated and who will do whatever it takes to get the job done because they care. We are family (personal communication, December 18, 2003).

The comments made by Marley and Lucia indicate several important elements that encourage the district’s family orientation. First, community members work and live in the district and send their children to the district’s schools. These community members have a personal investment in the success of the organization. Outsiders, as Marley pointed out, feel the commitment and dedication of the community members and are motivated to care about the people they are working with and for. These feelings of commitment and dedication create the
feeling that the organization and the community are a family group.

In order for a family orientation to exist all members must be valued for who they are and incorporated into the functioning of the system. Marley compared her experience as a parent in the district her children attend to her interactions with parents in EDUSD:

Being in another school district and working with administrators as a parent I don’t feel, and I am somewhat on the same level [professionally], that they value me or my thoughts as much as we value our parents here. We place a lot more value on them and it doesn’t matter if they are educated or not, or recently immigrated or not, it’s just they are human beings and they are here and we are here to help them; working together as a team (personal communication, April 2, 2004).

The organizational culture of EDUSD encourages its employees to hold the community members in high regard, to value their thoughts, and to work together with them to improve the community as a whole.

Aida Morales, Facilitator Latino Family Literacy, recognizes that in the community “family” encompasses not
just the nuclear family, but also includes extended family members:

Head Start parents are encouraged to fulfill "in kind" hours and participate in the education of their children. Extended family members are welcome also; I don't care if it's an older sister, tia (aunt), or primo (cousin), whoever, they are all part of the child's life ... Parents [and family members] are not left out; they are not alienated from school (personal communication, June 24, 2004).

Recognition of the importance of extended family and welcoming extended family members to participate in school activities communicates acceptance of cultural norms and creates more inclusive connections between the district and the community; no one is left out.

During a meeting with the researcher, Dr. Chris Williams, Director Testing and Assessment/State and Federal Projects, reflected on why teachers stay at EDUSD:

A high percent of our teachers are working toward credentials. Once they have them they stay even though they could get better pay and be closer to home in the other districts in the valley. What holds teachers in place is the feeling that they are
a part of something special. By special, I mean successful; they have the feeling that they are making a difference (personal communication, April 28, 2004).

An Adult School teacher shared the same sentiments with the researcher. She explained that during the day she is a county social worker, but this job, teaching English as a Second Language at night, was what brought her joy. She said “Every day I get to see the American Dream coming true. These students work so hard and they succeed. It’s so encouraging to work with them; I feel like I am doing something worthwhile” (personal communication, April 28, 2004). The feeling that they are making a difference in the community and the belief that they are a part of something special adds to the dedication that employees have for the organization.

The feeling expressed by the district’s employees with whom the researcher had contact is that EDUSD is an exceptional place. Employees work as a team and consider themselves to be a family. Many district employees are also community members thus the community is a part of the organization’s family as well. The cultural importance of family is recognized and honored by district employees.
EDUSD personnel do not see themselves as separate from the community; this integration yields a higher level of commitment, loyalty, and pride. Employees see themselves as working for and with the community, as respecting and valuing the parents, and they believe that it is their job to be of service. Furthermore, employees seem to believe that they are a part of something that is unique and that what they do matters. The culture of EDUSD encourages employees to think and act based on family values.

Community/District Relationship

Communications that demonstrate trust and respect suggest the existence of a relationship between EDUSD and the East Desert community. Additionally, since the community is primarily of Mexican descent, continuity of employees and the establishment of inside connections were classified as factors in relationship building. Parent willingness to seek help from the district and/or resolution for problems were considered indications that respect was being extended to parents; they trusted the district enough to utilize services and to bring up their problems.

Trust and respect. Nicholas Aguilar and Araceli Sanchez of the 21st Century and Community Based English
Tutoring programs commented: “EDUSD is in touch with the needs of the community. The parents trust the district and feel comfortable seeking help from it; they also feel comfortable approaching the superintendent” (personal communication, September 18, 2003). This opinion was supported by a comment written on one of the parent surveys. This parent had an issue with the Head Start program and wrote:

I was never given the option to decide if I wanted for [sic] my daughter to end up repeating Head Start or keeping her out of school an extra year. This is very serious to me. I would like to speak to the superintendent regarding this matter.

A parent participant in the Home School Connection class focus group also supports the idea that parents feel comfortable interacting with EDUSD:

Here in the school I feel at ease because if you have a problem . . . I only had one problem with my child and the director promptly resolved it . . . since they are kind to me, it motivates me to help them with activities after school or with field trips (personal communication, December 4, 2003)
Both of these parents indicate a willingness to speak for themselves. Trust that the organization will respond, as the second participant put it, with kindness encourages parents to interact with the school district. The first parent expresses that she would like to speak to the superintendent; this shows confidence on her part that he will meet with her and that her concerns will be addressed. Another important aspect of the second parent’s statement is that the relationship is mutual. Since she has been treated well she is willing to devote her time to the needs of the school.

Another example of the feeling of mutuality and respect that exists between the district and the community members was provided by Hilario Dueñas, Coordinator Special Projects, as he described community members’ involvement in Project Oasis. Project Oasis is an after school enrichment program offered in one of the most rural areas of the district. The majority of the parents in this area are farm workers.

When we started project Oasis, I recognized that our teachers may not necessarily have the expertise in all the areas that we wanted to provide enrichment activities so we opened the program up to community
members. We have parents teaching Ballet Folklorico [traditional Mexican dance]. We also have a man who works the fields here but was a calculus teacher in Mexico; he was hired to tutor the kids in math. Later he found out about a regional chess tournament and began teaching chess for Project Oasis. Our students now compete in this tournament. The parents who have been involved in this project expressed a desire to give something back to the district and we are pleased to have them working for us (personal communication, September 21, 2004).

The district shows a remarkable amount of respect for the talents of and belief in the community members by recruiting them to be teachers for project Oasis. This is a win-win situation; the district gains expert instructors, the community members contribute meaningfully to the education of the children, and the children have been to many competitions and performances. Relationships have been formed through this project on many levels; between parents and the district, between parents, and between parents and students.

Christina Diaz, Manager Saul Martinez Dental Clinic, showed a tremendous amount of respect, care, and cultural
understanding for a parent who came into the dental clinic on the day the researcher was observing:

A mother came in to the clinic because Christina had sent a note home with her child requesting her telephone number and address to complete the child’s dental charts. The mother obviously took care in dressing to come to school. Her blouse was neatly pressed, she had make-up on and her hair was pulled back. Her hands were rough and her nails were ragged suggesting that she worked in the fields. When Christina requested the information the lady produced a wrinkled up piece of paper on which her phone number was written. Christina asked her address and the woman did not know it. She described where she lived by the landmarks that surrounded the trailer park. Christina asked if she knew what her trailer number was. She did know that and Christina wrote it down. Christina walked outside with the mother and explained to her that in the U.S. it was very important to know the street address where she lived. Christina told her to look at some of her bills when she got home and to memorize the numbers and the street name; this was her address. Christina
approached this mother with respect, care and dignity. She did not behave in a manor that would make the woman feel unworthy or ignorant. Christina understood that more than likely in this woman’s hometown addresses were not used and having a set street address was a new concept for her (dental clinic observation, October 9, 2003).

The way Christina handled this situation creates the potential for a relationship to develop between this mother and the school district. As the mother went into a lengthy description of where she lived Christina smiled, nodded her head and assured the mother that she knew exactly where the trailer park was located. This mother got dressed up and came to the unfamiliar environment of school. She was warmly accepted and Christina encouraged her efforts; respect was extended and trust was established between Christina and the mother. This mother now has a connection to the school district.

Lucia Quintero, Parent Liaison, discusses the importance of the links between the district employees and the community members:

We do have parents who don’t understand the school district . . . So parents are a little intimidated or
they feel they have nothing to contribute. Once they hook on to someone, and usually it's me since I'm out there . . . [but] it doesn't have to be me, it could be a school secretary or whoever. They develop partnerships and they cling to that person (personal communication, October 6, 2003).

These links help parents to feel that they can approach the school district because they have a personal relationship with someone who works there.

Three participants in the Home School Connection class focus group got into a conversation about the importance of relationship formation with school district personnel for solving problems:

Participant One: I personally see the difference in the school. My son was here and now I have my daughter here and I feel that, maybe, because they have known me for so many years, that I don't have any problems here at the school.

Participant Two: I feel that has something to do [with it]. Once they get to know you and your kids, maybe there are no problems, but there are parents who go and go again and I see that their problems are not solved. I don't know what is
missing. I don’t know what is happening. It seems that you are talking about a school that I don’t know.

Participant Three: But, many times, it has to do with the parents who work and they just leave the children there, and they never bother to come, even for a brief time, to meet the teachers or the director, and if they have problems with their kids it is because they don’t come (personal communication, December 4, 2003).

Following this exchange, all of the focus group parents came to a consensus that if they wanted to be heard then they had to get involved and make an effort to get to know the employees of the school. The recognition that they hold an important part in the relationship represents a shift in thinking about their role in the schooling of their children.

Marley Adler, Coordinator School Readiness, suggested that the trust the community extends to the school district may be in part cultural: “The Latino population tend to be very trusting of school administrators and teachers anyone who is helping their child or family they will trust” (personal communication, April 2, 2004).
Different employees offered possible reasons for community trust: "Community assistants go wherever the parents are. The parents know and trust them" (P. Rendon, personal communication, December 16, 2003). "Trust has been developed through East Desert High School graduates coming back and working in the district" (N. Aguilar & A. Sanchez, personal communication, September 18, 2003). "Community members seek out the Adult School on a need basis. They need English or a diploma to move ahead in their jobs and they show up . . . Parents feel comfortable coming here and trust us" (S. Marquez, personal communication, October 3, 2003). "Community members trust us and know us by name. There is a feeling that we are all in this together" (H. Dueñas, September 21, 2004).

Employees offer various reasons why the community trusts the district, however, all believe that trust exists. Cultural inclination and the provision of needed and desired services in culturally appropriate and respectful ways encourage trust as does the establishment of inside connections through outreach workers and community members working in the district.
Aida Morales, Facilitator Latino Family Literacy, described a beginning of the year activity that she uses to help establish a trusting relationship with parents:

At the beginning of the school year I make a big heart and each parent cuts off a piece of it. Then I tell the parents to put the heart back together (like a puzzle), but one piece is missing. I ask them “what happens to the heart if a piece is missing?” The parents usually answer that it doesn’t work well or that it dies. So then I tell them: “We are a team, we must all work together.” The first meeting of the year is crucial for making parents comfortable and getting them involved. It is very important that the school does not intimidate them. It pays off because fathers and mothers will come in for meetings straight from the fields. They will be all dirty and excuse themselves, but they have their books and they want to participate and to learn (personal communication, June 24, 2004).

Mrs. Morales’s belief that it is important for parents to feel welcome and comfortable coming to school is transmitted to the parents through her words and actions. They respond by having the confidence to show up
and be involved with the school. Since she is the facilitator of Latino Family Literacy she teaches other teachers the importance of and how to create this atmosphere of trust in their classrooms too.

Employee continuity and dedication. Iris Robinson, Board Member, shared some of the district’s history as an explanation for the level of community interest and involvement in the district. Reid Brewer, Superintendent, discusses the same events but from the perspective of employee loyalty:

In spring of 1990 EDUSD was four million dollars in debt and had to borrow money from the county to meet payroll. The following September the district was placed under state receivership . . . Changes were made to help the district become solvent; positions were cut, programs were eliminated, student walking distance was increased, and salaries were frozen temporarily . . . The community was very involved with the insolvency. Parents began to realize how many services the district provided and became more involved as the district went through this process (I. Robinson, personal communication, September 26, 2003).
Mr. Brewer, Superintendent, has been with EDUSD for 27 years. His long-term commitment to the district and dedication to the community are not unique to him. “Many of the current leaders and teachers have been with the district for many years. When the district went through bankruptcy many district employees stayed on, even though their salaries were frozen” (R. Brewer, personal communication, June 19, 2003). Employee commitment to the organization through bankruptcy demonstrates extraordinary levels of loyalty.

The district’s history has important ramifications for both the employees and the community. Through the difficult times the community realized how much the school district impacts their lives and responded by becoming more involved. The community members began to see that they had a role in the functioning of the district for it to be successful. The fact that many employees stayed with the school district even without raises demonstrates a remarkable level of dedication. Teachers are in high demand in the Coachella Valley; if the EDUSD teachers were just in it for the money they could have easily found jobs in the neighboring districts. The fact that many stayed
communicates a commitment to the community and to the district.

Angelica Trujillo, Migrant Resource Teacher, shared the following example of employee continuity and community response to the dedication shown by EDUSD:

The community aides drive out to rural areas to pick parents up so that they can attend meetings, health fairs, and other activities. One of the community aides has been with the district for 26 years. She is committed to the community and dedicated to the parents. The district offers a 20 dollar stipend to the parents for bringing three other parents to the meeting. Angelica says that the parents bring other parents, but they never ask for the stipend. They say "Oh, I was coming anyway; you don't have to give me money" (personal communication, September 19, 2003).

The fact that the same employees have been working in the district's communities for years and years communicates dedication and commitment to the community members. They in turn respond by not taking money that is offered them by the district. They are helping out by bringing other
parents, yet, they feel that they have been helped by the district so there is no expectation for reward.

The format of the Early Head Start and Head Start programs combined with employee stability promote the formation of relationships between district employees and parents. Jackie Salbach, Coordinator Early Head Start, explains her program:

The objective of Early Head Start is primary care and continuity of care. The program strongly encourages teachers to remain with the same group of children for two to three years. The model helps children and families bond. Teachers are able to facilitate the child’s learning as well as supporting families in the care of their young child. Trust and care are being established while family goals are developed (personal communication, April 6, 2004).

Likewise, Sandra Wagner, Coordinator Children and Family Services, explains the Head Start program:

Connections are created to the credit of our teachers and to the aides . . . because the parents bring their children to the classrooms and they have many, many opportunities throughout the year for them to get to know each other. There’s a very close bond,
plus teachers have parent meetings once a month . . .

I think between the teachers and the aides that
closeness which develops that spreads throughout the
community and over the years, having the classrooms
in the same place, the teachers and the program
become very well known. We have not had a lot of
turn over, we’ve had some and some of that was due to
retirements. But basically, once a teacher comes
here, in general they stay (personal communication,
December 16, 2003).

Both Jackie and Sandra credit employee continuity for the
establishment of relationships between the district and
the community. In time these programs and their teachers
become a part of the fabric of the community.

Similarly, Marley Adler, Coordinator School
Readiness, commends her staff for establishing community
relations: “I would credit my staff with 90 percent of
really developing program because of their personalities
and their connection to the community that they have made
and developed that relationship” (M. Adler, personal
communications, April 2, 2004). A Home School Connection
class focus group participant supports Marley’s thought:
“Like the secretary here in the school. She is always
looking after all the children. She is very kind. If you call her with a problem she always tells you to come right away” (personal communication, December 4, 2003). However, another Home School Connection class focus group participant talked about a bad tempered employee (the other mothers knew this employee as well and laughed); she and other mothers discussed their varied experiences with the district:

Participant One:
Some schools are better [than others]. With better staff, I don’t know . . . I had my son in another school . . . I am not going to mention the name . . . and for example the secretary had a bad temper whenever you went there. You felt like not going to the office anymore. I don’t know if the reason is for being a secretary for so long, but she was always in a bad mood.

Participant Two:
We have had a lot of contact with the people in the District. I think that when they see a person with certain abilities they take advantage of that, in a good way. But there are some people in the District that have that idea
and they have made some parents feel . . . as if you were the most ignorant person in the whole world . . . they see you as . . . what do you know?

Researcher:

Are there any people like teachers and other district employees who have this attitude?

Participant Three:

You can’t generalize. There are some people who have done that but not everybody.

Participant Four:

I would think that six or seven people would treat you like that. And regrettably, sometimes even our own people who were born here.

Participant Five:

I have met American people who are very, very kind.

Participant Six:

Personally, I don’t know if it’s my ego or I am proud to be Mexican, but it hurts that they think . . . (personal communication, December 4, 2003).
Summary community/district relationship formation.
The parents who have participated in the district’s programs are realistic about working with the system and recognize they must extend themselves and get to know the employees of the school. They also realize that some employees are easier to get along with and are more respectful than others and that some school sites are better than others. Overall, the district has earned the trust of the community members by taking their concerns seriously. Parents show a willingness to bring their problems to school district personnel indicating they have confidence that their issues will be addressed. It is also significant that these parents utilize the services and programs offered by the school district.

EDUSD employees and parents recognize that relationships have been formed between them. The format and goals of various district programs are conducive to relationship building and employees consider making the parents feel comfortable and a part of the system an important part of their job. The fact that many EDUSD employees have stuck with the district through difficult times demonstrates a high level of commitment to the community and the organization. Parents form
relationships with school district employees and as time goes on these employees and their programs become well known and integrated into the community.

**Access**

When asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement: "The East Desert Unified School District works hard to make its programs and activities accessible to me" parents surveyed overwhelming agreed: 87 percent selected either "Strongly agree" or "Agree", 11 percent chose "No opinion", and two percent responded "Disagree" or "Strongly disagree". Survey responses for participation in any program, i.e. Latino Family Literacy, Sonrisitas, the Saul Martinez Dental Clinic, the Flying Doctors, and Parent Resource Center programs were aggregated to determine if participation influenced perception of accessibility. Results of crosstabulation indicate parent perception of district accessibility for those who strongly agreed or agreed is significantly different for those who participated in district programs versus those who did not (see Table 2): $\chi^2 (2, N = 915) = 22.62, p < .001$. 

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Table 2. Parent Participation Cross Parent Perception of District Accessibility

<table>
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<th>Program Participation (Any Program)</th>
<th>&quot;Strongly agree&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Agree&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;No opinion&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Disagree&quot; or &quot;Strongly disagree&quot;</th>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>4.8%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
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<td>84</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>84.0%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Evidence of district accessibility was explored through attitudes, actions, financial considerations, and their effect on the community.

**Attitudes:** District attitudes that encourage community access are best described by a consciousness regarding staffing levels. EDUSD administers the same programs as other districts such as Head Start and Migrant Education. When asked if there was a difference in how these programs were approached Sandra Wagner, Coordinator Children and Family Services, responded:
Yea, I don't know, the programs are pretty similar, but the staffing patterns are definitely different. We have four Social Service Parent Aides, five counting Early Head Start. The Social Service Parent Aides work primarily with the parents. They know the parents personally, call them and go to their homes (personal communication, December 16, 2003).

Likewise, Lucia Quintero noted her position, Parent Liaison, is not existent in other districts in the valley. "They [the parents in other districts] don't really have someone they could go to; not a direct contact" (personal communication, October 6, 2003). She also noted that the district has positive interactions with the community due to having staff dedicated to the community:

[Through the years] more personnel have been added. They have, like in the Head Start program, Community Service Aides who are focusing just on getting parents trained, providing services for parents and things like that. The Special Education department also has more personnel so they are helping parents more and looking for the different issues and servicing more families. I think in respect to adding more personnel the different programs have
become more accessible to parents (personal communication, December 18, 2003).

Over the past few years the district has added increasing numbers of employees who are specifically dedicated to community outreach. Program directors recognize and accept the importance of having workers who know the community and go out into the community. These directors understand that the community needs personal connections and is willing to provide them as reflected in the levels of staffing for their programs.

**Actions:** Services, programs, and steps taken by employees increase parent access to the district. Examples of programs and services that increase community access can be found in the Adult Education and the Community Based English Tutoring programs: “The Adult Education program is beginning to open classes in outlying areas. English as a Second Language and General Educational Development classes are being offered in apartment buildings” (S. Marquez, personal communication, October 3, 2003). “Community Based English Tutoring is free to any adult wanting to learn English. It serves populations that Adult Education cannot access. Rural areas are served by providing transportation to local
schools and by providing childcare” (N. Aguilar & A. Sanchez, personal communication, September 18, 2003).

The district strivestomake its services accessible to all community members and is cognizant that many community members live in very rural and isolated communities and generally lack resources. In order to make the district accessible EDUSD goes to the parents. To accomplish this task, EDUSD has a partnership with Coachella Valley Housing Coalition. This organization builds low-income apartments in underdeveloped areas of the district. They plan conference and community rooms in their designs. These rooms are then made available to the school district for childcare, classes, and other social service needs. When feasible, classes are offered in apartment buildings; if not, classes are held at the closest school with transportation and childcare provided.

The actions of the Social Service Parent Aides and Community Aides increase community access to the district and its programs. Sandra Wagner, Coordinator Children and Family Services, noted that Social Service Parent Aides help parents to make necessary contacts:

They [the Social Service Parent Aides] will make the call while they are sitting there [at the parent’s
home] and help with the call. Yea, because just leaving something is not always effective. Many parents are not familiar with the systems in the U.S. and need help to make these contacts (personal communication, December 16, 2003).

Likewise, Patricia Rendon, Migrant Resource Teacher, described the dedication of the Community Assistants:

Community assistants work with families who need medical services, clothes, food, or any other social services. These workers will go out into the fields, the packinghouses, and to homes to coordinate services. They look for services and resources to help the families. They help them fill out applications and will take the parents and children to appointments if they don’t have transportation (personal communication, April 21, 2004).

The district increases its accessibility to the parents through the actions of community outreach employees. These employees take it upon themselves to make contacts for parents and to teach the parents how to interact with the system. They also help parents to access many of the social service providers outside of the EDUSD.
Another important feature that increases parent ability to access the district is language. All written materials sent home are in both English and Spanish. The district phone system has both English and Spanish options and the school secretaries, office staff, and other outreach personnel are bilingual. The Adult School offers the only Spanish General Educational Development testing center in the Coachella Valley (S. Marquez, personal communication, October 2, 2003). Additionally, all parent education classes and workshops are offered in both English and Spanish: "In some communities I have more participation in Spanish than I do in English and in other areas I have more English speaking parents than Spanish speaking parents. So we’re always prepared for both. (L. Quintero, October 6, 2003). When asked about the ability to communicate with school district personnel, Home School Connection class focus group participants had the following to say:

Researcher: Are all these schools approachable by you? Is there a way to speak with the teachers? Are there any persons who can help if you don’t speak English?

Participant One: Yes, in all the schools
Participant Two: Well, those who are Americans also speak Spanish well.

Researcher: When you went to the school, was there anybody there to help you with the English speaking teacher who you needed to talk to?

Participant Three: Yes, and in the conferences there is always a teacher (personal communication, December 4, 2003).

All district communication is offered in both English and Spanish. Parent classes are offered in both languages and all school events have translators on hand. Spanish speaking parents know that they can go to their child’s school and that there will be someone available to help them if they need to speak to an employee who only speaks English. The parents also recognized and appreciated the American teachers who could speak Spanish.

Financial considerations: The district is well aware of the financial limitations of the community it serves and responds by minimizing costs to parents so that they will not be excluded from services and/or activities: "The General Educational Development exam costs $65.00 to take here at the Adult School; it can cost up to $200.00 in other testing locations" (S. Marquez, personal
communications, October 3, 2003). The same is true for classes and workshops provided by the Parent Resource Center: “Everything we provide is free and we provide childcare for everything and we don’t charge our parents anything. We even provide pencils and paper and all the materials they need to participate in the class and to take notes” (L. Quintero, personal communication, October 6, 2003). Making sure that all programs and activities do not place a financial strain on community participants increases their accessibility.

Effect on Community: Cultural distance is lessened by hiring employees who have similar backgrounds and who grew up in the same kinds of situations as the community members. Employee sensitivity to the cultural communication needs of the parents and district sponsorship of culturally relevant events also serve to reduce the distance between the district and the community. Aida Morales, Facilitator Latino Family Literacy, and Angelica Trujillo, Migrant Resource Teacher, both share their life experiences with parents and students:

Aida shares the story of her life with young parents and migrant parents. She feels that in her
job "I am giving back to parents what was given to me". Aida was one of 11 children. Her father abandoned the family when Aida was young and her mother had to raise the children on her own. They were migrant workers. Aida began working in the fields when she was six years old. Aida credits her Mom as being her inspiration: Even though my mother was illiterate she would sit with us every evening and encourage us to do our homework so that we could grow up and get good jobs and have a good life. My Mom was very optimistic. With all her hardships she learned to speak English; she has been working as a Head Start Grandma for ten years. The children call her "Grandma Suelo". She's 80 years old now. I am proud of her. I tell my students' parents about her because parents make all the difference (personal communication, June 24, 2004).

Angelica meets with her migrant students and teaches them the importance of continuing their education (especially past 8th grade). She shares her experiences with them: "If I didn't have my education in Mexico, I would still be working in the field. My education transferred with me, your
education will help you move ahead” (personal communication, September 19, 2003).

By sharing their history with families these employees reduce the distance between the organization and the community. Mrs. Morales grew up as a migrant worker and Mrs. Trujillo worked in the fields until she learned English and moved into a professional position. These stories allow families to see greater possibilities for themselves and it encourages them to form bonds with these employees because they share similar life experiences.

Hilario Dueñas, Coordinator Special Projects, explained the Mini-Corps Program as a mechanism that enables the school district to recruit community members with migrant backgrounds.

The Riverside County Office of Education recruits former Migrant students who are enrolled full time at College of the Desert [the local community college] or California State University San Bernardino and who are interested in becoming teachers. These students go out to the school sites on the Southern end of the district where many of the migrant families live. The Mini Corps students work as paraprofessionals with our migrant students and are involved in all of
the trainings that we hold. They are wonderful role models; our students love to have them come into their classrooms because they are community members, they are their brothers and sisters. The Mini Corps members motivate the younger students, their parents are proud of them, and it opens the door for employment here in the district once they have completed their degrees (personal communication, September 21, 2004).

The Mini Corps program gives the district a way to preferentially hire young professionals who grew up as migrant farm workers. This practice increases cultural understanding, personal connections to the district, and provides motivation and hope for the students and the community members.

Lucia Quintero, Parent Liaison, commented on EDUSD employee sensitivity to the communication needs of parents:

Sometimes we have to kind of adjust our style depending on the parent. With some parents we need to approach them a little more formally, somebody else we could be a little more sympathetic with we know that one style will reach this person, but not
someone else (personal communication, December 18, 2003).

Communication needs vary depending on the individual and also on the level of enculturation. Lucia recognizes that she must be sensitive to these differences when communicating with parents.

A comment made by a Home School Connection class focus group participant acknowledges the district’s efforts to be culturally aware: “They are supposed to know the sensibility of the people. Like the schools are doing ‘posadas’ [Christmas plays and carols with traditional foods]. Little things that make you feel part of the community” (personal communication, December 4, 2003).

Another participant noted that sometimes Mexican customs were Americanized such as Cinco de Mayo and the following conversation ensued:

Participant one: I asked once why they celebrate here “cinco de mayo”. Why? I want them to tell me why?

Participant two: It is easier to pronounce “cinco de mayo” than “quince de septiembre.” [September 15] Or “vienty de noviembre.” [November 20] Those are more important dates.
Participant three: Is like celebrating, down there, more the day of the rabbit that the U.S. Independence Day.

Participant four: Why we haven't said anything? I ask myself.

After this exchange the mothers discussed other school events and observed that the Mexican flag was often presented along with the American one. These parents felt that the school district was not perfect, but that it did try to incorporate Mexican culture, although sometimes Americanized, into the activities of the schools. These efforts on the part of the district were appreciated.

**Summary of access.** EDUSD encourages and communicates open access to the community through their commitment to hiring employees who are devoted to community outreach. When compared to other districts, program administrators recognize that EDUSD requires a higher proportion of employees dedicated to community service. Additionally, the district employs a Parent Liaison whose purpose is to advocate for and to empower parents. Access is highlighted by district efforts to bring classes to rural and isolated areas. All district classes and activities are offered to parents at reduced cost or free of charge.
“The district respects the community and caters to Spanish speaking parents” (A. Sanchez, personal communication, September 18, 2003). This effort to accommodate Spanish-speaking parents is found in all forms of communication. Written documents are all translated, many staff members are bilingual, and interpreters are on hand at all schools and for all events. Additionally, workshops and classes for parents are offered in both English and Spanish. Cultural understanding and empathy are achieved through culturally appropriate communications, through events that make the parents feel welcome and a part of the district, and by hiring people who share common life experiences with the community.

**Concern for Wellbeing**

Indications of district concern for the wellbeing of the parents and care for the community were examined through attitudes toward the community, actions that met community needs, financial choices that maintained programs and services, and their effect on the community. The majority of parents surveyed believed that EDUSD cares about the community (88 percent chose “Strongly agree” or “Agree”). Survey responses for participation in any program, i.e. Latino Family Literacy, Sonrisitas, the Saul
Martinez Dental Clinic, the Flying Doctors, and Parent Resource Center programs were aggregated to determine if participation influenced perceptions of community care. Results of crosstabulation indicate parent perception of district care for the community for those who strongly agreed or agreed is significantly different for those who participated in district programs versus those who did not (see Table 3): $\chi^2 (2, \ N = 915) = 11.83, \ p < .01$.

Table 3. Parent Participation Cross Parent Perception of District Concern for the Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUSD Cares for the Community:</th>
<th>Level of agreement or disagreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Participation (Any Program)</td>
<td>&quot;Strongly agree&quot; or &quot;Agree&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-participants</td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>85.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Likewise, the majority of survey respondents indicated that they felt the district was interested in his/her wellbeing (86 percent selected "Strongly agree" or "Agree"). Again, survey responses for participation in any program, i.e. Latino Family Literacy, Sonrisitas, the Saul Martinez Dental Clinic, the Flying Doctors, and Parent Resource Center programs were aggregated to determine if participation influenced perceptions of interest in wellbeing. Results of crosstabulation indicate parent perception of district interest in his/her wellbeing for those who strongly agreed or agreed is significantly different for those who participated in district programs versus those who did not (see Table 4): $\chi^2 (2, N = 915) = 11.11, p < .01$. 
Table 4. Parent Participation Cross Parent Perception of District Interest in his/her Wellbeing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Participation (Any Program)</th>
<th>&quot;Strongly agree&quot; or &quot;Agree&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;No opinion&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Disagree&quot; or &quot;Strongly disagree&quot;</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-participants</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83.0%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attitudes: District employees recognize the needs of the community and demonstrate the motivation to do what is needed to the best of their ability. Nicholas Aguilar, Coordinator Community Based English Tutoring and 21st Century, reflects on services that are offered through his program:

CVUDS is the greatest provider of after school activities in the valley (even bigger than Boys and Girls Club). Sometimes people disparagingly refer to 21st Century as a "baby sitting" service. I don’t care, I am here to provide childcare because this
community desperately needs a place for their children while they are working long hours (personal communication, September 18, 2003).

Jackie Salbach, Coordinator Early Head Start, expresses the same spirit of service in spite of the odds: The Early Head Start program is not cost efficient due to the low child to teacher ratio of one to four, but it is high quality. In a conversation with Mr. Brewer, I asked what kind of childcare he would want for his grandchild; we have both recently become grandparents. He agreed that the difference in care is related to numbers. The real cost of chaotic, overcrowded childcare is long term. Low student numbers, individualized attention, and parent involvement are key factors in success. I have to think that what I do matters (personal communication, April 6, 2004)

Nicholas and Jackie express that what they are doing is more important than how their programs are perceived or the cost of running them. Both feel that doing what is beneficial for the wellbeing of the community is more important than other concerns.
Lucia Quintero, Parent Liaison, reflects on the prevailing attitude in the school district:

To me my personal thing is not just to take but to give back and I think that’s the feeling that a lot of people have, that we want to give back to the community in our jobs in being better teachers, or being better principals, or doing whatever it takes to empower the parents or to empower our students to be successful students and good community members in the future. We do it (personal communication, December 18, 2003).

Lucia feels the employees of the district share the motivation to do the best that they can for the good of the community. This type of attitude conveys a personal involvement in and concern for the community.

Home School Connection class focus group participants were asked if they felt EDUSD was interested in the community and in their welfare. Three parents offered the following: Participant one: “I think it is. These talks [classes] are sponsored by them. They teach us to be good parents and not to be so closed minded.” Participant two: “Evidently, the district is very interested. They care about the education of the children; they are also very
interested that we the parents help the school, the
children so they can get ahead.” Participant three: “The
District is interested because they realize that we are
scoring lower than other places and therefore, they are
interested in educating us, so our children can get ahead.
But they give you [the parent] the opportunity” (personal
communication, December 4, 2003). These parents linked
the parent classes offered through the district and the
district’s concern with helping their children improve
academically to being concerned for them and interested in
their progress.

Actions: Expressions of care for the wellbeing of the
community are found in programs that are in many ways
outside of the mandate of a school district. The
realization that learning cannot take place before basic
needs are met is reflected in an observation made by
Marley Adler, Coordinator School Readiness:

Board members are extremely supportive they can see
the whole picture and they see that students need
everything; they need a home to sleep in, medical
attention and therapy services depending on the home
and just the basic needs, clothing, food, and all of
that. It’s more than just what kind of curriculum
you have in the classroom (personal communication, April 2, 2004).

The district understands that they have a far bigger job than simply educating the children of the East Desert. In order for these children to arrive to school ready to learn their basic needs must be met; the school board is consistently willing to support programs that are social service in nature.

Christina Diaz, Manager of the dental clinic, explained how the dental clinic works to serve all children in the district: "By January the school nurses will have completed dental screenings. Students without insurance and in need of dental care will be referred to the clinic. Then the nurses contact the parents to make an appointment" (personal communication, October 9, 2003).

Dr. Young, Dentist from Loma Linda School of Dentistry, feels that the dental clinic has made a difference in the community: "School nurses have noticed a difference in children’s oral health since we have been working in the clinic" (personal communication, October 9, 2003).

The dental clinic provides for the needs of children without dental insurance and the semi-annual Flying Doctors event provides for the medical, dental, vision,
and mental health services for any community member without insurance. Both of these services are coordinated and directed by Children and Family Services. Children and Family Services is expanding its scope with a new clinic, opening in August 2004. This clinic will provide for the needs of zero to five year olds and high school students. Children and Family Services is hoping that in the future they will be able to expand the clinic services to include all age groups. Rick Brown, Director of Children and Family Services, described the functions of the new clinic:

The clinic will be located on the East Desert High School campus. The following services will be provided: Training for parents in the areas of health and nutrition, advocacy, parenting skills, and child development. School readiness activity training for local home day care providers on will also take place there. Health services will be available for children including: vision, dental, medical, and mental health. Social service employees will aid families in finding affordable housing, health insurance enrollment, immigration issues, and making links with community services. Food and clothing
will be distributed through the clinic as well
(personal communication, September 11, 2003).
Social service programs coordinated by the school district
provide for the medical, dental, and physical needs of the
community. The district also works to get parents and
families connected to the social service network available
through community based organizations, the county, and the
state. These programs communicate concern for the health
and welfare of the community.

Financial considerations: Decisions made by the EDUSD
School Board and program directors to extend community
oriented programs beyond their available funding limits is
an example of the district’s commitment to the population
served. Marley Adler, Coordinator School Readiness,
explains the board’s motivations and actions:

The board considers it important to support the whole
child and the child’s family. Children cannot learn
if they have not eaten, if they are sick, if they do
not have clothing, etc . . . The board has separate
state funding that can be used at their discretion,
thus decisions to maintain programs are based on
community needs and desires (M. Adler, personal
communication, September 12, 2003).
Examples of program continuation were found in the 21st Century program, the State Child Care program, and the Saul Martinez Dental Clinic:

21st Century wrote their grant estimating that 20 percent of the school aged population would participate [in after school programs]. The school district receives funding based on this estimate. In actuality they serve 40 to 50 percent of the student body at each school. We do not want to turn any child away so we provide services without reimbursement (N. Aguilar & A. Sanchez, personal communication, September 18, 2003).

The Child Care program was supported by the district when it ran a deficit. The board did not cut that program until we had another in place, but we could not continue to run a program that was not self sufficient. Sometimes the district gets focused on the academic elements of the program because they are under pressure to meet state standards so their vision can become a little narrow, but in general the board, who are community members, are very interested in the social services and supportive of our programs

Our funding ended for the Healthy Start grant and the board and the superintendent and administrators in the district decided to continue our dental clinic through LEA [Lead Educational Agency] funds and Medical billings. LEA makes direct service claims and gets reimbursed for medical services; all LEA funds go into the dental clinic (M. Adler, personal communication, April 2, 2004).

The school board maintains needed programs and services even if they can not sustain themselves financially. Although the community is largely unaware of these actions, the district employees working for these programs know that the board makes decisions with the community’s welfare in mind.

Effect on Community: EDUSD School Board members, employees, and program directors recognize the need to orient recent immigrants to U.S. systems. The school district, by choice, plays a role in this orientation process. Rick Brown, Director of Children and Family Services, considers parent orientation one of the main functions of his programs (personal communication,
September 11, 2003). Iris Robinson, School Board Member, observed: “Coachella is rural and low income; it is necessary to support many of the basic needs of the population (medical, dental, social services, etc.). Because of fear and lack of knowledge many people do not know how to access available services” (personal communication, September, 26, 2003). Similarly, Angelica Trujillo, Migrant Resource Teacher, commented on family reluctance to ask for services:

Eighty percent of migrant parents have legal papers to cross the boarder and work. Many parents are afraid and/or embarrassed to ask for social services. Migrant teachers assess family needs and send parents to the proper channels to get the services they need (personal communication, September 19, 2003). An example of a family trusting a school district employee to help them find needed services occurred the day the researcher was observing in the dental clinic:

An extended family group came into the clinic with a child who had no insurance, but his sister did have insurance. The mother did not understand why her son did not have it too. Christina, Manager of the dental clinic, made a call to the woman’s MediCal
worker to straighten it out and then explained what had happened to the mother. She gave the mother the name of the worker assigned to her and the number to call if she had any further problems. After Christina made that call the grandmother asked about insurance for herself and her husband. Her husband works, but she does not. She has high blood pressure and diabetes. Her medications are expensive and Medicare does not pay for them. Christina referred them to Martha’s Kitchen and to Catholic Relief Services (local charities) for help with the medicine and doctor bills. She also gave them the phone number and the name of a contact person at the Workforce Development Center (dental clinic observation, October 9, 2003).

With the guidance of school district employees, parents are able to gain access to district services and to social service networks. In addition to getting the resources they need parents are also supported and taught how to access bureaucratic systems themselves.

Summary of wellbeing. EDUSD expresses care and concern for the wellbeing of the community and its members in many ways. Employees of the school district recognize
the needs of the community and meet them in a manner that is validating and respectful. Employees seem to feel that their efforts matter and parents recognize that the district is interested in their growth and development as human beings. The district acts on its commitment to the community’s wellbeing by coordinating programs that are social service in nature. There is an organizational recognition that learning cannot take place if a family’s survival needs are not being met. The school board acknowledges the need for these programs and supports them with discretionary funds if the program is still needed and other funding is not available. The efforts made by EDUSD result in greater use of and orientation to U.S. systems. Employees work with community members to obtain health insurance for their children, to access community based organizations, to teach them what to ask for, what their rights are, and to advocate for themselves.

Empowerment

When surveyed, employees were asked if they feel EDUSD is dedicated to the empowerment of the community it serves. Almost three quarters, 74 percent, indicated that the school district was “Very dedicated” or “Dedicated”, 23 percent selected “Somewhat dedicated”, and 3 percent
chose "Not very dedicated" or "Not at all dedicated". Survey responses for awareness of Latino Family Literacy, Sonrisitas, the Saul Martinez Dental Clinic, the Flying Doctors, and the Parent Liaison were aggregated to determine if awareness influenced perception of the district's dedication to community empowerment. Results of crosstabulation indicate employee perception of district dedication to community empowerment for those who indicated the district was very dedicated or dedicated is significantly different for those who participated in district programs versus those who did not (see Table 5): $\chi^2 (2, N = 1395) = 12.72, p < .002$. The researcher explored district philosophy, actions, funded programs, and changes in community members' attitudes and behaviors which suggested empowerment.
Attitudes: Reid Brewer, Superintendent, feels that it is his job to “empower great people so they feel confident and comfortable . . . I have created a culture within the district that values and empowers people. My philosophy is that everyone is important and has a role to play” (personal communication, June 19, 2003). This belief permeates the organization and is evident to the employees as the following comment by Lucia Quintero, Parent Liaison, suggests:

I know a lot of people in transportation and in maintenance and everybody knows each other not only
because they live in the community because I don’t live in this community any longer but it’s through our jobs that we know each other more because there is a mutual respect for one another and for what we are all doing. I don’t the bus drivers don’t think of themselves any less because they are bus drivers in talking to someone who works at the district office. There isn’t that um, there is respect and we all work together and just do it. There is no feeling of one person’s job being less important than another
(personal communication, December 18, 2003).
Likewise, when asked if both classified and certificated personnel would be present at a staff meeting the researcher wanted to attend to distribute surveys, Michael Long, a district elementary and secondary school principal, responded “I don’t differentiate, we’re all here for the kids” (personal communication, May 4, 2004).

Employees who the researcher was in contact with see themselves as having an important role in the functioning of the organization and consider each position to be equally important. The researcher had the opportunity to observe this sense of equity first hand as a district employee and over the nine months she was collecting data.
in the district. Secretaries and support staff were treated with respect and valued as individuals and for their work. The custodian who came to clean the School Readiness office was always greeted warmly by name, Luis, and was frequently invited to join in if the office was having a party or lunch. Sandra Wagner shared that sometimes when she is in the office alone and a Spanish speaking parent calls she hands the phone over to Luis since she cannot speak Spanish. This indicates a high level of confidence and respect on the part of Sandra and a willingness to help out on the part of Luis. The bus drivers were also known and would sometimes stop into the School Readiness office to say hello. Employees know each other and value each other in this organization.

Egalitarian standards are extended to the community as well. Aida Morales, Facilitator Latino Family Literacy, believes:

Many parents are willing and want to be empowered and educated. All parents have the same needs: to be listened to, to be known, to have a sense of self, and to have your life belong to you. I feel like I helped; I do my best (personal communication, June 24, 2004).
In a similar fashion, Adriana Fuentes, Coordinator Sonrisitas, expresses her belief in the community members who have gone through training to become promotoras: "I just saw the qualities that you all have within you. Not just anyone can do this work. I recognized that you were all capable and helped you to see that as well" (personal communication, May 7, 2004). In addition to seeing each other as equals EDUSD employees also see the community members as capable and as having the same needs and the same potential as they have.

**Actions:** Many programs sponsored by EDUSD are designed to change behaviors or attitudes of the participants through education. Jackie Salbach, Coordinator Early Head Start, realizes these kinds of changes must be made by all involved: "In this program we are trying to do what is best for children and families. We are asking our parents to change; we must change also" (personal communication, April 6, 2004). Adriana Fuentes, Coordinator Sonrisitas, recognizes that change does not happen all at once: "We can’t expect dramatic changes in behavior, but if we reach a few people that’s great. Even if they just start thinking about something new, like dental floss, that’s positive. To make any sort of
behavioral change takes time” (personal communication, September 26, 2003).

Employees understand that change is a process and attempt to make these changes more comfortable and accessible to the parents. Aida Morales, Facilitator Latino Family Literacy, observes:

Reading readiness is a new concept to the parents. The home needs to be school and literacy ready. I tell parents to have a library for their children, even if it is just an old shoebox. Have paper, crayons, and pencils around so that they can begin to write. I encourage parents to do small things that are easy to do, but make a big difference for the child. I ask them to involve their children in household activities in whatever way possible. I encourage them to talk to their children, to ask them questions and things like that (personal communication, June 24, 2004).

The Latino Family Literacy program provides books that the parents bring home for their children. Aida’s suggestions for creating a library at home are accessible to the parents. Every parent can find a small box to put the books in; the paper to be used by their child doesn’t
have to be new, it can be the back of an announcement or and old envelope. Some suggestions, like talking to their young children might be new and a little strange, but other parents in the class will be trying it too, so perhaps it might seem a little easier to do. Parents are learning new skills in a way that is within their reach and are receiving support from the school and each other in the process.

In a similar fashion, the migrant program works with parents to teach them the benefits of keeping their children in school for the entire year, but accept and accommodate the parents if they cannot:

Sometimes the mother will stay behind with the children until the end of the school year and then meet up with the father after. If the family does leave the migrant teachers show the parents how to get transfer records from the school secretary. They also have taught the parents to ask for migrant personnel in the new school (A. Trujillo, personal communication, September 19, 2003).

Migrant teachers are encouraging changes that will keep migrant students in school longer, but even if the family cannot make that sacrifice and must move the district does
not judge and extends continuing support. Migrant program employees teach parents how to effectively change schools and give the students packets of work to do while they are in transition. Parents leave EDUSD empowered because they are prepared and know what to ask for when they get to their next school site.

**Financial considerations:** The district funds and supports programs that are specifically designed to empower parents and teach them how to effectively interact with the schools, the district, and other outside organizations. Sandra Wagner, Coordinator Children and Family Services, notes that the training parents receive in these programs often provides the impetus for them to continue being involved with the district and eventually to become parent leaders: "I’ve seen parents who have learned skills in those [Head Start] meetings that they didn’t have. They take those skills and become involved in many of the other district programs" (personal communication, December 16, 2003).

Classes offered through the Parent Resource center are specifically geared toward empowerment. Two examples are PRICE Parenting classes and Home School Connection classes. Aida Morales, Facilitator Latino Family
Literacy, taught PRICE Parenting classes in the past and discusses their impact on parents:

PRICE is a unique parenting course designed to teach the basics of positive parenting. PRICE stands for Positivity, Responsibility, Influences, Consequences, and Encouragement. Mrs. Morales explains that in order to have healthy children parents must clean up their lives. She asks parents what they would like to change in their lives. She tells them that baggage from their childhood affects their children. They must deal with these issues and adopt new behaviors. Parents start to branch out and see more opportunities for themselves and for their children. They learn living skills and become empowered in their own lives. They realize that they have a voice (personal communication, June 24, 2004).

Through the PRICE Parenting classes parents are taught how to free themselves of old behaviors that do not serve them and are not helpful to their children. Parents are given the education and the support to develop new ways to live and they learn to take charge of their own lives. Aida feels these are powerful classes.
Home School Connection classes are empowering as well, both for the participants and for the parents who lead the classes. Lucia Quintero explains that 30 parents have gone through training to be able to give these workshops. These parents then become available to help other parents in their communities:

The classes introduce different strategies for parents to help their children to be more successful by helping them, by empowering them. They are introduced to the idea that parents are the first teachers, how to have effective parent-teacher conferences, they also deal with self esteem, motivation, discipline, and leadership. There are six different topics in the workshops. The workshop on parent teacher conferences is very helpful. It teaches the parents what kind of questions to ask, that they can ask questions, that they are not there just to listen to the teacher and just take everything that the teacher tells them like GOD . . . they learn that they have the right to request conferences and that they can ask questions (L. Quintero, personal communication, October 6, 2003).
The researcher was a participant observer in the Home School Connection classes. These classes empower parents through their participatory format. Ignacio Rojas, program author, explained that many parents have never stood up or spoken in front of a group. In these classes the entire group of parents has to present their ideas to the rest of the class. Even if a parent cannot read or write they hold the paper. By the last session parents are freely participating. These experiences gained in a safe environment give them the confidence to go out try the new skills they are learning (I. Rojas, personal communication, July 28, 2004). In addition to being taught and practicing new skills the parents are given support materials to enable them to effectuate these skills on their own. For example, the class on teacher conferences provided parents with several copies of a form that they could fill out and send to school to request a conference and a list of steps to take to ask for the conference and to prepare for it (see Appendices E and F). Other sessions provided similar handouts to encourage and remind parents to adopt new habits. For example, when self-esteem was taught a "contract" was provided to give to their child. This contract described what the parent
was going to do for the child to help develop the child’s self esteem, with what frequency, and had a place for the parent’s signature (see Appendix G). Additionally, handouts and poems were distributed that could be hung up in the house to support the formation of a new behavior or attitude. Since parents teach these classes, the community members felt free to ask all kinds of questions. Group interactions frequently resulted in finding possible solutions for a problem that a parent was having and being a part of a group of parents who are striving to learn and make positive changes is in and of itself an empowering experience.

**Effect on Community:** Changes in parents are not only seen by district employees but also by the parents themselves. Patricia Rendon, Migrant Resource Teacher, notes that migrant parents are “very vocal, very involved, and very active” (personal communication, April 21, 2004). The researcher found this to be true. When she introduced herself at a Migrant Parent Advisory Committee meeting and asked the parents if they would mind helping her by filling out the parent survey. Several parents asked her who she represented, why she wanted the information, and
what she was going to do with it. After answering their questions the parents then agreed to participate.

Aida Morales, Facilitator Latino Family Literacy, talked about the changes that she sees in parents as the year goes on and they become more oriented:

I teach parents that they are their child’s first teacher. I see parents becoming more confident and more empowered; their child’s education is not just the teacher’s job. I emphasize that there is no guilt; everyone is going to learn together. I teach parents that they are powerful and capable . . . As the year goes on I see a difference in parents. They get excited about their children’s progress and involved in their learning. Their attitudes change and they are less fearful of school (personal communication, June 24, 2004).

A participant in the Home School Connection class focus group confirms Aida’s observation:

Our culture also plays a role. We are not used to [participating] sometimes the parent meetings in the schools [in Mexico] are in the morning. Most classes are in the morning and here there is a different system for getting involved and we don’t give the
necessary importance. The child is going to learn in school. I am not going to say anything to my child because what he is going to learn is from the school. And here the parents are the important ones, the ones who should be involved. It's a different thing. [At first] we are not used to it (personal communication, December 4, 2003).

District employees are aware that there are different cultural expectations regarding schooling and the education of children. In Mexico parents rely completely on the school and are only marginally involved in the educational process. Additionally there is a cultural belief that young children are not capable of understanding much so formal education does not begin until the child enters school (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 2001). In the U.S. parents are seen as their child's first (and perhaps most important) teachers. Furthermore parents are expected to be actively involved in their child's education. These are new concepts for most of the district's parents, however, being involved in Head Start, State Preschool, the Migrant program, or any of the parenting classes encourages parents to see themselves as powerful and capable. Employees who are involved in these
programs and parents who participate in them see parent attitudes change as they recognize their own importance in this system.

A Home School Connection class focus group participant talks about the need for parental involvement in order for their community to progress:

I think that we as parents must get other parents involved in learning. If we have 100 children let’s get 1,000. Why have so few? We would be very proud to see our culture succeed. Instead of having two or one doctors among Latinos, have 20 or 30 . . . Sometimes the circumstances for immigrating to another country are not hunger, poverty. Different motives. We came to improve our conditions not to live off the system (personal communication, December 4, 2003).

This parent equates her desire to see the community succeed to her involvement and the involvement of other parents in the learning process.

Changes in behaviors: The community members who were trained through the Sonrisitas program and are now promotoras of dental health related changes in behaviors to the researcher:
Sylvia: My students were shocked to find out that there are 10 packets of sugar in each can of Coke. Everyone in my class drank 2 or more Cokes a day, one guy drank as many as 6 each day. Now he is bringing water to work and reducing the number of Cokes he drinks in one day (personal communication, September 26, 2003).

Vanessa: I have changed many of my behaviors now that I have been educated through this program. I love my culture, but there are some things that are not healthy and I changed my habits. I don’t fry my enchiladas anymore and that I don’t add butter to the beans. Certain customs are very cultural and when you change sometimes you distance yourself from others (personal communication, September 26, 2003).

Daniela: I believe that people [who have taken the dental hygiene classes] have changed their habits because I see it in my family. Since I have taken the classes my family has changed. For example, before, we had no idea what dental floss was, once in a while we’d brush our teeth,
but if there was something stuck in our teeth usually we’d grab a needle to push it out. Now, no, we use dental floss. In my bathroom now there is dental floss and in my mom’s bathroom I have seen it too. I see that we have learned a lot. Before my family would get up and we would all be in a hurry to get to school and work and we never thought about our teeth. We’d just run out the door, but now we take the importance of dental hygiene into account and we take the time to take care of our teeth.

According to the stage of change model for behavior change, “individuals modifying behavior move through a series of five stages: precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance. These stages reflect shifts in attitudes, intentions, and behaviors” (Taylor et al., 2001, p. 285). Social marketing theory suggests that changes in behavior are difficult and time consuming to achieve, however, community members are learning new habits and changing their behaviors as a result of classes and programs offered by the EDUSD. This is a tremendous accomplishment.
Stories of empowerment: Adriana Fuentes, Coordinator Sonrisitas, related to the researcher how much growth she has seen in the promotoras as a result of their being a part of the program. She noted that there have been changes in the way these women carry themselves and in their perceptions of themselves. Adriana observed that many of them now have the courage to have dreams and the motivation to take the steps necessary to fulfill them. Vanessa, Camila, and Eugenia have all gotten their GEDs or are taking classes to get them. Caroline is in school to be a nurse, and Daniela is taking computer classes. Sylvia has been offered jobs with increased responsibilities. These women attribute their new sense of being empowered to Adriana. The following exchange between Sylvia and Camila illustrates how these women feel:

Sylvia: Now I have arrived at a moment in my life where my family is grown and they know that I am concentrating on what I want to do. This has truly impacted my life; it all started with the Sonrisitas and with Adriana. Adriana has been a person who has helped us to get our lives going she has helped us for the first time to do this.
kind of work. In a way, her persistence it makes us see and try to do what we are capable of and what we love. Really, this has been a wonder.

Camila: It is beautiful that someone will look for you and push you to develop yourself and to encourage you and to recognize the qualities that we have. For me personally, Adriana had confidence in me and even when I didn’t believe that I could do something Adriana believed that I could so I would tell myself “If she has confidence in me then I have to have confidence in myself because I can’t disappoint her.” Things like that; if she thinks that I can do something, then clearly, I can do it. It’s a big push from Adriana . . . We are following Adriana; she is a great model and inspiration for us.

Sylvia: It is like she has pulled us out of our shells and has pushed us to do greater things with our lives, that’s how I see her (personal communication, May 7, 2004).
Camila shared her path to becoming a promotora. Her first contact with the school district was as a Head Start parent. She attended meetings and helped out in the classroom. After that she started to take workshops and trainings. From there she became a parent educator in both the Sonrisitas program and for Home School Connection classes. Now she is taking leadership training through the Parent Resource Center. She describes the effects of these contacts in her own words:

Everything was like a little ladder more or less. I always had the desire to learn and learn and sometimes I made barriers for myself. I would say "Yes, I’m going to do it but tomorrow. Yes I’m going to do it, but later" and, like Daniela said, Sonrisitas opened the door and gave me a kick and now I am doing it. I am no longer waiting for tomorrow or for the future. You are going to do it now because the doorway is there you can pass through it. You don’t have to wait a long time to do things. Each and every day it’s like a little push to do things “Yes I’m going to do it, now I’m going to do it and I am going to do it”. In my personal life, well, it has helped me to be surer of myself. The
impression that I had of myself before, there was a
time where I had lost faith in myself and was very
down. Working with the people elevated my self
esteem. I said to myself, what happened to me? I am
going to do this. Like Adriana said, I was quiet and
timid before. I don’t want to elaborate on how I
was, but they opened the doors for me personally and
also for work. Now I feel very confident and I
believe in what I can do because of the people who
supported me and because they always encouraged me to
learn more and take different courses (personal
communication, May 7, 2004).

All of the community members who have become
promotoras credit the changes in their lives to a single
district employee, Adriana Fuentes. They appreciate and
value the training that they received through the program,
but it was this one employee’s unwavering belief in them
that allowed them to see their potentials and begin to
become empowered. Parents have also credited Mrs.
Morales, Migrant teachers, Lucia Quintero, Head Start
teachers, and other district employees with getting them
involved with the district. EDUSD, through its program
offerings, provides parents an opening, an opportunity to learn and grow as individuals.

As an employer EDUSD also promotes growth and shifts in perspective. A classified employee who is also a community member shared with the researcher her ongoing domestic struggles. Her husband is an alcoholic and the conditions in her home are deteriorating. She is thinking about leaving him. She reflected:

Before I worked for the district I just accepted that this is the way my life is. I never thought to expect better things for myself or for my kids. Now I spend more time doing things with my kids and I expect my husband to participate in our lives. If he’s not going to it’s not worth staying with him; it’s bad for me and it’s bad for the kids (personal communication, September 17, 2004).

The change in this woman’s perspective is a transformative event. Her employment with EDUSD allowed her to see, to recognize, to name oppression and, most significantly, envision other possibilities for herself. The importance of her and other community members’ interactions with the school district cannot be understated. EDUSD literally
serves as a passageway to an inner sense of capability and a better quality of life for many community members.

**Summary of empowerment.** EDUSD communicates the aspiration of empowering and uplifting the community through the creation and maintenance of a strong organizational culture. The goal is stated by the superintendent and travels through all levels of the organization and into the community. Workers see themselves as equally valued and are treated with respect. The community is seen as competent and is valued by employees who believe in the capacity of the parents. There is also a feeling that the community is a part of the team, not separate from the school district. Employees are dedicated to the development of the community members, but at the same time are aware that change is not an event, but a process. Employees try to be of service to the parents and look for ways to make the changes reachable for them. Dedication to empowerment is shown in the choice of programs the district provides for the parents. These programs are designed to provide parents with the tools to become involved in the district and leaders in their communities. As a result of being involved in these programs parents have learned that in
the U.S. they have an important role in their child’s education and that they must take responsibility for the progress of their community. Parents have also developed healthier habits and lifestyles as a result of contact with EDUSD. Most importantly however, the parents who have truly involved themselves in the district’s programs are now aware of their own power and believe themselves to be capable and worthy. They are working to better themselves and believe that they will achieve their newly formed dreams and goals.

In sum, communication processes are what create and sustain the five functional categories identified in this study. The communications that support the organizational culture are the district motto, mission, and memorable messages. The organizational culture has been internalized by many of the district employees. They see themselves as a family and because many of the employees are also community members the community has been integrated into the organization. Employees who have assimilated the organization’s culture communicate its values to the community through their attitudes and actions. These employees believe that their job is to be of service to the community and they treat community
members with kindness and respect. The district encourages relationship formation with the community through employee interactions with parents and continuity of employees and programs. Perceptions of accessibility, concern for wellbeing, and interest in the empowerment of the community are communicated through use of Spanish, by hiring employees who are culturally aware and empathetic, through the presence of programs that are social service and empowering in nature, and through outreach into the community; all of which rest on the organizational belief in the intrinsic value of the community members.

Research Question Two

Research Question Two asks: What communication channels are being utilized by the EDUSD community outreach programs? Communication channels and information flow between EDUSD Programs and the East Desert Community are illustrated in Figure 1 (page 175). The community encompasses the district; as such it is located on the perimeter of the figure. The district directs external communication to the community, which is comprised of Parents, Community Members, and Employees. An individual community member could fill one, two, or all three of
these descriptions. Since community members make up the target audience, these three descriptors are found at the top and bottom of the chart. Running in both directions between the target audience boxes are dashed lines representing the Community Communication Network. Information flows through this channel by Word of Mouth.

Moving in from the perimeter of Figure 1, the illustration shows two nested hearts representing EDUSD Employees and Programs. Hearts were chosen because EDUSD extends care and concern for the community members through actions and attitudes. Program communication channels are indicated by lines leaving and coming back to the central heart representing EDUSD Programs. Beginning from this central heart the flow of internal and external program communication can be followed.

An established communication channel extends from the top left side of the Programs heart. This channel shows that fliers are sent from Programs to Teachers. These fliers are intended for community members and do not communicate program information to teachers. Two established communication channels are shown at the top of the Teachers box; one arrow is leaving carrying the fliers and indicating direct contact with the community, the
other is shown returning from the community carrying information about the needs of the community members. At the bottom of the Teachers box there is a faint dashed line that returns to the EDUSD Programs heart. This line is faint because Teachers have no established communication channel with EDUSD Programs making program referrals uncertain.

Another established communication channel extends from the top right side of the Programs heart. This channel shows that program information is sent from the Programs to Administrators. Two established communication channels are shown at the top of the Administrators box; one arrow is leaving indicating direct contact with the community, the other is shown returning from the community carrying information about the needs of the community members. At the bottom of the Administrators box there is an established communication line carrying program referrals back to the EDUSD Programs heart.

At the bottom right side of the EDUSD Programs heart there is a faint dashed line that returns to the heart from the Staff box; Staff members have no established communication channel with EDUSD Programs. Two established communication channels are shown on the sides
of the Staff box; one arrow is leaving indicating direct contact with the community, the other is shown returning from the community carrying information about the needs of the community members. The lack of a direct communication channel between Staff and EDUSD Programs makes program referrals from staff uncertain.

The last established communication channel is for Mass Media; it is shown on the bottom left side of the EDUSD Programs heart. Mass Media carry information about the programs out into the community. This information may or may not be received by the community members.

As noted previously, community members are the target audience for external program communication. Information from any of the channels shown leaving the EDUSD Programs heart can be picked up and carried along the Community Communication Network. Internal program communication channels are complete between EDUSD Programs and Administrators; Teachers and Staff lack established communication channels. The next section explores EDUSD programs' internal and external communication channels. Community communication preferences, effectiveness, and needs are addressed as well.
Figure 1. Communication Channels and Information Flow between EDUSD Programs and EDUSD Employees (Internal) and between EDUSD Programs and the Community (External).

Note: Arrows indicate direction of communication flow.
Program Communication Channels

Direct questioning of program coordinators and survey questions were used to assess communication channels for programs run by Children and Family Services and the Parent Resource Center. Lucia Quintero, Parent Liaison, explained the various modes of communication used by her office:

We send home [with the students] the monthly calendars of everything that is happening for the month. I also provide a master calendar not to the parents but to the different directors, principals and to the superintendent, and the assistant sups [sic], and the school board so they are aware of what’s happening and what’s going on in the future. We also do press releases for the bigger events and we’ll fax over some things to the local radio stations to announce so the parents are aware through the media also . . . The workshops we just do fliers and also by word of mouth (personal communication, December 18, 2003).

Rick Brown, Director Children and Family Services, noted the importance of word of mouth for the East Desert community: "Head Start meetings are one of the main
conduits of information to parents. Parents trust the Head Start teachers and tell other parents” (personal communication, September 11, 2003). Home School Connection class focus group participants indicated a preference for direct contact as a way to get more parents involved in the classes and activities:

Participant one: I think that I would like if they could come to my house. Maybe committed parents could have time to come to my house. How are you going to convince me? Something more personal.

Participant two: Michelle, I know that in other States they do that type of program where concerned mothers visit homes. They are like us, a group of concerned mothers but visiting homes and having meetings to talk about a topic, just like we are doing it here. It is more feasible for a lady to go three houses down the street than driving a car over here [to the school] (personal communication, December 4, 2003).

Survey results support direct, personal contact as one of the main channels for information flow for all Children and Family Services programs with the exception of the Flying Doctors (see Table 6).
Table 6. Community Communication Channels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Know a Participant</th>
<th>Directly Invited</th>
<th>Word of Mouth</th>
<th>Flyers or Papers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Count: 24</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent: 13.1%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>Count:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonrisitas</td>
<td>Count: 20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent:</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent:</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental</td>
<td>Count: 23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent:</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent:</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinic</td>
<td>Percent:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Averaged:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sum of Flyers or Papers (Column 4) = 38.2%

Sum of Direct Contact Averages (Columns 1 - 3) = 47.7%

Note: More than one channel could be selected

The primary communication channel indicated by parents for the Flying Doctors was fliers sent home from school. Interestingly, this event is also publicized using mass media including television, newspapers, and the local Spanish language radio stations (see Figure 2).
Figure 2. Communication Channels Selected by Parents Indicating How they Learned about the Flying Doctors Event. Note: More than one channel could be selected.

Effectiveness of communication channels. Program communication efforts for both Children and Family Services and for the Parent Resource Center seem to be aimed at the community and towards administration, but not directly to other employees. Employee survey comments indicate that information passes through them, but is not directed to them: "I send home every newsletter in the box. I glance at it, but never read them thoroughly."; "When we get flyers, they are to pass out and I do, but I
would like something that gives information of [sic] the questions that were asked [on the survey]." Survey results, when separated by the employee's position, indicate that administrators do have greater program knowledge than other employees (see Figure 3).

![Figure 3. Employee Awareness of Community Programs Hosted by the School District as a Function of Employee Position.](image-url)
Thus, of all surveyed employees administrators had the most program knowledge followed by office staff and classroom aides; teachers had the least amount of program knowledge. Possible reasons for these findings are as follows: Administration is informed because there is an established communication channel between program directors and administration. Classified staff are often community members. As such, they are part of community communication networks and they may have children attending district schools; information reaches them indirectly. Teachers are the least aware because many live outside of the school district and no direct communication channel has been established to convey program information to them. They receive information indirectly (with the exception of teachers who are responsible for mandated monthly parent meetings).

Differences were also found when parent program familiarity ("Very familiar", "Familiar", or "Somewhat familiar") was compared to employee awareness ("Yes") of programs (see Table 7).
Parents had a greater level of knowledge than employees for every program with the exception of the Flying Doctors. Possible reasons for higher levels of employee awareness of this particular event can be found in employee comments written on surveys: "I am familiar with this event [the Flying Doctors] because our school has hosted it in the past."; "The principal announced it at our staff meeting and asked us to explain it to our students."; "I got an e-mail about it."; "My room was used for the Flying Doctors last year."; "My students worked as volunteers for this event."; "I have volunteered for this event."; "I am friends with the coordinator of this event."; "My wife is a nurse in the district."
comments indicate that employees were in some way directly told about, impacted by, or someone close to them was involved with the Flying Doctors.

As noted previously, the Flying Doctors is the only written communication that was indicated by parents as being a primary channel of communication. To determine if there is a difference in the Flying Doctors announcement and other forms of written communication parent and employee familiarity with the Monthly Parent Calendar (produced by the Parent Resource Center) was compared to familiarity with the Flying Doctors announcement. Parental familiarity with the Monthly Calendar was determined by their response to having ever seen the calendar. Employee familiarity was gauged by selection of "Very familiar", "Familiar" or "Somewhat familiar" when asked about the Monthly Calendar. Degree of familiarity with services provided by each was measured by respondents indicating they were either "Very familiar" or "Familiar" for both the Parent Liaison and the Flying Doctors (see Figure 4).
Figure 4. Parent and Employee Familiarity With Written Information Produced by the Parent Resource Center and the Flying Doctors Compared to Parent and Employee Familiarity With Services Provided by Each Program.

Communication needs. As can be seen in Figure 4, the Flying Doctors announcement conveys more information about the services it provides than the Parent Resource Center calendar does. Possible reasons for this can be found in comments written on parent surveys suggesting changes in the Monthly Parent Calendar: “Bigger letters because many parents don’t see very well and the letters on the calendars are small.” “With this calendar you have to look at another calendar to use it.” “Put signs and drawings to make it more understandable.” “Every activity
should be briefly explained on the calendar.” Parents are asking for a better format and for more information. The Monthly Parent Calendar does have pictures on it, but they are not related to the classes being offered, spatial constraints limit the number of details that can be included on the calendar, and the format requires the recipient to get another calendar and write down when events and/or classes are going to take place. In comparison, the Flying Doctors announcement is written in large bold letters, has relevant pictures on it which make the intent of the communication obvious even if the recipient cannot read, and it provides service details. The Flying Doctors announcement is an effective form of written communication for this population. Examples of the Monthly Parent Calendar and the Flying Doctors Announcement can be found in Appendices C and D.

Lucia Quintero, Parent Liaison, feels there is a free flow of communication between herself and other departments in the school district:

There's a sharing more; each department knows about each other I think. There is more of an interconnection and a lot of interfacing. I am aware of who I can contact to put me on the right path to
help the family (L. Quintero, personal communication, October 6, 2003)

While this does hold true at the administrative level and for employees who are directly involved in programs that require parent meetings, survey information shows that other district employees are lacking information.

Employee survey comments indicate a desire for more information regarding the services of the Parent Liaison and Children and Family Services: "I would like to know more about this program [Children and Family Services]."; "What are the Parent Liaison duties?"; "Teachers need all this information and who to get in touch with for referrals [Children and Family Services]."; "What types of resources are available through this [Parent Liaison] program? What types of services can we refer parents to?" Survey information shows that EDUSD employees would be willing to refer parents to the various programs and services if given the appropriate information and they indicate an interest in learning about each program as it relates to helping their students and parents (see Table 8).
In addition to expressing their willingness to inform parents of these programs and activities many employees wrote comments beside the willingness questions such as "Of course!" showing not just willingness, but a real desire to be a conduit for information. A number of teachers' comments indicated that they wanted to know how these programs could be best used to benefit their students and their parents: "How can I use her [Lucia] to help my parents?"; "Will these programs help my students?" Many just wanted to know about the programs: "Tell us who you are and what you do." Finally, one teacher wrote...
about difficulty of juggling teaching responsibilities and the social service needs of the population: "In general I think these services are great . . . The social work aspect of this job is hard to manage with official responsibilities." Rick Brown, Director Children and Family Services, commented that teacher work load was one of the primary reasons that he did not actively target communication towards teachers, however, results of this survey indicate a desire for more information about services and classes that would help the students and their families (personal communication, April 28, 2004). Additionally, when employees were asked: "If you were informed of the extra, non-mandated community outreach programs run by the EDUSD would you have a more favorable impression of the district?" Eighty percent of survey participants responded "Yes" demonstrating a connection between program knowledge and impression of the district. Many employees wrote out suggestions for improved communication with the community and with them. Typical comments included: "Suggestions: Distribute packets to all teachers in September. Visit school (i.e. faculty meeting) with ideas teachers can implement to involve our parent community."; "Your representatives to all these
programs should be around to give information during open house and/or parent conference - a booth just to give information."

Summary of communication channels. EDUSD program directors utilize formal channels of communication such as: fliers, radio, television, and newspapers. However, these directors recognize that word of mouth is a very important form of communication for the East Desert communities. Home School Connection class focus group parents indicate a preference for direct personal contact. Survey findings show that parents learn about district programs, with the exception of the Flying Doctors, predominately through direct personal contacts. Parents are informed of the Flying Doctors through fliers sent home with students. The Flying Doctors announcement stands out due to its simplicity. Relevant pictures are prominently placed on the announcement, the date is in bold and centered between two pictures, and all services are detailed. Survey results indicate that parents understand this flier.

Finally, district program communication is primarily targeted toward the community and administration. Information is not directed to other employees.
consequently they lack program knowledge. This omission in effect eliminates other employees, who are frequently in contact with parents and privy to information about family needs, from being channels for program communication. However, these employees indicate an interest in learning about the various district programs and services and a willingness to act as information channels to the community.

In conclusion, communication channels are the structures that support the exchange of information between EDUSD and its communities. It is essential for the organization to transmit information about its programs and services externally to the community and internally to other subsystems in the organization while the community must have a way to inform the organization of its needs and desires. Both formal and informal communication channels are utilized by EDUSD. The community preference for direct personal contact is recognized and utilized, however there is still a heavy reliance on written communication. External communication channels were found to be functional and effective, but internal communication channels have only been established

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at the administrative level; other employees gain program knowledge indirectly if at all.

Discussion

The ways that EDUSD establishes its organizational culture, encourages relationships with the community, and conveys accessibility, concern, and interest in the development of the community are EDUSD's communication processes. Communication channels are the means by which the district transmits and receives information internally and externally. The communication processes and channels work together to form a community/organization system. In order for this system to survive and accomplish its goals it must develop mutually beneficial exchange relationships (Allvine, 1987). The formation of mutually beneficial exchange relationships requires communication on two levels. First, the district's communication processes must create an environment that the community perceives as accessible or they will not utilize the services being offered. On the second level, the district must communicate program and service information through internal and external channels so that referrals can be made and community members know who to contact and where
to go if they are interested. As a system, the organization and the community must be interdependent and have permeable boundaries so that information can flow back and forth between them; communication must also flow between community members and between organizational subsystems.

The motto of EDUSD is “Together we build the future”. This motto implies that a relationship exists between the district and the community and that empowerment is an organizational goal. The culture of EDUSD encourages the realization of this goal; its values and philosophy mirror those of the community. The district communicates these values and goals internally to employees shaping their attitudes and behaviors and externally to the community through employee-parent interactions and the provision programs and services.

Internally employees live by and spontaneously repeat the memorable message “We are family”. According to the Hispanic Community Foundation (2003) Family “represents the nucleus of the Latino community... [and] provides a safe, loving and nurturing environment for individual growth and development” (¶ 3). By this definition, if EDUSD is a family, then it symbolizes the nucleus or heart
of the East Desert community and it should create spaces and opportunities for the empowerment of its members. The superintendent's belief that the community must be involved in order to meet educational goals is supported by research. De Vos and Suárez-Orozco (1991) claim the community must have a sense of ownership in order for programs to be successful and P. Reyes et al. (1999) assert community members must be full partners in the education process. EDUSD recognizes it needs to be a part of the community and has created organizational expectations of its employees to facilitate its integration into the community. As a family, district employees are expected to be highly dedicated, value one another, and work as a team. Likewise, parents are to be valued, respected, trained, and invited to participate in their own education and in the education of their children.

Organizational expectations are important because employee actions and attitudes are guided by them. Kotler (1975) declares the culture of the organization makes it seem accessible or inaccessible to clients. Parents perceive EDUSD to be accessible to them, interested in the community, and concerned for their wellbeing. The
district creates these perceptions through their communication processes.

Communication Processes

The communication processes utilized by EDUSD help to build positive community relations with the primarily Mexican origin population served by the district. These processes function because EDUSD employees have established connections inside the community; use culturally appropriate communication and Spanish; have an empathetic understanding of the community and its needs; and they support community empowerment. The communication processes used by EDUSD are consistent with best practices identified through research.

Community connections. According to Garcia-Preto (1996) the family is of primary importance to Latino populations. Because families tend to be self reliant they generally do not turn to outside organizations to get their needs met. Colon (1996) and Falicov (1996) emphasize the necessity of establishing inside connections in order to provide services. EDUSD does this in a variety of ways. First, they actively recruit and hire community members. In addition to being employees, community members have their children in the district’s
schools and are personally invested in the success of the organization. The integration of community members into the organization creates loyalty, pride, and commitment to the school district; these feelings extend into the community and to other employees who are not community members. Hiring community members also creates trust and encourages the use of services and participation in district sponsored activities.

A second way that EDUSD establishes inside connections is through what Kemp (2004) calls continuity of care providers. Jenswold and LaMont (2003) observe that stability is important to Latinos. Many EDUSD employees have been with the organization for a long time; they weathered the district being placed under receivership due to bankruptcy and did not receive raises for many years. The superintendent has been with the district for 27 years. Employees tend to stay with EDUSD even though they could get better pay and live closer to home in the neighboring districts. They stay because, as one teacher put it, she feels that what she is doing is worthwhile. Employee stability and commitment to the community is important to community members.
Continuity of employees allows parents to form relationships with them. The formation of personal relationships is essential to the provision of services to Mexican clients (Falicov, 1996). Connections form between community members and employees as they get to know each other over time. The district encourages the formation of these connections by hiring large numbers of community outreach workers and by having one employee solely dedicated to parents, the Parent Liaison. Additionally, parents are more likely to approach the school district if they have a personal relationship with an employee.

Once relationships are established employees and programs develop reputations of being trustworthy within their communities. Colon (1996) notes professionals working in Latino communities must develop a reputation in the community for both their knowledge and their compassion. Community confidence must be formed through mutual trust in order for services to be used. One parent commented on the mutual nature of her relationship with the school. She observed that since the school was kind to her she was motivated to help them out as much as she could. It is an organizational expectation that EDUSD employees respect and value the parents and consider it
their job to help parents to feel welcome and comfortable coming to school; many of the district’s employees embrace this expectation and are highly committed to the community.

Another way the district establishes connections with the community is by holding culturally relevant events and inviting community participation. One parent commented that the schools hold “posadas” every Christmas and they make her feel that she is included. Parents also liked that the Mexican flag was presented at assemblies and events. The district’s attempts to incorporate Mexican culture into school activities and to invite the parents to participate made them feel as though they were a part of the district.

In sum, community connections are established in a variety of ways. EDUSD recruits and hires community members and has a low employee turnover rate which lends stability to the organization. Additionally, the district actively makes connections by hiring large numbers of community outreach workers and by employing a Parent Liaison. Employees extend respect to the community and feel that it is their job to help orient the parents to the organization. Once community members have formed a
connection they are more likely to become involved with the district. Cultural events also help to make parents feel they are a part of the organization.

**Language and communication.** Since 97.3 percent of the district’s students are of Hispanic origin language and cultural communication patterns are important considerations in the establishment and maintenance of a community/organization system. First and foremost the option of communicating in Spanish is essential for many of the district’s parents. Kemp (2004) recommends that all written communication be translated and interpreters should be available if the service provider is not bilingual. He also recommends having Spanish-speaking staff or volunteers available to clients. The district translates all written materials, has a phone system with both English and Spanish options, and hires bilingual secretaries, office workers, and outreach personnel. Additionally, General Education Development testing is available in Spanish and all district classes and workshops for parents are offered in both Spanish and English. It is not necessary for community members to speak English in order to interact with EDUSD.
Latino cultures accept high levels of power distance; the effect of which, Garcia-Preto (1996) observes, is a level of respect for authority that can impede Hispanics from asking questions or advocating for themselves. EDUSD is aware of this cultural predisposition, but works to help parents learn U.S. cultural norms by inviting parents to become actively involved in school, and teaching them how to question and to assert their rights. Programs with mandated monthly meetings encourage parents to be active in the district. The result is, as one parent realized, that here in the U.S. she is the important one. EDUSD also offers leadership training and training for parents to become parent educators. Through program participation the parents do become vocal, involved, and active in the affairs of the district and beyond.

Another communication consideration is that of formality. Latinos value formality in the early stages of a relationship. This is especially true if they have recently immigrated (Kemp, 2004; Williams, 2002). Communicating in ways that are culturally appropriate is important to the establishment of trust between the district and the community. Lucia Quintero, Parent
Liaison, reflected that employees adjusted their style depending on the needs of the parent.

One of the most important language and communication considerations when working with a primarily Mexican origin population is the use of Spanish. Having translations for all written materials and interpreters available for verbal interactions assures that the organization is accessible to the population. Additionally, cultural norms dictate a high respect for authority and preference for formality. These norms must be respected and understood by EDUSD employees, but U.S. cultural communication expectations must be learned as well. EDUSD's community communications are aligned with the recommendations of researchers while concurrently recognizing the need to orient parents to collaborative leadership and to the communication patterns of the U.S.

**Empathy and the understanding of needs.** According to Kotler (1975) it is essential for service organizations to have "a deep understanding of the needs, perceptions, preferences, reference groups, and behavioral patterns of the target audience" (p. 282). In the case of EDUSD the needs of the target audience are often those of survival. The school district and especially the board are well...
aware that students cannot learn and parents cannot be involved with education until these basic needs are met. Abraham Maslow best explains human motives. "Maslow theorized that man’s motives form a hierarchy composed of physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization needs. We cannot shift from a lower set of motives to a higher one until the lower needs have been at least partially fulfilled" (Travers, 1977, p. 300). Physiological needs such as hunger and thirst are so compelling that if they are not met other needs will not emerge. Obviously, it is in the district’s best interest to make sure these needs are met.

Programs which help to fill physiological needs are the Federal Free or Reduced Price Meal Programs, the dental clinic, the Flying Doctors, and the new clinic. Safety needs are met by 21st Century’s after school programs and Early Head Start’s commitment to secure and stable child care. The district shows a particular dedication to the fulfillment of these needs by continuing social service programs past their funding cycles. A sense of belonging is encouraged by the district’s culture, but the need for love really must be met at home. Esteem needs for children are met indirectly through
parenting classes. Both PRICE Parenting and Home School Connection teach the importance of self-esteem for both the child and parent in order to develop and move toward self-actualization. The Adult school offers parents the opportunity to develop themselves further as well.

Colon (1996) advises professionals working in Hispanic communities to hire community members so that knowledge of community matters can be freely transmitted to the organization. EDUSD has established itself as an integral part of the community and makes many accommodations for parents based on its understanding of the community's needs and behavior patterns as suggested by Kotler (1975). The provision of transportation and food at meetings and childcare at all district events indicates a deep understanding of the community's needs. Additionally the offering of classes in apartment buildings shows an understanding that the population may lack transportation or, as the Home School Connection parents pointed out, it is far easier for a lady to go down the street than to drive all the way to a school site.

Taylor et al. (2001) claim in order for the population to accept and embrace new ideas employees must
develop a deep understanding and empathy for the community members. EDUSD does this by hiring from within the community, by recruiting people who share the same backgrounds and life experiences as the community members, and by training parent educators. In this way the employees can relate to the parents with a depth of understanding that would otherwise be unavailable. These employees serve as role models for the parents and offer them support and encouragement. Trust is established through personal sharing and the adoption or incorporation of new ideas is more easily accepted from a fellow community member or an employee who has a similar background.

The recognition and fulfillment of physiological and safety needs are essential in order for children and their families to turn their attention to education. The district provides for these needs through federal programs, the office of Children and Family services, and at times through discretionary funding. Esteem and self-actualization needs are met through Parent Resource Center and the Adult School classes. Kotler (1975) and Taylor et al. (2001) assert it is necessary for employees to have deep empathy and understanding for the community to enable
them to grow and develop. Many of the district's employees have this empathy because they are from the community and/or have grown up under the same conditions. The contribution these employees make is one of guidance while instilling confidence and being an inspiration to the parents.

Empowerment. The Latino population in the U.S. is growing at an accelerated pace and many Hispanic children are at risk. Garcia (1992) claims that the future of Latinos is the future of the country. The need to empower this population and to incorporate them into the mainstream is pressing. De Vos and Suárez-Orozco (1991) claim that it is the responsibility of schools to be of "educative service to the community into which [they have] been placed" (p. 8). EDUSD clearly recognizes that its responsibilities in the East Desert go far beyond the education of children; the education process cannot even begin if a child's basic needs are not met. However conditions of deprivation will persist if the underlying cause is not addressed. Chapa and Valencia (1993) observe that the overall low socioeconomic situation of Hispanics combined with low levels of educational attainment severely limit their opportunities and wellbeing. If the
school district wants children to show up every day ready to learn then it must also dedicate itself to the educational needs of the parents.

EDUSD attends to the education of the community by running a state of the art adult school, by hosting parent education classes, and by orienting parents to U.S. systems through employee efforts, programs, and mandatory monthly parent meetings. Classes and programs selected by Lucia Quintero, Parent Liaison, are specifically designed to empower parents. Through these classes parents learn new skills and are provided with both emotional and material support to act on them. Furthermore, community empowerment is encouraged by the district's culture which expects EDUSD employees to see parent orientation as a part of their job.

Interactions with the programs, services, and personnel of EDUSD help community members to develop what De Vos and Suárez-Orozco (1991) call an "inner sense of empowerment". Examples of changed attitudes, changed behaviors, reduced fear, greater confidence, willingness to confront problems, and increased feelings of self worth and capability abounded in interviews, observations, conversations, interactions, and survey comments. This
internal shift is necessary for parents to become
empowered and to engage in effective interactions with the
school district and with U.S. systems in general (De Vos &
Suárez-Orozco, 1991; Delgado-Gaitan, 1994). For many
parents the district’s programs create what Camila,
Sonrisitas promotora, called a “little ladder” for
individual growth and development. Head Start and the
Migrant program serve as passageways to greater
involvement with the district and, ultimately, to
empowerment.

Colon (1996) advocates egalitarianism as a way of
inspiring client trust and encouraging empowerment. He
suggests including classified staff in employee meetings
and treating them as community experts. EDUSD goes beyond
Colon’s recommendations; employees of all levels are
recruited into the organization and all employees are
treated with equal respect. Everyone at EDUSD has an
important job to do; anyone can be a district hero. This
sense of equity is transmitted from the organization to
the community. EDUSD employees see community members as
competent and as having the same needs and the same
potential as they do. As Adriana Fuentes, Coordinator
Sonrisitas, explains, she saw the qualities within each
promotora, recognized that they were all capable, and helped them to see it too.

Delgado-Gaitan (1994) and P. Reyes et al. (1999) argue that parents must be valued, respected, and trained to be partners in the education process. De Vos and Suárez-Orozco (1991) go a step further and insist that programs must be turned over to the community members themselves. EDUSD has taught parents to be partners in the education of their children. Trained parents recognize their importance as their child’s first and most important teacher. They also know that they are an integral part of the educational process. EDUSD would like to eventually move out of the social service arena and some programs have already been turned over to the community and others were designed to be turned over. One example is the new clinic; this clinic is only going to be run by Children and Family Services for three years. After that time it is going to be taken over by a community based health care organization called Santa Rosa del Valley.

The critical need to empower the U.S. Latino population is passionately argued in the literature. Many researchers feel that schools should be responsible for
taking the first steps toward this goal. EDUSD accepts and takes on this responsibility in the East Desert communities. The school district arranges for or meets the survival needs of many families and trains parents with the hope that these needs will eventually be reduced through the empowerment of the community. The district serves as a passageway for orientation to U.S. systems and for the personal growth and development of community members. Researchers advocate egalitarian systems and the inclusion of parents as full partners in the school district along with community ownership of programs. EDUSD’s programs, practices, and communication processes encourage the empowerment of the communities they serve.

Communication Channels

According to systems theory organizations must be hierarchically ordered, interdependent, and have permeable boundaries (Miller, 2003). For EDUSD, Children and Family Services and the Parent Resource Center are subsystems within the larger bureaucracy of the school district. Internally, these two subsystems must have permeable boundaries and communicate with other organizational subsystems such as EDUSD employees, administration, and the school board. Externally, all of these subsystems
must be permeable to the greater community in which they are located.

According to Miller (2003) a system and its component parts must allow some exchange of information with its environment in order to survive. If no exchange takes place the system enters into a state of negative entropy and breaks down. Communication channels are the established conduits for communication between the subsystems and between the subsystems and the community. In order to be a responsive organization communication between all components and between the components and the environment should occur through open channels and should flow two ways (Colon, 1996; Kotler, 1975).

External communication channels. External program communication is directed to the community and utilizes three channels: mass media, written information carried home by students, and personal transmission of information by direct contact with providers or informed employees. Mass media communication channels have one-way communication flow from the organization to the community. Mass media channels used by program directors are the two local Spanish language radio stations, television, and community newspapers. Written communication mainly flows
in one direction and takes the form of fliers, announcements, notes from teachers, and calendars; these are sent home with children from the school sites. Communication via direct contact is two way and occurs through mandated parent meetings, personal invitations to participate in programs, and casual contact between parents and school employees. Distribution of direct contact information occurs by word of mouth. Information from any channel may be picked up and passed along through community communication networks.

Culturally, reading and writing are not common forms of communication amongst Latinos of lower socio economic or rural backgrounds (Kemp, 2004). Because reading and writing are not preferred communication channels Kemp (2004) recommends that any written instructions be explained directly, actively, and visually. He argues that communications should be adapted to reduce reliance on written forms. EDUSD is well aware of this community preference and attempts are underway to expand the use of mass media, especially radio. Unfortunately, written documents are still heavily used by most district programs and schools in their communications with parents. Clearly, this is not the ideal method of communication for
East Valley residents; however, survey results showed that one piece of written communication, the Flying Doctors announcement, was particularly effective due to its simplicity and its heavy reliance on visual information which allowed the recipient to understand the intent of the communication even if he/she could not read.

Caziani (2003) and Williams (2002) describe Hispanic culture as valuing and maintaining extensive communication networks amongst established and trusted people. These networks have been formed in the East Desert and survey results showed word of mouth to be an important and preferred communication channel. EDUSD is cognizant of this preference; direct contact and transfer of information via community networks by word of mouth is utilized as much as possible by program directors and employees. Programs that have monthly parent meetings such as Head Start, the Migrant program, and Early Head Start are particularly well suited for this form of communication. Additionally, parents who have positive interactions with EDUSD employees form connections to the district and are willing to bring their problems, issues, or concerns to the district.
The external communication channels of EDUSD allow for the exchange of information between the district and the community. Program communication is directed to the community through mass media, written communications, and direct contact. The utilization of mass media and community networks is noteworthy and consistent with research, however, there is still a strong reliance on written forms of communication and few of these are simple and visual. As one survey parent bluntly put it “If notes are sent home from the school with the children and they must be signed then we read them”. The implication being if they don’t have to be signed they most likely will not be read.

**Internal communication channels.** Internal program communication occurs between organizational subsystems and utilizes two channels: written information in the form of e-mail, program announcements and/or calendars, and direct personal contact between employees. Survey results show that internal communication was mainly directed at administration. There are few or no direct attempts by program directors to communicate program information to other employees.
Since parents are the target audience, program communication is mainly directed toward them and they have higher levels of program awareness than EDUSD employees. Program communication is not directed to EDUSD employees with the exception of administration and certain teachers. As one employee survey respondent wrote "It's a big secret!" This is unfortunate because teachers, office staff, and classroom aides are in direct contact with parents on a regular basis. Additionally parents and students share information about their needs with these employees. The employees know which families need services, but lack program and referral information. Communication between EDUSD programs and employees is truncated.

Research Question Three

Research Question Three asks: How do these communication processes and channels function to create and maintain the community/organization system? This last section summarizes how EDUSD has formed an integrated relationship and partnership with the predominately Mexican origin population that it serves. The success of this system depends on the district's ability to establish
the perception or awareness that it is interested in, responsive to, and that it values the community members. The organization’s communication processes and channels must work in concert to convey this message.

Summary of Communication Processes and Channels

    The East Desert communities and EDUSD have formed a community/organization system. Symbolically, the community/organization system is a “family”. EDUSD functions as the “nucleus” or heart of the East Desert communities. A family system “provides a safe, loving and nurturing environment for individual growth and development” i.e., empowerment, of its members (Hispanic Community Foundation, 2003). The system is functional because its communication processes and channels work together to create and sustain relationships between the community and the organization. The formation of these relationships allows the system to pursue the common goal of empowerment.

    Communication processes transmit a message of district accessibility and welcome to the community members. EDUSD communication processes are completely in line and often exceed best practices indicated in research. The ways in which the organization creates this
inviting environment and encourages relationship formation begins with its organizational culture. District employees are expected to value, respect, train, and involve parents. They are also expected to view themselves as dedicated family members who value each other and work together to achieve common goals. These expectations are, for the most part, met by EDUSD employees. EDUSD extends the organizational culture to the community by establishing connections inside the community; using culturally appropriate communication and Spanish; developing an empathetic understanding of the community and its needs; and by supporting community empowerment.

Communication channels are the way that information flows back and forth between all elements of the system. Allvne (1987) asserts the only way to have positive and responsive exchange relationships is through the establishment and maintenance of open communication channels. From a systems theory standpoint this means that boundaries between subsystems need to be permeable and feedback must be accepted. EDUSD program directors do a good job of maintaining open communication channels externally. This means that community members are
familiar with programs and services and know who to contact and/or where to go if they are interested in participating or need services. They also know who they can contact if they have a problem, question, or issue. Some written forms of communication are more effective at conveying information than others. The program’s internal communication channels are only partially effective. Communication channels between administration and program directors are open and functional; administrators are largely aware of EDUSD services and programs and know who to refer parents to. Communication channels between other district employees and program directors are truncated. Formal lines of communication between program directors and employees have not been established and knowledge of program and service offerings is inconsistent making referrals uncertain.

Although internal communication channels do not function optimally the community/organization system as a whole does. Communication processes are in operation and parents respond. They feel that the district is approachable, is interested in the community and in their wellbeing. Employees feel that the district is dedicated to the empowerment of the community. External
communication channels are open and program information reaches the community and the community knows how to communicate with the district. Through their communication processes and channels, EDUSD has created an integrated community/organization system which facilitates the accomplishment of its motto: "Together we build the future".
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

Summary

EDUSD serves approximately 13,800 students kindergarten through twelfth grade in an area that is extremely rural, isolated, and impoverished. Agriculture is the major industry in the district's service area. Because of the district's proximity to Mexico and the abundance of jobs in the agricultural sector the district serves many immigrant, migrant, and first generation students. A little over 97 percent of the district's students are Latino, 98 percent of these are of Mexican origin. New immigrants tend to settle in the southeastern end of the district's service area; these communities are isolated and agricultural. As the immigrants become oriented to the U.S. and more affluent they move to the communities on the west side of the district. As these immigrants work toward achieving the American Dream they may move out of the district's service area and into more prestigious neighborhoods. Because of this phenomenon and increased rates of immigration the district is continually faced with the challenge of orienting new immigrants.
The Hispanic population in the U.S., the Mexican origin population in particular, is growing at an accelerated pace. As a group, Latinos have experienced little educational or economic success in this country and are considered to be "at risk" (García, 1992). The Council of Economic Advisors (1998) claims educational attainment to be "one of the most important indicators of lifetime economic opportunities" (p. 13). Many researchers feel the only way to empower this population is through meeting the educational and survival needs of the very young and of their parents. The survival needs of the Latino population must first be met in order for them to be able to focus on education.

Two departments in EDUSD provide for the physical and educational needs of the community. The Parent Resource Center is dedicated to empowerment of parents while Children and Family Services concentrates on families with young children. They educate the children and their parents and provide for the basic needs of these families and the community. These two departments are engaged in social marketing. They are attempting to change the "beliefs, attitudes, values, or behavior of a target public" (Kotler, 1975, p. 282). To be successful, EDUSD
must be able to communicate effectively with the community and establish a relationship of mutual trust and respect.

To establish trusting relationships the organization must be able to communicate its mission and beliefs to the community. This requires open channels of communication. The culture of the organization is important because it provides the structures and values that dictate the expected employee attitudes and behaviors. The culture of an organization can either encourage community members to be involved in the organization or discourage their involvement (Kotler, 1975).

Researchers have identified various cultural communication norms associated with Hispanic populations. These norms must be taken into account if communication and service delivery are to be successful. Kotler (1975) and Taylor et al. (2001) stress the importance of communicating with empathy and cultural understanding. Kemp (2004) warns that reading and writing are not common communication forms in Latino populations. He suggests that all communication should be translated and interpreted. Written directions should be adapted to be as visual as possible. Care providers should be aware of the importance of respect and the formation of personal
relationships in order to gain the trust of the community (Colon, 1996; Falicov, 1996; Kemp, 2004).

Colon (1996) advocates egalitarian treatment of all community members in order to truly understand the needs of the population and to help with community integration. Other researchers discuss the role that school districts have in the lives of Hispanic immigrants. The responsibility of orienting and empowering immigrants often falls to the schools (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; P. Reyes et al., 1999). There is agreement that in order to end disenfranchisement Latinos must be helped to develop their own sense of competence. In order to facilitate this process, school districts must develop a deep level of community understanding (Kotler, 1975).

The study of the communication processes and channels of EDUSD was undertaken for several reasons. First, the communities that this district serves are described by researchers as “at risk”. Additionally, the district houses two departments dedicated to the education and care of the populations (young children and adults) which researchers indicate as being the solution to the disenfranchisement problem of Hispanics in the U.S. Finally, the district has been given commendations for
their relations with the community in various state evaluations and these commendations were consistent with the researcher’s experience as a district employee. Thus, if EDUSD is successful in helping community members to become empowered then their communication processes and channels are worth investigating.

To study the communication processes and channels used by EDUSD the researcher chose both qualitative and survey methods of investigation. Ethnographic methods were chosen to provide quality and depth of information. Surveys were chosen for their ability to reach large numbers of people and to assess program knowledge, behavior, and interest. Ethnographic data collection occurred from September 2003 through June 2004. The researcher attended meetings, trainings, classes, and observed various programs hosted by Children and Family Services and the Parent Resource Center. Parent trainers and participants in the Home School Connection classes were interviewed as a group as were the promotoras for the Sonrisitas program. Parent interviews were conducted in Spanish. Directors of programs that worked closely with parents were contacted and interviewed as well and field notes were collected.
Collection of survey information began in April 2004. The researcher visited every school in the district and met with principals to secure permission to survey employees. The researcher was granted access to 16 out of 19 of the district's schools. A total of 960 surveys were distributed and 281 were returned for a 29.3 percent return rate. The survey is a sufficient sample of the district's teachers, but there were too few respondents in other school site employee positions; because not all school site employees had the opportunity to respond to the survey results cannot be considered representative. Parent surveys were available in both English and Spanish. Parents were surveyed at a community event, through adult school classes, and at a Migrant Parent Advisory Committee meeting. Additionally Camila, Sonrisitas promotora, took home 150 surveys to administer at her apartment unit and Aida, Facilitator Latino Family Literacy took 100 surveys to administer to Head Start parents. A total of 610 parent surveys were distributed and 277 were returned for a response rate of 45 percent. Some surveys were eliminated leaving 183 valid parent surveys. These surveys were not drawn from a random district wide sample
and cannot be considered representative of all district parents.

The researcher transcribed and translated, as necessary, all ethnographic data. Survey data was entered into SPSS for statistical analysis. Analysis consisted mainly of descriptive statistics. Frequencies were run for all questions and some comparisons were made using crosstabs which are two variable chi-square tests. These were selected to examine differences in the distributions of selected categories. Responses for participation in Latino Family Literacy, Sonrisitas, the Saul Martinez Dental Clinic, the Flying Doctors, and Parent Resource Center programs were aggregated to determine if program awareness and participation created differences in perceptions of the district.

Data analysis began after all qualitative and survey data were collected. The first phase involved ethnographic data analysis. From this analysis five functional categories emerged: Organizational Culture; District/Community Relationship; Community Access; Concern for the Wellbeing of the community; and Empowerment. These categories are interrelated and work together as follows: community members’ perception of organizational
accessibility and of the organization's care and interest in them are based on the organization's ability to form relationships with the community which begins with the organization's attitude toward the community as is established by its culture. After categorizing the ethnographic data, survey data was integrated into each category as appropriate.

The organization's culture was found to encourage teamwork, commitment, and inclusiveness. Because many employees are also community members, many EDUSD employees do not see the organization as separate from the community. Parents are respected and valued, and employees believe it is a part of their job to be of service.

Relationships between EDUSD and the community were evident. The district created the basis for these relationships by being respectful and taking parent concerns seriously. Low employee turnover has helped to establish trust upon which relationships are formed. Additionally, employees consider parent orientation an important part of their job. Parents respond to the district with their participation; they volunteer their time, they attend meetings and events, and they utilize district services. Their confidence in the mutuality of
the relationship is expressed in their willingness to bring up concerns or issues with the expectation that they will be addressed.

Parents view EDUSD as accessible to them. Access is encouraged by hiring many employees who are specifically dedicated to community outreach and by bringing classes to rural areas. The ability to speak English is not necessary to communicate and interact with the school district. All written materials are translated, interpreters are available at all sites, many staff members are bilingual, and workshops and classes are all offered in both English and Spanish. Lastly, the district hires people who share similar life experiences with the community members or who are community members. These hiring practices add to the depth of cultural understanding and empathy employees have for the parents.

Recognizing the needs of community members and delivering services in a respectful manner expressed concern for the wellbeing of the community. The fact that community members use these services indicates a high level of trust between the community and EDUSD. The district hosts programs that are social service in nature with the realization that learning cannot take place until
a family's survival needs are met. Furthermore, EDUSD employees work with parents to help them understand and use U.S. systems.

EDUSD communicates its goal of working with the community toward empowerment by maintaining a strong organizational culture. Egalitarian treatment of all employees extends to community members and parents are perceived as competent. Employees know that attitudinal and behavioral changes take time and try to make the process more reachable for the parents. District programs not only teach new skills but also support their development by providing physical tools to enact the skills and by creating a supportive atmosphere to learn and practice them in. Parents who have become involved with the district have grown and developed, gained new abilities and life habits, but most importantly, they now have an inner sense of empowerment which allows them to function effectively in the district and beyond.

The channels used to convey program information were outlined and evaluated using both ethnographic and survey data. Both formal and informal communication channels were used by program directors. Formal channels include: fliers, radio, television, and newspapers. Informal
channels of communication are direct contact and word of mouth. Word of mouth is an important, preferred, and effective communication channel which is exploited by programs that have mandated monthly parent meetings. Written communication tends to be less effective with the exception of the Flying Doctors announcement. This flier was successful in transmitting its message due to its simplicity and reliance on relevant pictures to make the intent of the communication clear. District program communication is primarily targeted to parents. External communication channels are open and functional. Internal communication channels are less efficient mainly because program information is directly communicated only to administrators. Other employees are not targeted in program communication attempts. Due to the uneven targeting of communication parents and administrators have the highest degree of program knowledge; teachers have the lowest.

Conclusions

Literature would predict an adversarial relationship between EDUSD and this impoverished, predominately uneducated Spanish speaking population and yet, EDUSD has
managed to create a community/district system dedicated to advancement with the East Desert residents. Of interest in this study and to other school districts serving similar populations are the communication processes and channels that have been used to create and support the functioning of this system.

Systems theory was used as a lens to interpret organizational behavior and communication in this thesis. Systems theory looks at an organization and its interactions with its environment as an ecosystem. There are three important concepts related to this theory: hierarchical ordering, interdependence, and permeability. Exchange is also an important tenet; exchange processes explore input, throughput and output. Lastly, the system maintains its stability through both positive and negative feedback. Each of these concepts and processes are apparent and functional in the EDUSD/Community system.

According to systems theory, a system is hierarchically organized, meaning there is a large super-system that the organization fits into and subsystems throughout the organization that increase in specificity until reaching the individual level (Miller, 2003). EDUSD is hierarchically ordered; it is contained within the
super-system of public education in the U.S. It is a part of the state of California public school system and administered through the Riverside County Office of Education. The district is administered locally through the board and the superintendent. EDUSD is comprised of various departments and schools which are subsystems within the school district. Each subsystem is designed to serve the East Desert Community and has its own administrators who are responsible for disseminating information to individual employees. Individual employees at all levels exchange information with each other and with the community members.

Interdependence means that each component of the system is dependent on the functioning of other components in the system (Miller, 2003). In the EDUSD/Community system it is difficult to distinguish where the community ends and where the school district begins. The two are so intertwined that it is nearly impossible to consider one without the other. First and foremost, the school district would not exist if the community was not present. There would be no children to send to the schools and no parents to provide services for. The community, although it could exist without EDUSD, would be a very different
place. One of the most substantial impacts that the district has on the community is that it is one of the largest employers in the area. The importance of the positions at EDUSD goes beyond simply employing community members. These jobs are beneficial to the employee; they offer healthy working conditions, benefits, and opportunities for advancement. The empowerment of individual community members facilitates the advancement of the community as a whole. Because so many of the community members work for the district the labels of "parent", "employee", and "community member" become interchanged and one person could be one, two, or all three of these descriptors.

Permeability gauges the ease of flow of information and materials between the organization and its environment. Permeability levels can vary but a system and its component parts must allow some exchange with the environment in order to survive (Miller, 2003). Allvine (1987) and Kotler (1975) both argue for free flow of communication between organizations and their environments. The organization and all of its subsystems must have permeable boundaries in order to effectively serve the community.
Both input and output require and exchange with the environment outside of the system. The degree of permeability can facilitate or prevent exchanges from occurring (Miller, 2003). In the case of EDUSD external communication channels are open and functional. Internal communication between organizational subsystems is inconsistent. Some subsystems have established communication channels while others do not; this is a limitation within the system. Because the external communication channels are functional the community members are able to give input and feedback to the district and the district is able to respond to the community, to maintain itself, and to grow and adapt as new conditions arise in the environment.

The organizational culture of EDUSD is the most important element in the establishment of the community/district system. EDUSD has a strong corporate culture that instills "family" values into its members. Employees are expected to be dedicated, to cooperate with each other, and to respect one another. They are also expected to treat the community members with an equal amount of dedication, cooperation, and respect. The district's motto "Together we build the future" confirms
its orientation to working with and for the community. As Marley Adler observed, "I feel people have more of a sense of a heart here . . . those of us who are new to the district can see that sense of loyalty and pride . . . and so it spills over" (personal communication, April 2, 1004). Commitment to the creation of a strong organizational culture has to come from the top (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). The organization's leaders must believe in and live by these values if they are to have any effect upon employees. And while it is impossible to affect all employees, the values espoused by the district were prevalent and honestly held by the employees observed in this study and by many of the employees the researcher used to work with. Reid Brewer, Superintendent, has been with the district for 27 years and truly embodies these organizational expectations.

It is the culture of EDUSD that encourages the community to trust it thus allowing relationships between the organization and the community to form. The organizational culture created by EDUSD is the keystone; it is what holds all the other contributing elements in place. It is also the most difficult element to recreate elsewhere. However, if the leaders of a district are
interested in forming positive relationships with their community members, then changes must be made in their organization's culture.

Nonprofit organizations, such as school districts, are notorious for being unresponsive to the needs of their target markets because "these types of organizations do not face active competition or depend for their continuity on active customer support through purchase" (Kotler, 1975, p. 39). According to Kotler (1975), an unresponsive organization has two characteristics: "1) It does nothing to measure the needs, perceptions, preferences, or satisfaction of its constituent publics. 2) It makes it difficult for its constituent publics to place inquires, complaints, suggestion, or opinions" (p. 40). He further posits that this type of organization "either assumes that it knows what its publics need and feel or that their needs and feelings do not matter" (p. 40). What makes EDUSD unique is that it does believe that the community it serves matters, it is interested in their needs and feelings, and the community is aware of the district's interest and concern for them. For other districts looking to improve how they are perceived in their
A shift must be made from being unresponsive to responsive.

Deal and Kennedy (1982) describe cultural change as "real changes in the behavior of people throughout the organization" (p. 158). Since it is the attitudes and actions of the employees that either encourage or inhibit positive relations with community members, clearly cultural change is the key to shifting poor community interactions to positive ones. Deal and Kennedy (1982) and Kotler (1975) discuss the difficulties of changing the culture of an organization. First and foremost, people are resistant to change in general because it is disruptive and it brings new and unfamiliar ideas and expectations that must be adjusted to. McKay (cited in Kotler, 1975) discusses the process an organization must go through when it decides to become responsive:

It may require drastic and upsetting changes in organization. It usually demands new approaches to planning. It may set in motion a series of appraisals that will disclose surprising weaknesses in performance, distressing needs for modification of operating practices, and unexpected gaps, conflicts, or obsolescence in basic policies. Without a doubt,
it will call for reorientation of business philosophy and for the reversal of some long-established attitudes. These changes will not be easy to implement. Objectives, obstacles, resistance, and deep-rooted habits will have to be overcome (p 48).

Given that true organizational change is a difficult and painful process the organization’s leaders must be truly committed to the idea of being responsive to the community. Deal and Kennedy (1982) offer various suggestions to organizations undergoing such changes. They recommend five actions that will aid the change process: build consensus, establish two-way trust, provide training for new skills, have patience because change takes a long time to become established, and be flexible. In addition to these tips they emphasize the importance of top managers embracing the new values on a day to day basis. “People are interested in what other people say they value, but they are only really convinced by what others do. What counts is . . . the consistency of a pattern of behavior over time” (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p. 168). Kotler (1975) also discusses the importance of preplanning, top management sponsorship, education, and training programs. Thus, organizational management
researchers agree that change is difficult, but not impossible; it must be prepared for and advocated by the organization’s leaders.

Obviously other districts could not create the same conditions and attitudes extant in EDUSD, but they can make the move toward being more responsive to their communities. In addition to implementing changes in their organizational culture other steps that are based in literature and have been proven successful by EDUSD could be taken by the district; these would promote the changing culture and improve community relationships. Actions such as recruiting and hiring community members can establish bridges or links between the organization and the community. Hiring community members creates a greater investment in the organization and increases the community’s trust. Another way to establish inside connections is by hiring employees who are specifically assigned to work in the communities. Language and communication considerations are also important; it is essential to communicate in the community’s primary language. Bilingual staff should be hired, interpreters should be on hand for all parent conferences and meetings,
and written communication sent home to parents should be as visual as possible and translated.

School districts can capitalize on their employees who are also community members by consulting them on community matters and perceptions. Greater cultural understanding can be developed by hosting in-services and by creating an egalitarian work environment. One of the greatest contributions a district can make to its community is to educate and provide training for the parents. Adult education should be of equal importance as K-12 education. Additionally parent education programs should be geared to empowering parents. Parent educators can be trained to encourage behavioral changes and they are impressive models of empowerment for other community members. Valuing community members is an attitude that can be established by the district’s leaders and enacted by employees. Welcoming parents to be active participants in the education of their children can reduce the fear of the U.S. school system and systems outside of the organization as well.

As a responsive culture grows within an organization it will be communicated to the community through employee attitudes and actions while interacting with students and
parents. Actions by the district such as establishing community connections, using Spanish to communicate, developing cultural empathy and community understanding, and perceiving the parents as capable are all communication processes. These processes transmit messages of district accessibility, concern, and dedication to the community members. Most importantly these processes encourage the community members to be involved with the district; they have been welcomed as partners.

Overall the communication channels of EDUSD are not particularly unique, however, the recognition and exploitation of community communication networks is noteworthy. Word of mouth is the preferred and most effective communication channel available to the Latino serving school district. Finding avenues to utilize this channel is in the district's best interest. Informing employees and staff of programs, services, and events is an excellent way to utilize community communication networks. These employees are in contact with parents on a regular basis and are able to pass this information along because they are a part of the community's communication networks.
The establishment and maintenance of open communication channels inside and outside of the organization provide the structure that supports the community/organization system. The communication processes transmit messages of district accessibility and welcome the community members. These two must both be present for the system to function effectively.

In sum, EDUSD serves as an outstanding organizational model for cooperative and empowering community relations. Their greatest strength lies in the system-wide belief in the capacity of the community members. The attitudes and behaviors of EDUSD employees predominately reflect the organization’s beliefs and the net effect is employees who respect and value community members. This respect engenders trust and encourages the formation of community/district interactional relationships. Relationships between community members and district employees provide bridges between the community and the organization which grow and develop through time. Additionally, many of the district employees are also community members making it difficult to separate the organization from the community. These factors and processes allow for the formation of a community/district
system which, in turn, is supported by the presence of open communication channels.

Implications

Although the findings of this study are specific to EDUSD they hold potential for use in other school districts working with similar populations. Literature indicates that most school districts serving impoverished minority populations do not have positive community relations. The process model outlined in Table 1 (page 91) has possible assessment applications for school districts with troubled community relations that are interested in becoming more responsive. These districts could use each of the five functional categories, i.e. Organizational Culture, Community/District Interactional Relationships, Access, Wellbeing, and Empowerment, to guide their analysis and evaluation of organizational strengths and weaknesses.

Once organizational appraisals of key areas have been completed the leaders of school districts striving to improve community relations must look for ways to modify operating practices, policies, philosophies, and attitudes that do not support organizational responsiveness (McKay,
cited in Kotler, 1975). Once again, the EDUSD model could be used as a guideline for creating better effects in areas that have been identified as deficient through assessment. The organizational leaders must also be fully committed to being responsive to the community and must model these new behaviors and attitudes themselves (Deal & Kennedy, 1982).

The importance of organizational culture is the biggest implication of this study for other school districts. The impact of organizational culture on the behaviors and attitudes of district employees cannot be understated; it is the key to creating positive relations with community members. Positive community relations lead to improved perceptions of the organization within the community. There are many other elements in EDUSD’s model that are also supported in literature, but their effectiveness hinges on the attitudes of the employees in their interactions with community members. If community members are not respected and do not trust the organization they will not utilize services, attend events, or become involved with the schools.
Limitations

Because this study is focused solely on the EDUSD any discoveries, claims, or models developed will only be applicable for this district. Additionally, the researcher was in the field an average of twice a week for one school year. Observations of activities are limited by these time constraints and the impossibility of being able to capture every event. Additionally, the researcher's focus was on community outreach programs not the K - 12 educational system. Input was increased through parent and employee surveys, however, her observations are limited to the spaces she was able to observe and her experiences as a teacher in the district. Limitations regarding school site employee surveys include a lack of information from administrators, pupil services, paraprofessionals, and office staff. A sufficient sample of teachers was obtained and their responses could be generalized, but with caution since the researcher did not have access to all sites. Findings for these other positions must be considered preliminary. Additionally, the population selection for parent surveys was a nonrandom convenience sample and limited to parents who
were accessible to the researcher and the people who volunteered to help her.

Given the limitations of this project, ethnographic findings and results should be considered valid for no more than for this population. Survey findings for parents and school site employees should be considered initial explorations; however they do serve to expand the scope of the ethnographic findings. Additionally, the results from these surveys and the parent survey do provide a glimpse of the knowledge and opinions of these employees and parents and can serve as a platform for further research. Moreover, when additional data is collected by other researchers studying similar or other culture communities served by school districts this information will become more generalizable and comparisons will be able to be made between districts and communities.

Recommendations

For EDUSD, I would recommend they develop an internal public relations/communications plan. As Dr. Williams observed, the district employees want to feel that they are a part of something special. Surveys indicate that letting employees know about all of the amazing programs
the district sponsors will add to the perception that the district is extraordinary. One employee survey respondent wrote: “I knew about the Dental Clinic, but I didn’t know it was run by EDUSD”. That is truly an opportunity lost. The district should capitalize on all of the programs it runs by informing the people who are inside the organization; by doing so it would enhance employee perceptions of the organization while concurrently improving information dissemination capabilities.

Opportunities abound in EDUSD for research on community building, cultivating cultural bridges, and empowerment. This study could be expanded and would be more conclusive if representative samples of administrators, office staff, classroom aides, counselors, nurses, and librarians were obtained. A district wide sample of parents would provide more accurate information as well. EDUSD is continuously faced with an influx of immigrants. It is hard to see “improvements” when the population served is continually changing, however, what stands out about this district is, as Marley put it, there is a sense of “heart”. The district cares about the community and that is communicated in many different ways.
APPENDIX A

PARENT SURVEY
PARENT SURVEY

This survey is designed to study parent awareness of EDUSD sponsored community outreach programs. I appreciate your sincere answers to the following questions. There is no need to identify yourself. Thank you for your time.

Answer the following questions as they relate to you. For most answers, check the boxes or fill in the blanks.

Section A: The Parent Education Program

1. How familiar are you with the services offered by the Parent Education Liaison? (Select only one)
   - Very Familiar
   - Familiar
   - Somewhat Familiar
   - Not Very Familiar
   - Not at all Familiar

2. Have you ever called the Parent Liaison when you had a problem or question regarding the school district? (Select only one)
   - Yes
   - No

3. Have you ever attended a program run by the Parent Resource Service Center? (Select only one)
   - Yes (If yes, continue with question 4)
   - No (If no, continue with question 5)

4. Please indicate which programs you have attended. (Select all that apply)
   - Leadership Training
   - PRICE Parenting
   - Home-School Connection
   - Spanish Adult Literacy
   - Head Start Policy Committee
   - Migrant PAC meetings
   - DELAC Advisory Committee
   - Evening Workshops
   - Other(s): ____________________________________________

5. Have you ever seen the Monthly Parent Calendar (attached) announcing parent activities that is sent home with the students each month? (Select only one)
   - Yes
   - No
6. How often does your child bring this calendar home from school? (Select only one)
   □ I receive it every month
   □ Once in a while
   □ Never

7. Please indicate the school your child (or children) attends, their grade level(s), and if you receive the Monthly Parent Calendar from this site.

   School ___________________________ Grade(s) __________
   I have received the calendar from this site: Yes  No

   School ___________________________ Grade(s) __________
   I have received the calendar from this site: Yes  No

   School ___________________________ Grade(s) __________
   I have received the calendar from this site: Yes  No

8. How do you use the Monthly Parent Calendar when your child brings it home? (Select all that apply)
   □ I use the calendar to plan my monthly activities
   □ I use the calendar to see if there are any classes or activities that I would like to attend
   □ I have seen the calendar but I do not use it
   □ I have never seen this calendar
   □ Other: ____________________________________________________

9. Are you interested in attending any of the classes found on the attached calendar? (Select only one)
   □ Very Interested
   □ Interested
   □ Somewhat Interested
   □ Not Very Interested
   □ Not at all Interested

10. Are there any additional classes that you would like to see offered for parents? Please list them below.

    __________________________________________________________
    __________________________________________________________
    __________________________________________________________
11. How easy is it to understand the attached Monthly Parent Calendar? (Select only one)
   □ Very Understandable
   □ Understandable
   □ Somewhat Understandable
   □ Not Very Understandable
   □ Not at all Understandable

12. What suggestions do you have for making the Monthly Parent Calendar clearer and easier to understand?

13. Are you aware that childcare is provided for all district sponsored parent classes? (Select only one)
   □ Yes
   □ No

14. Please indicate any factors that have prevented you or might prevent you from attending these activities and classes. (Select all that apply)
   □ I didn’t know these classes were offered
   □ I am not interested in these classes
   □ I am interested in attending the classes, but I do not have time
   □ I am interested in attending the classes, but I do not have transportation
   □ I prefer to be home with my family in the evening
   □ Other: ______________________

15. If you are interested in these classes but do not attend them is there anything that Parent Liaison could do that would allow you to participate? Please list any suggestions below.

16. Do you have any comments or questions about the Parent Education Liaison and/or programs run by the Parent Resource Service Center?

Section B: Programs run by Children and Family Services

1. How familiar are you with the Latino Family Literacy Program? (Select only one)
   □ Very Familiar
   □ Familiar
   □ Somewhat Familiar
   □ Not Very Familiar
   □ Not at all Familiar
2. Have you ever participated in the Latino Family Literacy Program? (Select only one)
   □ Yes
   □ No

3. How did you find out about the Latino Family Literacy Program? (Select all that apply)
   □ I have never heard of this program
   □ I know someone who participates in this program
   □ My child’s teacher invited me to participate in this program
   □ I received a flyer announcing the program from my child’s school
   □ A friend/neighbor/relative told me about the program
   □ Other: _____________________________________________________________

4. How familiar are you with the Sonrisitas Dental Hygiene Education Program? (Select only one)
   □ Very Familiar
   □ Familiar
   □ Somewhat Familiar
   □ Not Very Familiar
   □ Not at all Familiar

5. Have you ever participated in Sonrisitas Dental Hygiene classes? (Select only one)
   □ Yes
   □ No

6. How did you find out about the Sonrisitas Dental Hygiene classes? (Select all that apply)
   □ I have never heard of this program
   □ I know someone who participated in this program
   □ A person who teaches the classes invited me to participate in this program
   □ I received a flyer announcing the program
   □ A friend/neighbor/relative told me about the program
   □ Other: _____________________________________________________________

7. Are you aware that the EDUSD operates a dental clinic in the Saul Martinez School?
   (Select only one)
   □ Yes
   □ No

8. Has your child ever received services at the Saul Martinez Dental clinic? (Select only one)
   □ Yes
   □ No
9. How did you find out about the Saul Martinez Dental clinic? (Select all that apply)
   - I did not know there was a dental clinic at Saul Martinez school
   - I know someone who’s child was seen at the dental clinic
   - A school nurse referred my child to the dental clinic
   - My child attends Saul Martinez school and I receive information every year
   - A friend/neighbor/relative told me about the dental clinic
   - Other: ___________________________________________________

10. How familiar are you with the Flying Doctors event which the school district hosts twice a year? (Select only one)
    - Very Familiar
    - Familiar
    - Somewhat Familiar
    - Not Very Familiar
    - Not at all Familiar

11. Have you or anyone in your family attended this event and received services? (Select only one)
    - Yes
    - No

12. Are you familiar with the Flying Doctors announcement (attached) that is sent home with the students before the event? (Select only one)
    - Very Familiar
    - Familiar
    - Somewhat Familiar
    - Not Very Familiar
    - Not at all Familiar

13. How did you learn about the Flying Doctors event? (Select all that apply)
    - I have never heard of it
    - Through the fliers sent home with students
    - I heard it announced on the radio
    - I read about it in the newspaper
    - I saw a special spot about it on TV
    - I saw it covered on the local TV station
    - I learned about it through a community agency
    - Other: ___________________________________________________

14. How familiar are you with the services provided at the Flying Doctors event? (Select only one)
    - Very Familiar
    - Familiar
    - Somewhat Familiar
    - Not Very Familiar
    - Not at all Familiar
16. Do you have any comments or questions about programs run by Children and Family Services?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Part C: District Communication and Information

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to the following statements.

1. I feel that the East Desert Unified School District cares about the communities it serves. (Select only one)
   - □ Strongly Agree
   - □ Agree
   - □ No Opinion
   - □ Disagree
   - □ Strongly Disagree

2. I feel that the East Desert Unified School District is interested in my well being. (Select only one)
   - □ Strongly Agree
   - □ Agree
   - □ No Opinion
   - □ Disagree
   - □ Strongly Disagree

3. The East Desert Unified School District works hard to make its programs and activities accessible to me. (Select only one)
   - □ Strongly Agree
   - □ Agree
   - □ No Opinion
   - □ Disagree
   - □ Strongly Disagree

4. Do you have any comments about your relationship and/or interactions with the East Desert Unified School District?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

5. Do you have or have you ever had children attending schools in the East Desert Unified School District? (Select only one)
   - □ Yes, my children are enrolled in district schools (If Yes, please answer question 6)
   - □ No, my children no longer attend district schools (If No, skip question 6)
   - □ No, I have never had children in the district schools (If No, skip question 6)
6. How many years have you had children attending schools in the East Desert Unified School District? (Select only one)
   □ 0 – 5 years
   □ 6 – 10 years
   □ 11 – 15 years
   □ Over 15 years
Esta encuesta está diseñada para determinar si los padres están enterados de los programas de ayuda a la comunidad auspiciados por el Distrito Escolar Unificado del Desierto (EDUSD, por sus siglas en inglés). Agradezco su sinceridad al responder a las siguientes preguntas. No hay necesidad de que se identifique. Gracias por su tiempo.

Conteste las siguientes preguntas relacionadas con usted. Para la mayoría de las respuestas, marque las casillas correspondientes o llene los espacios en blanco.

Sección A: El Programa Educativo para los Padres

1. ¿Qué tan familiarizado está con los servicios ofrecidos por la Asociación para la Educación de los Padres “Parent Education Liaison” (Juanita Peña)? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
   - □ Muy familiarizado
   - □ Familiarizado
   - □ Algo familiarizado
   - □ No muy familiarizado
   - □ Del todo no familiarizado

2. ¿Ha llamado alguna vez a la Asociación para la Educación de los Padres cuando ha tenido un problema o pregunta sobre el distrito escolar? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
   - □ Sí
   - □ No

3. ¿Ha asistido alguna vez a un programa a cargo del Centró de Recursos y Servicios para los Padres? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
   - □ Sí (Si la respuesta es afirmativa, continúe con la pregunta 4)
   - □ No (Si la respuesta es NO, continúe con la pregunta 5)

4. Por favor indique los programas a los que ha asistido (Seleccione todos los que correspondan)
   - □ Instituto de Liderazgo
   - □ Crianza de los hijos PRICE
   - □ Conexión entre el hogar y la escuela
   - □ Alfabetismo en español para adultos
   - □ Comité de Política de Head Start
   - □ Reuniones del Comité del Programa Migrante
   - □ Comité DELAC
   - □ Talleres de trabajo por la noche
   - □ Otro(s): __________________________________________________________

5. ¿Ha visto alguna vez el calendario de actividades y eventos para padres (adjunto) anunciando actividades para ellos que es enviado con los estudiantes cada mes? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
   - □ Sí
   - □ No
6. ¿Con qué frecuencia lleva su hijo(a) este calendario de la escuela a la casa? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)

☐ Lo recibo cada mes
☐ De vez en cuando
☐ Nunca

7. Por favor indique el nombre de la escuela a la cual su hijo (s) asiste, su grado, y sí usted recibe de esa escuela el calendario de actividades y eventos para padres

Escuela ________________________ Grado(s) _________
He recibido el calendario de este lugar: Sí  No

Escuela ________________________ Grado(s) _________
He recibido el calendario de este lugar: Sí  No

Escuela ________________________ Grado(s) _________
He recibido el calendario de este lugar: Sí  No

8. ¿Cómo utiliza el calendario de actividades y eventos para padres cuando su hijo (a) lo lleva a casa? (Seleccione todos los que correspondan)

☐ Uso el calendario para planear mis actividades del mes
☐ Uso el calendario para ver si hay alguna clase o actividad a la quiero asistir
☐ He visto el calendario pero no lo uso
☐ Nunca he visto este calendario
☐ Otro: ____________________________________________

9. ¿Está interesado en asistir a alguna de las clases indicadas en el calendario adjunto? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)

☐ Muy interesado
☐ Interesado
☐ Algo interesado
☐ No muy interesado
☐ Del todo no interesado

10. ¿Hay alguna clase adicional que le gustaría que ofrecieran a los padres? Por favor menciónelas a continuación

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
11. ¿Qué tan fácil es entender el calendario adjunto mensual para padres? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
- Muy comprensible
- Comprensible
- Algo comprensible
- No muy comprensible
- Del todo no comprensible

12. ¿Qué sugerencias tiene para que el calendario mensual para padres sea más claro y fácil de entender?

13. ¿Sabe que se proporciona servicio para cuidar a los niños para todas las clases auspiciadas por el distrito? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
- Sí
- No

14. Por favor marque cualquier factor que le haya impedido o pueda impedir a que asista a estas actividades y clases. (Seleccione todos los que correspondan)
- No sabía que ofrecían estas clases
- No estoy interesado en estas clases
- Estoy interesado en asistir a las clases, pero no tengo tiempo
- Estoy interesado en asistir a las clases, pero no tengo transporte
- Prefiero estar en la noche en la casa con mi familia
- Otro:

15. Si está interesado en estas clases pero no asiste, ¿hay algo que podría hacer la Asociación para la Educación de los Padres para que usted participe? Por favor indique cualquier sugerencia que tenga a continuación.

16. ¿Tiene algún comentario o pregunta sobre la Asociación para la Educación de los Padres o de los programas dirigidos por el Centro de Recursos y Servicios para Padres?
Sección B: Programas dirigidos por los Servicios Familiares y de Menores

1. ¿Qué tan familiarizado está con el Programa de “Latino Family Literacy”? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
   □ Muy familiarizado
   □ Familiarizado
   □ Algo familiarizado
   □ No muy familiarizado
   □ Del todo no familiarizado

2. ¿Ha participado alguna vez en el Programa de “Latino Family Literacy”? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
   □ Sí
   □ No

3. ¿Cómo se enteró del Programa de “Latino Family Literacy”? (Seleccione todos los que correspondan)
   □ Nunca he escuchado sobre este programa
   □ Conozco a alguien que participa en este programa
   □ El maestro(a) de mi hijo(a) me invitó a que participara en este programa
   □ Recibí un folleto anunciando el programa de la escuela de mi hijo(a)
   □ Un amigo/ vecino/ pariente me comentó sobre el programa
   □ Otro: ____________________________________________

4. ¿Está familiarizado con el Programa Educativo Sonrisitas de Higiene Dental? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
   □ Muy familiarizado
   □ Familiarizado
   □ Algo familiarizado
   □ No muy familiarizado
   □ Del todo no familiarizado

5. ¿Ha participado alguna vez en las clases de higiene dental de Sonrisitas? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
   □ Sí
   □ No

6. ¿Cómo se enteró de las clases de higiene dental de Sonrisitas? (Seleccione todos los que correspondan)
   □ Nunca he escuchado sobre este programa
   □ Conozco a alguien que participó en este programa
   □ Una persona que da las clases me invitó a participar en el programa
   □ Recibí un folleto anunciando el programa
   □ Un amigo/ vecino/ pariente me comentó sobre el programa
   □ Otro: ____________________________________________
7. ¿Sabe usted que el EDUSD opera una clínica dental en la escuela Saúl Martínez?  
(Selecteone sólo una respuesta)  
☐ Sí  
☐ No  

8. ¿Ha recibido su hijo(a) atención en la clínica dental Saúl Martínez? (Selecteone sólo una respuesta)  
☐ Sí  
☐ No  

9. ¿Cómo se enteró de la clínica dental Saúl Martínez? (Selecteone todos los que correspondan)  
☐ No sabía que existía una clínica dental en la escuela Saúl Martínez  
☐ Conozco a alguien que llevó a su hijo(a) a la clínica dental  
☐ Una enfermera de la escuela remitió a mi hijo(a) a la clínica dental  
☐ Mi hijo(a) asiste a la escuela Saúl Martínez y recibe información cada año  
☐ Un amigo/ vecino/ pariente me comentó sobre la clínica dental  
☐ Otro: ____________________________  

10. ¿Está familiarizado con el evento de los Médicos Voladores organizado por el distrito escolar dos veces al año? (Selecteone sólo una respuesta)  
☐ Muy familiarizado  
☐ Familiarizado  
☐ Algo familiarizado  
☐ No muy familiarizado  
☐ Del todo no familiarizado  

11. ¿Usted o alguien en su familia ha participado en este evento y ha recibido servicios?  
(Selecteone sólo una respuesta)  
☐ Sí  
☐ No  

12. ¿Está familiarizado con el anuncio (adjunto) de los Médicos Voladores que se envía con los estudiantes antes del evento? (Selecteone sólo una respuesta)  
☐ Muy familiarizado  
☐ Familiarizado  
☐ Algo familiarizado  
☐ No muy familiarizado  
☐ Del todo no familiarizado
13. ¿Cómo se enteró del evento de los Médicos Voladores? (Selezione todos los que correspondan)
   □ Nunca he escuchado sobre este evento
   □ Por medio de folletos enviados a casa con los estudiantes
   □ Lo escuché anunciado en la radio
   □ Leí sobre el evento en el periódico
   □ Vi un comercial especial en la televisión
   □ Vi que le dieron cobertura en una estación de televisión local
   □ Me di cuenta por medio de una agencia para la comunidad
   □ Otro: __________________________________________________________

14. ¿Qué tan familiarizado está con los servicios ofrecidos en el evento de los Médicos Voladores?
   (Selecione sólo una respuesta)
   □ Muy familiarizado
   □ Familiarizado
   □ Algo familiarizado
   □ No muy familiarizado
   □ Del todo no familiarizado

16. ¿Tiene algún comentario o pregunta sobre los programas operados por los Servicios Familiares y de Menores?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

Parte C: Información y Comunicación del Distrito

Por favor indique su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones.

1. Siento que el Distrito Escolar Unificado del Desierto se interesa por las comunidades que atiende. (Selecione sólo una respuesta)
   □ Totalmente de acuerdo
   □ De acuerdo
   □ Sin opinión
   □ En desacuerdo
   □ Totalmente en desacuerdo

2. Siento que el Distrito Escolar Unificado del Desierto está interesado en mi bienestar. (Selecione sólo una respuesta)
   □ Totalmente de acuerdo
   □ De acuerdo
   □ Sin opinión
   □ En desacuerdo
   □ Totalmente en desacuerdo
3. El Distrito Escolar Unificado del Desierto trabaja duro para que yo tenga acceso a sus programas y actividades. (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
   □ Totalmente de acuerdo
   □ De acuerdo
   □ Sin opinión
   □ En desacuerdo
   □ Totalmente en desacuerdo

4. ¿Tiene algún comentario sobre su relación o interacción con el Distrito Escolar Unificado del Desierto?

5. ¿Asiste o ha asistido alguno de sus hijos a una de las escuelas del Distrito Escolar Unificado del Desierto? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
   □ Sí, mis hijos están inscritos en las escuelas del distrito (Si la respuesta es afirmativa, por favor conteste la pregunta 6)
   □ No, mis hijos ya no asisten a las escuelas del distrito (Si la respuesta es negativa, no conteste la pregunta 6)
   □ No, nunca he tenido a mis hijos inscritos en las escuelas del distrito (Si la respuesta es negativa, no conteste la pregunta 6)

6. ¿Cuántos años ha tenido a su hijo(s) asistiendo a las escuelas en el Distrito Escolar Unificado del Desierto? (Seleccione sólo una respuesta)
   □ 0 – 5 años
   □ 6 – 10 años
   □ 11 – 15 años
   □ Más de 15 años
EMPLOYEE SURVEY

This survey is designed to study employee awareness of EDUSD sponsored community outreach programs. I appreciate your sincere answers to the following questions. There is no need to identify yourself. Thank you for your time.

Answer the following questions as they relate to you. For most answers, check the boxes or fill in the blanks.

Section A: The Parent Education Program/Parent Resource Service Center

1. Are you aware that the EDUSD employs a Parent Education Liaison (Juanita Peña)? (Select only one)
   - □ Yes  (If yes, please continue with question 2)
   - □ No   (If no, please continue with question 6)

2. How familiar are you with the services offered by the Parent Education Liaison? (Select only one)
   - □ Very Familiar
   - □ Familiar
   - □ Somewhat Familiar
   - □ Not Very Familiar
   - □ Not at all Familiar

3. Have you ever referred a parent to the Parent Education Liaison? (Select only one)
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

4. Have you ever referred a parent to a program run by the Parent Education Liaison? (Select only one)
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

5. Are you familiar with the content of the classes offered by the Parent Education Liaison? (Select only one)
   - □ Very Familiar
   - □ Familiar
   - □ Somewhat Familiar
   - □ Not Very Familiar
   - □ Not at all Familiar
6. Are you familiar with the Monthly Parent Calendar (attached) announcing parent activities that is sent home with the students each month? (Select only one)
   - □ Very Familiar
   - □ Familiar
   - □ Somewhat Familiar
   - □ Not Very Familiar
   - □ Not at all Familiar

7. If you were given copies of the Monthly Parent Calendar each month would you be willing to inform parents, as appropriate, of these programs and services? (Select only one)
   - □ Very Willing
   - □ Willing
   - □ Somewhat Willing
   - □ Not Very Willing
   - □ Not at all Willing

8. Do you have any comments or questions about the Parent Education Liaison and/or programs run by the Parent Education Liaison?

Section B: Programs run by Children and Family Services

1. Are you aware that the EDUSD runs the Latino Family Literacy program open to all 3 – 5 year old children who are enrolled in Head Start, State Preschool, State Childcare, or the Teen Parent program? (Select only one)
   - □ Yes (If yes, please continue with question 2)
   - □ No (If no, please continue with question 4)

2. How familiar are you with the Latino Family Literacy Program? (Select only one)
   - □ Very Familiar
   - □ Familiar
   - □ Somewhat Familiar
   - □ Not Very Familiar
   - □ Not at all Familiar

3. Did you know that the Latino Family Literacy Program gives books to participating parents and teaches them literacy activities that correspond with the books? (Select only one)
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

4. Are you aware that the EDUSD runs the Sonrisitas Dental Hygiene Education Outreach Program in all district communities? (Select only one)
   - □ Yes (If yes, please continue with question 5)
   - □ No (If no, please continue with question 7)
5. How familiar are you with the functioning of the Sonrisitas Program? (Select only one)
   □ Very Familiar
   □ Familiar
   □ Somewhat Familiar
   □ Not Very Familiar
   □ Not at all Familiar

6. How familiar are you with the content of the classes offered by the Sonrisitas program? (Select only one)
   □ Very Familiar
   □ Familiar
   □ Somewhat Familiar
   □ Not Very Familiar
   □ Not at all Familiar

7. Are you aware that the EDUSD operates a dental clinic in the Saul Martinez School? (Select only one)
   □ Yes (If yes, please continue with question 8)
   □ No (If no, please continue with question 9)

8. Did you know that this dental clinic is free and open to every child attending EDUSD schools? (Select only one)
   □ Yes
   □ No

9. If you had the appropriate contact information and knew a family that was in need of
dental hygiene education would you be willing to refer them to the Sonrisitas program? (Select only one)
   □ Very Willing
   □ Willing
   □ Somewhat Willing
   □ Not Very Willing
   □ Not at all Willing

10. If you had the appropriate contact information and knew a child in need of dental
services would you be willing to refer them to the Saul Martinez Dental Clinic? (Select only one)
    □ Very Willing
    □ Willing
    □ Somewhat Willing
    □ Not Very Willing
    □ Not at all Willing
11. Are you aware that the EDUSD hosts and coordinates the Flying Doctors event which brings volunteer doctors, dentists, and community service providers to the desert to provide free care and services twice a year for any community member in need? (Select only one)
   □ Yes
   □ No

12. Are you familiar with the Flying Doctors announcement (attached) that is sent home with the students before the event? (Select only one)
   □ Very Familiar
   □ Familiar
   □ Somewhat Familiar
   □ Not Very Familiar
   □ Not at all Familiar

13. How did you learn about the Flying Doctors event? (Select all that apply)
   □ I have never heard of it
   □ Through the fliers sent home with students
   □ I heard it announced on the radio
   □ I read about it in the newspaper
   □ I saw a special spot about it on TV
   □ I saw it covered on the local TV station
   □ I learned about it through a community agency
   □ Other: ____________________________________________________________

14. How familiar are you with the services provided at the Flying Doctors event? (Select only one)
   □ Very Familiar
   □ Familiar
   □ Somewhat Familiar
   □ Not Very Familiar
   □ Not at all Familiar

15. If you had the information on the Flying Doctors event and knew a family in need of services would you be willing to inform them of the event? (Select only one)
   □ Very Willing
   □ Willing
   □ Somewhat Willing
   □ Not Very Willing
   □ Not at all Willing

16. Do you have any comments or questions about programs run by Children and Family Services?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Part C: District Communication and Information

1. Do you feel that the EDUSD is dedicated to the empowerment of the community it serves? (Select only one)
   □ Very Dedicated
   □ Dedicated
   □ Somewhat Dedicated
   □ Not Very Dedicated
   □ Not at all Dedicated

2. If you were informed of the extra, non-mandated community outreach programs run by the EDUSD would you have a more favorable impression of the district? (Select only one)
   □ Yes
   □ No

3. Would you be interested in learning about the extra, non-mandated programs run by the EDUSD? (Select only one)
   □ Very Interested
   □ Interested
   □ Somewhat Interested
   □ Not Very Interested
   □ Not at all Interested

4. If the EDUSD designed a way to disseminate information on its outreach programs to employees, which method do you feel would be useful for you? (Select only one)
   □ A binder or booklet with a brief program description and contact information given to me at the beginning of the school year (written information only).
   □ A short presentation given at the beginning of the school year accompanied by written information.
   □ Other__________________________________________________________

5. How long have you been employed with EDUSD? (Select only one)
   □ 0 – 5 years
   □ 6 – 10 years
   □ 11 – 15 years
   □ 16 – 20 years
   □ Over 20 years
6. Please indicate your position at EDUSD. (Select only one)

☐ Office Staff
☐ Library Staff
☐ Librarian
☐ Food Services
☐ Maintenance
☐ Grounds
☐ Security
☐ Other: __________________________

☐ Administration
☐ Transportation
☐ Classroom Aide – Grade level(s) _____
☐ School Site Aide
☐ Teacher – Grade level(s) _____
☐ Nurse
☐ Counselor
APPENDIX C

FLYING DOCTORS ANNOUNCEMENT
FLYING DOCTORS & C.V. Medical Volunteers are landing at:

E.D. High School
83-800 Airport Blvd
Saturday, Nov. 15, 2003
9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.

For families with NO MEDICAL INSURANCE Services provided FREE OF CHARGE

Assistance with Health Insurance Applications will be available.

Please bring:
- Children's birth certificates
- Social Security cards
- Proof of Income (check stubs)
- Photo ID

For CHDP exams:
Please bring your child's yellow immunization card.

SERVICES AVAILABLE:
- Medical Exams
- Dental Visits
- Vision Exams
- Women's Health
- Immunizations
- Diabetes Check
- Family Counseling
- Community Resource Fair & Information
- Child Care Provided

For more information:
School Readiness Program

Sponsored By:
East Desert High School
EDUSD/School-Readiness Program
EDUSD/Parent Resource Service Ctr.
EDUSD/21st Century & CBET Program
Santa Rosa Del Valle, Inc.

Co-Sponsored By: American Grill Restaurant, Augustine Casino Restaurant, Berwood FUNDcamp, Clinicas del Pueblo/Mecca Health Clinic, EDHS Partnership Academies & Red Cross Club, Coachella Valley Rotary Club, CORE/Chiropractic & Orthopedic Rehabilitation, Emergency Medical Services/county of Riverside, Family Services of the Desert, Indio Sunrise Rotary Club, Inland Empire Health Plan, John F. Kennedy Hospital, Lion's Club of Palm Springs, Loma Linda University School of Dentistry, Los Medicos Voladores, Million Air La Quinta, Milauskas Eye Institute, Riverside Community College Physician Assistant Program, Royal Plaza Inn, Yosemite Waters.

East Desert Unified School District
Los Médicos Voladores & C.V. Médicos Voluntarios

aterrizarán en la:
High School del Desierto
83-800 Airport Blvd
Sábado 15 de noviembre del 2003
9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.

Para familias sin SEGURO MÉDICO
Servicios completamente GRATIS

Asistiremos con
Solicitudes de Seguros Médicos:

Favor de Traer:
- Actas de Nacimiento de Los Niños
- Tarjetas de Seguro Social
- Prueba de ingresos (talones de cheques)
- Identificación con Fotografía

Para Exámenes Físicos(CHDP):
Favor de Traer La Cartilla de Vacunas Color Amarilla.

SERVICIOS DISPONIBLES:
- Exámenes Médicos
- Servicios Dentales
- Exámenes de la Vista
- Salud de la Mujer
- Vacunas
- Exámenes de Diabetes
- Consejería Familiar
- Feria de Recursos Comunitarios
- Cuidado Para Niños

Para más información:
School Readiness Program
EDUSD/School-Readiness Program
EDUSD/Parent Resource Service Ctr.
EDUSD/21st Century & CBET Program
Santa Rosa Del Valle, Inc.

NO SE NECESITA CITA!


Distrito Escolar Unificado del Desierto
APPENDIX D

MONTHLY PARENT CALENDAR
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location/Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st.</td>
<td>Raising Children in Difficult Times</td>
<td>Central School 8:00-9:30 A.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd.</td>
<td>Spring Festival</td>
<td>South East School 4:30 - 7:30 P.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th.</td>
<td>Daylight Savings Time Begins</td>
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<td>9th.</td>
<td>Good Friday, Non School Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>12th-16th</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>21st.</td>
<td>Head Start Policy Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Central School Room 52 8:30 - 11:30 A.M.</td>
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<td>&quot;Parents are the First and Most Important Teacher&quot;</td>
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<td>South East Head Start 1:30 P.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22nd.</td>
<td>School Board Meeting</td>
<td>District Office 7:00 P.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24th.</td>
<td>Parent Leadership Training Institute</td>
<td>Central School Cafeteria 6:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.</td>
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<td>Child's Day Celebration</td>
<td>Veterans Park 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>27th.</td>
<td>DELAC Committee Meeting</td>
<td>District Office Board Room 6:00-8:00 P.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29th.</td>
<td>Raising Children in Difficult Times</td>
<td>Central School 5:30 - 7:00 P.M.</td>
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<td>ESL Classes</td>
<td>South East School Room 27 Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.</td>
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**Days to Celebrate in April**

- National Humor Month
- National Mathematics Education Month
- 2nd - International Children's Book Day
- 9th - Listening Day
- 10th - Encourage a Young Writer
- 18th - Pet Owner’s Day
- 21st - Secretary’s Day
- 22nd - Earth Day
- 26th - Hug a Friend Day
- 27th - Tell a Story Day

If you have any questions or to check for any possible schedule changes, please call Lucia Quintero or Raul Borretti at ########.
### Calendario de Actividades y Eventos para Padres

#### "Juntos Construimos el Futuro"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Reunión del Comité del Programa Migrante</strong> 8:00-9:30 a.m.</th>
<th><strong>Reunión de la Mesa Directiva</strong> 7:00 P.M.</th>
<th><strong>Inst. de Liderazgo Para el Entrenamiento de Padres</strong> 8:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.</th>
<th><strong>Celebración del Día del Niño</strong> 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.</th>
<th><strong>Reunión del Comité DELAC</strong> 6:00-8:00 P.M.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>* Creando a los hijos en tiempos difíciles* Escuela Central</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27th</td>
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<td>Escuela Central</td>
<td>Reunión de la Mesa Directiva</td>
<td>Instituto de Liderazgo Para el Entrenamiento de Padres</td>
<td>Celebración del Día del Niño</td>
<td>Reunión del Comité DELAC</td>
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<td>8:00-9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Oficinas del Distrito Escolar</td>
<td>Escuela Central-Cafetería</td>
<td>Parque de los Veteranos</td>
<td>Oficinas del Distrito Escolar</td>
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<td>7:00 P.M.</td>
<td>8:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.</td>
<td>9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.</td>
<td>6:00-8:00 P.M.</td>
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<td>Festival de Primavera Escuela Sureste</td>
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<td>Reunión de la Mesa Directiva</td>
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<td>Oficinas del Distrito Escolar</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Reunión del Comité de Política de Head Start Escuela Central Salón 52 8:30 - 11:30 A.M.</td>
<td>Reunión de la Mesa Directiva Oficinas del Distrito Escolar</td>
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**Días para celebrar en abril**

- Mes Nacional del Humor
- Mes Nacional de la Educación Matemática
- Día Internacional del Libro del Niño
- Día de Escuchar
- Día para animar al escritor Joven
- Día de la Secretaría
- Día de la Tierra
- Día de dar un abrazo a un amigo/a
- Día de contar una historia

Si tiene alguna pregunta o para confirmar algún cambio en el horario, por favor llame a Lucía Quintero o Raquel Borgetti al ****-****
APPENDIX E

HOME SCHOOL CONNECTION TEACHER CONFERENCE REQUEST
Request form for a conference with the teacher

I, ____________________________, parent

of ____________________________, request a conference concerning

____________________________________

Example: Classwork, Grades, etc.

Please call _____ Between _____

Phone # ____________________________ Hours

to arrange a conference.

Date ____________________________

Signature ____________________________
Forma para Solicitar una Conferencia con el Maestro

Maestro/a__________________________
(nombre)

Yo__________________________________
(padre/tutor)

De__________________________________ quisiera solicitar una
(nombre del estudiante)
conferencia referente a________________________
(Ejemplo: Tarea, calificaciones, comportamiento, salud, etc.)

Favor de llamarme al________________________ entre _____________
(número de teléfono) (horario)
para tener una conferencia.

Atentamente,

Firma_________________________________

Fecha______________________________
APPENDIX F

HOME SCHOOL CONNECTION TEACHER CONFERENCE TIPS
Activity Objective #2 (continued)

To prepare for a parent/teacher conference, parents should:

• Talk to their child/children before the conference to learn what his/her thoughts are about school.

• Ask for an interpreter if necessary.

• Write down a few questions they want to ask and points they think will help the teacher know their child/children better.
Actividad del Objetivo #2 (continuación)

Al prepararse para una conferencia con el/la maestro/a, los padres deben:

• Platicar con su hijo/a antes de la conferencia.

• Hacer una cita con el/la maestro/a. Ser puntual.

• Solicitar un intérprete si es necesario.

• Preparar una lista de preguntas para el/la maestro/a.

• Compartir con el/la maestro/a información que pueda afectar el aprendizaje de su hijo/a.
APPENDIX G

HOME SCHOOL CONNECTION PARENT/CHILD CONTRACT
Self-Esteem Contract

To enhance the self-esteem of ____________________________

name

I will ____________________________________________
everyday, once a week, or once a month (circle one).

Date __________ Signature ____________________________

name of mom/dad/guardian
El amor propio

Para desarrollar el amor propio de

__________

nombre de hijo/a

voy a _______________________

todos los días, una vez por semana, o una vez al mes

Fecha____________________ Firma____________________

papá/mamá/tutor

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La Conexión Entre La Escuela y El Hogar
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address cases of two different writing systems, such as English and Chinese. Based on the reason above, two research reports, *Biliteracy in Singapore* (Cheng, 1997), and *Chinese Bilingual Children’s Word Definition Skill* (Lee, 2001) are significant in addressing the issue of feasibility of biliteracy in Chinese and English.

Cheng’s research in 1997 was a survey of the written proficiency in English and Chinese of secondary-school pupils. The Republic of Singapore is a multilingual society including four official languages: English, Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil. The results showed significantly higher written proficiency in English than in Chinese. The characteristic of the testees’ reading habits is the main factor causing this consequence (see Table 4). Among 120 testees, only 6.7% read in Chinese, and 69.2% read in English (Cheng, 1997). In addition to the discussion of students’ reading habits, Cheng also pointed out two common areas for errors: the use of lexis and the writing of script units. For instance, when pupils translate one language to the other language, they cannot use a verbatim translation.

On the other hand, Lee (2001) investigated metalinguistic skills, such as word-definition skills,
among children in different types of bilingual programs in
Taiwan. These bilingual programs are common in Taiwan. The

Table 4. Language Preferences for Leisure Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Preference</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like both</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cheng (1997).

first type is the Mandarin-English immersion program,
which immerses monolingual Mandarin speakers in English.
The second type is the Mandarin-English bilingual program,
in which English is instructed as a language art, and
children receive English instruction via English classes,
usually forty or eighty minutes per week. The last type is
the Mandarin-Taiwanese program, in which children acquire
Taiwanese at home and learn Mandarin in school. This
program is regarded as a monolingual program because all
subjects are instructed through Mandarin in school, and
Taiwanese is an elective course, usually forty minutes or
less per week.

The aim of Lee’s report (2001) was to discover the
possible differences on the metalinguistic development of
these three bilingual groups. The result indicated that
students in the Mandarin-English immersion program and the
Mandarin-English bilingual program perform better than
students in the Mandarin-Taiwanese program. The fact that
students have followed a different route in acquiring the
second language may be the possible reason. In addition,
children in the immersion program perform better than
counterparts in the bilingual program. The consequence
results from different amounts of input of English. To sum
up, the more children are exposed to the second language,
the better then metalinguistic skills (Lee, 2001).

Summary

Biliteracy is "the acquisition and learning of the
decoding and encoding of print using two linguistic and
cultural systems in order to convey messages in a variety
of contexts" (Pérez & Torres-Guzman, 1992, p. 51). Through
the process of acquiring biliteracy, second-language
learners gain benefits in cognitive development, cultural
development, and metalinguistic awareness. In addition,
biliteracy is an index of dual-language proficiency. Thus,
the next level of bilingual education is biliteracy.

In Taiwan, because of the lack of a well-standardized
written language in Taiwanese, the discussion of
biliteracy in Taiwan is limited to English and Chinese
(Mandarin). Research relating to study of relationship
between Chinese and English indicated that learning two languages simultaneously did not interfere with literacy development for children. Furthermore, instructors play vital roles on children’s biliteracy development.

Even though English is not an official language in Taiwan, more and more people value the importance of English and more and more types of bilingual programs (English and Mandarin) are being implemented. Full biliteracy in Chinese and English may be achieved within the coming decade in Taiwan.

Foreign-Language Immersion

Foreign-language immersion “provides academic and language instruction in two languages” (Diaz-Rico, 2004, p. 312). In the United States, it is also called enrichment immersion which “immerse[s] monolingual English speakers in a second language” (Lessow-Hurley, 2005, p. 15). Foreign-language immersion or enrichment-immersion programs are similar to French immersion program in Canada. In general, immersion programs are divided into early-immersion, delayed-immersion, and late-immersion programs. The differentiation among three kinds of immersion programs is when they use the second language as a medium of content instruction.
In early-immersion programs, the second language is used as a medium of instruction starting in kindergarten. In delayed-immersion programs, students start to use the second language in the middle-elementary fourth or fifth grades. In late-immersion programs, the use of the second language is postponed until the sixth or seventh grade (Genesee, 1984, 1987; Snow, 1990). In addition, total immersion and partial immersion are two principal types of early-immersion programs. The main distinction between two types is the time spent in the second language. Generally speaking, in total immersion, students receive 100 percent of their instructional time in the second language. In partial immersion, only 50 percent of instructional time is spent in the second language. Furthermore, literacy training in the native language is the second distinction between two types. In total immersion, students receive literacy training in the second language first; whereas in partial immersion, students receive literacy training in both languages at the same time (Genesee, 1987; Snow, 1990; Met, 1993).

Definitions of Immersion

In immersion programs, “the second language is used for the delivery of subject matter instruction” (Snow, 1990, p. 111). Specifically, “immersion is defined as a
method of foreign language instruction in which the regular school curriculum is taught through the medium of the language” (Met, 1987, p. 1). Therefore, “all the usual curricular areas are taught in a second language—this language being the medium, rather than the object, of instruction” (Lessow-Hurley, 2005, p. 14). In other words, “immersion education is a type of bilingual education in which a second language (or second languages) is used along with the students’ first language for curriculum instruction during some part of the students’ elementary and/or secondary schooling” (Genesee, 1984, p. 32). In short, immersion education includes three elements: first-language development, second-language acquisition, and teaching content through the second language (Krashen, 1981).

In addition, immersion education means teaching foreign languages to language-majority students (Snow, 1990). For instance, participating students use the majority-group language, which is English in Canada, and receive French instruction in immersion programs. In the United States, the participating students’ home language is English, which is the majority-group language in America; students are instructed via the second language in immersion programs (Genesee, 1984).
The Goals and Features of Immersion Education

The first goal in immersion programs is to develop functional competence in the second language. The second is to promote and maintain normal progress in first-language development. The third is to ensure students get commensurate instruction in academic subjects compared to students in the regular school instruction. The fourth is to develop positive attitudes toward people who use the second language and toward their culture by learning their languages (Genesee, 1984, 1987; Met, 1987; Snow, 1990). Snow (1990) claimed that an additional goal for American immersion settings is that students “will have the opportunity to be schooled in an integrated setting with participants from a variety of ethnic groups” (p. 113).

Genesee (1984) proposed two distinctive features of immersion education. Teaching content through a second language is the first feature. In the beginning, students are allowed to use their first language in class because of insufficient second-language skill. With the increased acquisition of the second language, teachers encourage students to communicate in the second language and do not overcorrect their errors in grammar. Until most students approach a certain level in the second language, teachers
will assist students to use the language in school. In other words, this creates a similar circumstance to that in which children learn the first language.

The second feature in immersion education includes the use of monolingual language model and linguistic territories. The monolingual language model means creating a monolingual environment for students. The immersion teacher plays an important role in this model and is regarded as monolingual rather than bilingual. In French-Canadian immersion, the French teachers only speak French to students except for teachers in the kindergarten and the first grade because most students in this stage have not acquired enough competence in the second language. Linguistic territories mean setting a distinct line between first-language classrooms and second-language classrooms. In French-Canadian immersion, for example, when English is taught as a subject, students have to use English in English classrooms; but in French classrooms, students must speak French. Students have a natural tendency to use their strong language rather than their weak language. Therefore, these two strategies (monolingual language model and linguistic territories) are effective for promoting students’ frequent use of the second language (Genesee, 1984).
Snow (1990) offered three additional key features of immersion education. First, immersion programs last at least four to six years. Learning a new language is a step-by-step process and takes time. Participating students may not get benefits in language learning if they withdraw halfway through the education. Thus, some immersion programs require a formal commitment from parents to keep their children in the program at least six months or one year (Met, 1993). Second, "the two languages are separated for instruction" (Snow, 1990, p. 112). This principle is similar to such approaches as the monolingual model and linguistic territories proposed by Genesee (1990). The same material is never taught in both languages, and no translation occurs from the target language and the home language. Third, there is no risk for children to lose their first languages in immersion education because the majority language (the first language) still exists in the world outside of school. Children have sufficient opportunities to contact and use their first languages outside of school.

Theoretical Considerations

According to Lambert (1984), one of the fundamental premises in immersion education is that "people learn a second (or third) language in the same way as they learn
their first" (p. 11). Thus, immersion education emphasizes the creation of circumstances which are similar to children’s first language learning, and children can learn target languages as well as their native languages (Genesee, 1984).

Genesee (1984) pointed out three dimensions to explain why immersion programs are implemented in elementary grades instead of later grades. From a neuropsychological perspective, “the human brain is more ‘plastic’ and, consequently, better able to acquire languages prior to puberty” (Genesee, 1984, p. 42). From a psycholinguistic perspective, the facility of first-language learning is innate, and this facility not only results from language-specific ability, but also stems from general cognitive capacities. With the growth of age, the capacities will decrease, and the difficulty of learning first and second language will increase. In social psychology, evidence has shown that young children are more open to accept other languages because of fewer affective factors that can interfere with learning languages among them. Thus, young children can learn second languages better than older children because of social-psychological considerations (Genesee, 1984).
In current second-language theories, there is no consensus between the effect of age and second-language learning. For instance, some researchers argued that older children’s more mature level of cognitive development and positive transfer from their first-language systems may help them learn a second language better. On the other hand, some researchers have argued the opposite (Gass & Selinker, 2001).

Furthermore, two current theories of second-language acquisition related to immersion education are the input hypothesis and the affective-filter hypothesis proposed by Krashen in 1985 and 1981 (Genesee, 1984).

The Input Hypotheses. Krashen (1985) indicated that “second languages are acquired by understanding messages, or by receiving comprehensible input” (p. 2), and assumed there is an innate mental processor (the language acquisition device) that is able to handle both first- and second-language acquisition. The language-acquisition device is triggered by comprehensible input. In other words, comprehension input results in language acquisition, and the occurrence of comprehension input depends on communication between teachers and students (Krashen, 1985).
Second-language acquisition in immersion education is reflected in Krashen’s input hypotheses; “there is an emphasis on creating a desire in the student to learn the language to engage in meaningful and interesting communication” (Genesee, 1984, p. 44). Evidence has shown that teachers focus on communication skills in immersion program more than in traditional classes. For instance, in traditional schooling, teachers who teach subjects in the native language are likely to regard students’ misunderstanding as the students’ problem. However, such misunderstanding is attributed to an immersion teachers’ poor communication because students are taught via second-languages in immersion programs. Thus, immersion teachers are likely to repeat and clarify their utterance until students really understand (Genesee, 1984).

The Affective Filter Hypothesis. Krashen (1981) claimed that second-language acquisition is heavily influenced by affective factors, such as motivation, anxiety, self-confidence, and attitude. In the affective-filter hypothesis, Krashen drew an analogy between those factors and the filter. Input is passed through the language acquisition device when the filter is down, and the acquisition will occur. On the other hands,
when the filter is up, the input does not pass through the device, and acquisition will not take place (see Figure 1).

**Socio-cultural Theory.** Several socio-cultural conditions are involved in successful immersion education. First is support of the community, parents, teachers, and administrative personnel. Second, the participating students, teachers, parents, and administrative personnel in immersion programs value students’ first language and culture. Third, the target-language community supports participants’ efforts to learn the target language. These socio-cultural premises of immersion education correspond with Krashen’s affective filter hypothesis (Genesee, 1984).
Evaluation of Immersion Education

According to Met (1993), successful immersion programs include several characteristics, such as administrative support, qualified teachers, community and parental support, and so forth. Because these factors affect the result of immersion education, "the results [of immersion education] should not be generalized beyond the particular program" (Swain, 1984, p. 89). In other words, different immersion programs in different locations may lead to different results.

In terms of immersion education in Canada, Swain (1984) used three dimensions to evaluate its outcome. The first dimension is immersion students' academic achievement, such as in science and mathematics. The next relates to their first-language development. The last presents the results of their second-language development.

Academic Achievement. In early total-immersion programs, immersion students' performance in science and mathematics is as high as that of students in monolingual class. In early partial-immersion and late-immersion programs, immersion students may experience delay in the beginning when conducting the second-language instruction in science and mathematics. The possible reason is that "their proficiency in the second language [is] not high
enough yet to understand relatively complex subject matters in French" (Bournot-Trites & Tillowitz, 2002). Results have shown that eventually, immersion students will achieve the same levels of academic achievement when compared to English-instructed peers (Swain & Lapkin, 1982).

First-Language Development. In early total-immersion, all curricula are instructed in the second language in the initial stages (kindergarten and first grade). The lack of development in the first language in the initial stages concerns some educators and parents. They worry that "the negative consequences of the early total-immersion program on the development of first-language literacy skills in the child's formative years would be irreparable" (Swain, 1984, p. 92). These concerns prompted the use of early partial-immersion programs, which teach both languages from the stage of kindergarten.

Swain (1983) claimed that students in early total-immersion programs lag behind students in monolingual instruction in literacy skills at first. After one year's instruction in the first language for immersion students, the two groups present the equivalent competence on standardized tests of first-language achievement. However, early partial-immersion students do not perform
as well as the two groups mentioned above. One possible reason is that teaching two languages at the same time may lead to interference, and it takes time for children to overcome this hindrance. Swain (1984) suggested that "it is preferable to teach initially literacy-related skills in only one language, whether it be the first or second language" (p. 93).

**Second-Language Development.** Swain (1984) indicated that students in early total-immersion far exceed students in core French as a second language (FSL) in second-language performance. Further, compared to students in monolingual instruction (native speakers of French), immersion students perform as native speakers only in receptive skills (listening and reading). However, regarding productive skills, which are speaking and writing, immersion students do not attain nativelike proficiency.

In addition, early total-immersion students perform better in second-language acquisition than students in partial immersion and in late immersion. However, one interesting finding suggested that late-immersion students can learn the second language more effectively than students in early total-immersion. In other words, older learners progress more quickly in second-language
acquisition than do younger learners. Nevertheless, Swain (1984) claimed that "early immersion students feel more comfortable and at ease in the second language and maintain to a greater extent their facility in the second language over the long run" (p. 100).

In the United States, the first foreign-language immersion program was the Culver City Spanish Immersion Program (CCSIP). CCSIP is similar to early immersion programs in Canada. Students were monolingual speakers of English and were instructed by Spanish at initial periods. The students' achievements presented the similar result as early immersion education in Canada (Cohen, 1974).

In addition, the Hawaiian Language Immersion (HLI) program, started in 1994, features indigenous language immersion in Hawaii. The evaluation of HLI showed that students' achievements in English were equivalent to their peers in non-immersion classes. Regarding Hawaiian indigenous language (kaiapuni), "although there are no norms for Hawaiian language development against which to compare immersion students' achievement in Hawaiian, Kaiapuni students are achieving literacy at grade-level standards set by Kaiapuni educators (Genesee, 1999, p. 35). HLI leads not only to reinforcing kaiapuni
students' self-identity but also to making one precious indigenous language survive (Genesee, 1999).

However, compared with the social context between Canada and America, foreign-language immersion (enrichment immersion) is inappropriate as a model for English learners in the United States. Most English learners in the United States are minority-language users, and when participating in a majority-language program, the result may lead to loss of their first language. Diaz-Rico (2004) claimed that "the low status of the students' primary language puts it at risk for suppression" (p. 312).

In addition, French and English are high-status languages in Canada, and most immersion students' parents are in the middle class. In the United States, "when the minority language is not a high-status language, few middle-class, English-speaking parents will favor having their children immersed in it for instructional purposes" (Diaz-Rico, 2004, p. 312).

Summary

According to Lambert (1984), immersion education is an effective method for students to become bilingual. In Canadian immersion or CCSIP and HLI in the United States, immersion students' academic achievement, first-language development, and second-language development are verified
to be as good as that of students in traditional classes. Moreover, children in immersion education develop positive attitudes toward people who use different languages and cultures. However, a successful immersion program should consider several essentials: external conditions (social context) and internal conditions (school systems). Without these precondition, foreign-language immersion may be not appropriate in some school districts, areas, or even countries.

Cross-linguistic Influence: Language Transfer

Cross-linguistic influence (CLI) is defined as "any language influence from the L1 to the L2, from one IL [interlanguage] to another or from the L2 [the second language] back to the L1 [the first language]" (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 452). According to Oldin (1989), cross-linguistic influence was known as language transfer. Selinker (1992) pointed out that "language transfer is best thought of as a cover term for a whole class of behaviors, processes and constraints, each of which has do with CLI (cross-linguistic influence)" (p. 208).

To clarify the nature of transfer is crucial before discussing issues of language transfer. "Transfer means learning something in one context and applying it in
another” (Fogarty, Perkins, & Barell, 1992, p. ix). For instance, people learn reading strategies in English class (the first context), and use the same strategies in history class (the second context). Namely, “[t]ransfer is applying old learning to new situations” (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2002, p. 34). Hunter (1982) proposed a similar opinion: transfer is “the ability to learn in one situation and then to use the learning in another situation where it is appropriate; linking old learning to the new (p. 3). Regarding the function of transfer, transfer can be positive or negative. A previously learned situation (the first context) can either facilitate (positive transfer) or inhibit (negative transfer) the learning of a second situation (the second context).

The term “transfer” includes various meanings. The term language transfer is applied to deal with the linguistic aspects of transfer. Gass and Selinker (2001) indicated that language transfer is “the use of the first language (or other languages known) in a second language context” (p. 456). Specifically, language transfer is “the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired” (Oldin, 1989, p. 27). Language transfer plays an important
role in second-language acquisition (Oldin, 1989). Thus, negative and positive transfer in second-language acquisition could be defined as follows: negative transfer means "learners use rules from their first language that are not applicable to the second" (Diaz-Rico, 2004, p. 319), and positive transfer is "the use of the first language (or other languages known) in a second language context resulting in a target-like second language form (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 453).

Early Research on Transfer

In the 1940s and 1950s, American linguists began to discuss transfer. Subsequently, in the 1950s and 1960s, Lado (1957) stated that "individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture" (p. 2). In addition, most scholars believed that comparing and contrasting differences between learners' native languages and the target language was a way to predict learners' errors (Benson, 2002). This was also known as contrastive analysis: "systematic comparison of two or more languages" (Oldin, 1989, p. 165).

Contrastive analysis was based on following assumptions. Language was habit, and the "language
learning involves the establishment of a new set of habits" (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 72). The belief that language was based on habit originated from behaviorism, which was prevalent during the time. In behaviorist theory, one notion playing an important role was transfer: "the learning of task A will affect the subsequent learning of task B" (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 66). Therefore, the habits from first-language learning would be transferred to the habits of second-language acquisition, and most scholars considered transfer as interference with the second-language acquisition (Benson, 2002).

In contrast, the general consensus in the 1970s was against this view. A majority of scholars thought that learners making errors in second-language acquisition did not result from first-language transfer because learning a second language was similar to learning the first language (Benson, 2002).

In addition, more and more evidence indicated that the validity of contrastive analysis was questionable. For instance, copula verb forms exist in Spanish but not Russian, and contrastive analysis might only explain the error that Russian speakers omitted forms such as "is" rather than explained the same error that was found to
occur in Spanish speakers or even in children learning English as their native language (Oldin, 1989).

**Current Thinking on Transfer**

Cross-linguistic influence is a very important aspect of second-language acquisition and is defined as "the interplay between earlier and later acquired languages" (Kellerman & Sharwood Smith, 1983, p. 1). Oldin (1989) pointed out four misconceptions to clarify the concept of transfer. First, transfer is not simply a consequence of habit formation. Second, transfer is not simply interference. Third, transfer is not simply a falling back on the native language. Fourth, transfer is not always native-language influence.

In addition, several current thoughts about transfer have come into discourse. Dechert and Raupach (1988) claimed,

Language transfer is a theoretical notion, concept, or conception that aims at describing or explaining certain linguistic phenomena, resulting from the interaction of two or more areas of language (intralingual transfer) or languages (interlingual transfer) within a speaker or hearer, to be found in his or her linguistic behavior or output. (p. x)
When the first language and the target language are identical linguistic systems, transfer may result not only in assistance (positive transfer) but also in overproduction (negative transfer). Transfer such as avoidance may occur as the forms (structures) do not exist in the first language, and transfer may lead to either delay or promotion regarding the rate of language development (Benson, 2002).

Occurrence of Transfer

Three dimensions are concerned to clarify the occurrence of transfer: when transfer occurs, why transfer occurs, and in what context transfer occur. First, transfer may occur consciously and unconsciously, both in formal and informal context, and among children as well as among adults. Second, learners' interlanguage is not fixed and permeable. Thus, the likelihood that transfer may occur is increased. The last, transfer may occur in all linguistic domains such as phonology, syntax, semantics, and so forth.

When Does Transfer Occur? Transfer may occur consciously and unconsciously. In the former, learners may adopt a deliberate communication strategy to express meaning when they use their second language (Benson, 2002). Communication strategies are composed of three
elements: problematic, consciousness, and intentionality. Learners find and recognize a problem in communication (problematic), then are aware of doing something to overcome the problem (consciousness), and make a decision to choose an appropriate option to react (intentionality). Therefore, transfer may occur consciously under this circumstance (Gass & Selinker, 2001).

On the other hand, transfer may occur unconsciously as well. For instance, when using second languages, learners may not know the correct forms of the second languages or they do not internalize the forms that they have learned before (Benson, 2002).

Oldin (1989) claimed that “transfer occurs both in informal and formal contexts” (p. 152). In other words, transfer may occur not only in school settings but also in naturalistic studies. Furthermore, regarding transfer and age of acquisition, some researchers suggested that adults might be more receptive to transfer, but some evidence indicated that transfer was an inevitable phenomenon in child second-language acquisition. Even though the exact relation between age and transfer is still a controversial issue, one thing that can be verified is that “transfer occurs among children as well as among adults” (Oldin, 1989, p. 152).
Interlanguage. Gass and Selinker (2001) claimed that interlanguage is the basic assumption in second-language acquisition. Interlanguage is an intermediate system or a language system that learners create (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2002). Specifically, “interlanguage is the type of language produced by second and foreign language learners who are in the process of learning a language” (Richards, Talbot Platt, & Platt, 1992, p. 186). Interlanguage tends to favor neither native languages nor target languages (Selinker, 1972). The possible reason why transfer occurs is that “interlanguage (the learner’s interim grammar of the L2) is not fixed and rigid like the L1, but permeable” (Benson, 2001, p. 69).

Interlanguage process belongs to the field of psychology rather than linguistics. In terms of psycholinguistic processing, one approach to second-language acquisition is the competition model, which illustrates how speakers interpret sentences. The central concept of this model is “speakers must have a way to determine relationships among elements in a sentence. Language processing involves competition among various cues, each of which contributes to a different resolution in sentence interpretation” (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 193). For instance, a native speaker of English may
depend on various cues to construct an English sentence. These cues include word order, knowledge of the meaning of lexical items, animacy criteria, and morphology.

However, different languages use varied cues to make sentences. In Italian, morphological agreement, semantics, and pragmatics are more important than word order comparing to English. Furthermore, learners are used to search correspondences from their native languages first. Therefore, because of different cues and interpretation strategies, conflicts occur among second-language learners. To deal with the conflicts, Gass and Selinker (2001) pointed out that:

Learners first resort to their NL interpretation strategies and, upon recognition of the incongruity between TL and NL systems, resort to universal selection of meaning-based cues as opposed to syntax-based cues before gradually adopting the appropriate TL biases as their L2 proficiency increases. (p. 197)

In What Context Does Transfer Occur? Evidence from several studies claimed that transfer occurs in all linguistic domains, including phonology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and morphology (Kellerman &
Compared to other linguistic subsystems, cross-linguistic influence in phonology is relatively obvious. Foreign accent is an example (Benson, 2002). Furthermore, "a great deal of evidence has also been found for syntactic transfer (both positive and negative) in studies of word order, relative clauses, and negation" (Oldin, 1989, p. 85). For instance, "I very much like England" may be a transfer of Chinese word order into English. "Speakers of a flexible language may use several word orders in English even though English word order is quite rigid" (Oldin, 1989, p. 87). Regarding relative clauses, Oldin (1989) pointed out that English relies on a Right Branching Direction (RBD), which "the relative clauses appear to the right of the head noun" (p. 98). Japanese and Chinese are Language Branching Direction (LBD), which the modifying clause appears to the left of the head noun" (p. 98). Thus, the speakers of Chinese and Japanese (LBD languages users) often avoid using relative clauses in their English writing and speaking. In contrast, RBD language users such as Arabic often use such clauses in using English (Schachter & Hart, 1979).
In semantics, Benson (2002) described that transfer may occur in "false cognates." Second-language learners may assume that "an L2 word has the same meaning as a similar L1 word" (p. 69). For instance, a Spanish word "embarazada" means "pregnant" in English. Thus, when seeing an English word "embarrassed," a Spanish speaker may regard its meaning as "pregnant." In addition, Seliger (1988) claimed that "[r]estrictions in L1 cause the form to be avoided in L2 for contexts in which it is not normally used in L1" (p. 32). In Seliger's study, the target form is the passive voice, which does not exist in Hebrew. Therefore, when using English, Hebrew speakers often avoid the passive. A similar case also happens in Chinese speakers. For instance, "If you burned your finger, it would hurt" and "If you had burned your finger, it would have hurt." In Mandarin, there is no particular syntactic device to identify the difference between the former and the latter sentence. Therefore, Chinese speakers often confuse these types of sentences and may try to avoid using them (Bloom, 1981).

Lexicon includes not only the meaning of words, but also syntactic and morphological information. Thus, lexical transfer results in the occurrence of morphological and semantic transfer. However, some
information may facilitate second-language acquisition, but some may lead to interference (Oldin, 1989). "False cognates" is an example. Nevertheless, cross-linguistic influence in morphology is less influential than other linguistic subsystems (Benson, 2002).

**Nonstructural Factors in Transfer**

Most studies of language transfer focus on analysis of linguistic structures between two languages. "If two languages are perceived as close, transfer (both positive and negative) is more likely to occur" (Benson, 2001, p. 69). However, structural descriptions cannot explain all phenomena in second-language acquisition. Kellerman and Sharwood Smith (1986) stated that "structural identity is not a sufficient condition for transfer to occur" (p. 2). Specifically, "cross-linguistic effects do not appear always and in all grammatical domains in bilingual first language acquisition" (Argyri, 2003, p. 1). Therefore, nonstructural factors such as learners' personality, language proficiency, and the social dimensions may result in the occurrence of language transfer (Oldin, 1989).

**Individual Variation.** Individual differences may influence the probability of transfer either increasing or decreasing. A language learner's motivation, type, and
personality affect the likelihood of transfer. In terms of second-language acquisition, a highly motivated second-language learner probably learns more or learns faster than a poorly motivated one, no matter what first languages and second languages are involved (Oldin, 1989). Transfer occurs more frequently in learners who focus on form than learners who focus on meaning (Benson, 2002).

Furthermore, Oldin claimed that “[a]nxiety and empathy are two personality characteristics that appear to interact with transfer” (1989, p. 131). When second-language learners use unfamiliar forms such as relative clauses, they may experience anxiety. This anxiety leads to the phenomenon of avoidance when using the second language (Schachter, 1974). On the other hand, Oldin (1989) stated the relation between individual empathy and transfer: “the less an individual learner can feel emotionally ‘inside’ the target language speech community, the more pervasive the influence of native language pronunciation will be” (p. 131).

**Proficiency.** To evaluate second-language proficiency is a controversial issue because there is no absolutely objective test that can reflect learners’ second-language skills completely (Oldin, 1989). In addition, some evidence suggested that the probability of transfer
decreases with increased proficiency. In other words, less proficient learners tend to rely on transfer (Taylor, 1975). However, some researchers pointed out that Taylor’s analysis focused only on negative transfer. Relatively, some evidence suggested that positive transfer may occur in the advanced stages of second-language acquisition. Nevertheless, Taylor’s study is still regarded as an important index in terms of the relation between transfer and proficiency (Oldin, 1989).

The Social Dimensions of Transfer. “A thorough understanding of cross-linguistic influence depends very much on a thorough understanding of social contexts” (Oldin, 1989, p. 14). Researchers investigate the relation between transfer and social context, such as formal versus informal settings. Researchers argued the effects of formal education on transfer with regard to second-language acquisition. Some researchers claimed that formal education results in the occurrence of transfer, while others thought that transfer occurs via informal transfer. Actually, the dichotomy may regard the issue as oversimplification.

In Oldin’s view, “While transfer is primarily a psychological phenomenon, its potential effect on acquisition may be large or small depending on the complex
variations of the social settings in which acquisition takes place" (1989, p. 14). For instance, in some countries in which English is a foreign language instead of a second language, the likelihood of the occurrence of transfer may increase inside the classroom rather than outside the classroom. The reason is that learners lack opportunities for language interaction in nonacademic settings (Benson, 2002).

Implication for Teaching

Oldin (1989) claimed that "[c]ross-linguistic influence has considerable potential to affect the course of second language acquisition both inside and outside the classroom" (p. 157). Further, transfer can be positive as well as negative. Thus, teachers should possess knowledge of transfer, including negative and positive transfer, to facilitate students in second-language acquisition.

The first thing discussed here is attitudes toward negative transfer. For instance, foreign accents from speakers may lead to less respect or a negative reaction from listeners. Teachers should be aware of the occurrence of this phenomenon from second-language learners, and "do what they can do to eliminate the prejudices in a society" (Oldin, 1989, p. 159).
Second, teachers should keep an eye on the differences between learners' language backgrounds, and capitalize on the difference to facilitate their teaching. For example, teachers can observe that students from different language backgrounds often make similar mistakes on some vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar structures and so forth that are specific to that group.

Third, "[c]onsideration of the research showing similarities in errors made by learners of different backgrounds will help teachers to see better what is difficult or easy for anyone learning the language they are teaching" (Oldin, 1989, p. 4). In addition, to "explicitly point out or elicit awareness of differences between L1 and L2" was also a good strategy to facilitate second-language acquisition (Benson, 2002, p. 70).

In short, according to the statement that a previously learned situation can either facilitate (positive transfer) or inhibit (negative transfer) the learning of a second situation, teachers should employ the knowledge of transfer to help students "become aware of ways in which they can draw from prior knowledge" to make learning the second language easier (Diaz-Rico, 2004).
Summary

Language transfer is related to the influence between L1 and L2. Transfer plays an important role in second-language acquisition. Language transfer occurs not only in all linguistic domains such as semantics and syntax, but also in nonstructural factors including individual motivation and social setting.

Further, language transfer may lead to different rates of development in the second-language acquisition: either delay (negative transfer) or acceleration (positive transfer). Thus, a learner who recognizes the characteristics of transfer may become a better language learner. Teachers can employ such features of transfer to monitor learners' language development and give them better instruction during second-language acquisition.

Effect of a Second Language on the First-Language Learning of Children

Introduction

Extensive research has addressed the issue of whether introduction of a second language helps or interferes with the development of both languages, the first language (L1) and the second language (L2). Many scholars indicate that the L1 has crucial influence on second-language learning.
For instance, Lado (1957) stated the role of the native language in a second-language learning situation as affecting transfer: "individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture" (p. 2). Ringbom (1987) claimed that "the importance of the L1 in L2-learning is absolutely fundamental" (p. 134). Overall, the student's competence in L1 plays an important role in learning L2.

However, the issue also includes the effect of a L2 on the L1, which is called "reverse" or "backward" transfer. Based on Cook (2003), discussing the relationship between the L1 and the L2 is prerequisite to exploring the negative or positive effects of the L2 on the L1.

The Relationship between the First and Second Language

Some scholars explained the relationship between the L1 and the L2 by using the separation model, in which there are no links between the L1 and the L2 (see Figure 2). Based on this model, L2 instructors may ignore learners' L1 when teaching the L2 because there is no relationship between the L1 and the L2. In other words,
there is no point to debating the influence of the L2 on the L1 (Cook, 2003).

The opposing view to the separation model is the integration model, which is a single merged system formed by users (see figure 2). In other words, L2 users have a single system which integrates L1 and L2. For example, the L2 users have a mental lexicon which includes vocabulary of L1 and L2 (Cook, 2003).

![Figure 2. Separation Model and Integration Model](source)

Figure 2. Separation Model and Integration Model

However, total separation and total integration seem too extreme to explain the relationship between the L1 and the L2. Regarding total separation, when learning L2, people have L1 and L2 in mind at the same time; in terms of total integration, "L2 users can keep the languages apart" (Cook, 2003, p. 7).

According to Cook (2003), one type of interconnection between the L1 and the L2 is the partial integration.
model, which "captures the idea of partial overlapping of the two language systems at the same time" (Cook, 2003, p. 8). Some aspects of language knowledge, such as syntax and vocabulary, may be shared in the overlap (see Figure 3).

![Diagram of L1 and L2 overlap]


Figure 3. Partial Integration

In sum, Cook (2003) displayed the integration continuum to illustrate the relationship between L1 and L2 (see Figure 4). "The continuum does not necessarily imply a direction of movement" (Cook, 2003, p. 9). In other words, some people may stay in the separation model; gradually, they move from separation to interconnection, and they arrive at integration model in the long run. However, some people may start with integration model and move toward separation model, and some may stay in the separation model permanently.
However, the continuum may not apply to all aspects of language knowledge (Cook, 2003). For instance, a L2 user may have a mental lexicon integrating L1 and L2, but his/her phonology may be separated. In addition, the continuum may vary from person to person because of individuals' perception of the language model and personal factors (Grosjean, 2001).

![Diagram of the Integration Continuum](image)


Figure 4. The Integration Continuum

**Negative Effects on the First Language**

In common sense, when people attain certain level of a L2, and live in a circumstance where their L1 is less used, they may to some extent lose their command of the L1
(Cook, 2002). In terms of learning L2 in childhood, Wong-Fillmore (1991) stated that the younger the children are when they come into contact with L2, the greater the impact of the L2 is on their L1. Many children, particularly those who start learning L2 before the age of five, already start to lose their L1. In Wong-Fillmore’s study, these children had already given up their native language before mastering their L2.

Some scholars attribute L1 loss and impairment to the effect of L2 on L1. Cook (2003) indicated that “the usual context for discussing possible harmful effects of the L2 on the L1 is language loss or attrition” (p. 12). Oxford (1982) claimed that “language loss refers to loss or attrition of skill in one’s native language or a second or foreign language” (p. 160).

Overall, language loss means that a child’s competence in his/her L1 diminishes, but skills in L2 are not comparable to those of native speakers (Kaufman & Aronoff, 1991). According to Anderson (1998), language loss and maintenance relates to two main factors: social and environmental factors, and linguistic factors.

Social and Environmental Factors. Poole (1992) claimed that “all language learning is culture learning, and the acquisition of linguistic knowledge and
socialcultural knowledge are integral to one another" (p. 594). In Taiwan, pupils' English competence relates to their socio-economic status, English learning experience, parents' attitudes toward learning English, and even school location (Chung, 2003).

Anderson (1988) indicated five social and environment factors that influence L1 maintenance or loss in minority language children. First are majority attitudes toward minority languages. When minority languages are rejected by minority-language speakers, an individual's minority language may not be maintained or may be lost (Dressler, 1991).

A second factor is the size of the minority-language community (Anderson, 1998). A first language may be maintained in certain areas where most people share the same first language (Anderson, 1998). A third factor is the rank of the minority language. When a government or the public does not value or support a minority language, the language assumes a lower rank in the society, and its maintenance will be difficult. The lower the rank of a language in a society, the more difficult it is for the language to persist.

The fourth factor is the use of the first language at home, an essential key for maintaining the first language
(Anderson, 1998). "The effect of the children's use of English in the home can be seen both in what happens to their retention of the primary language, and on their parents' language patterns" (Wong-Fillmore, 1991, p. 336). Research suggests that family members using both languages interchangeably in the home environments may cause first-language loss, and subsequently result in a monolingual second-language environment in the home. When English is instructed in schools, and the first language is not maintained at home, first-language loss and attrition may occur because of insufficient chances of exposure to the first language. Even though it may be maintained, there is a reduction in input (Anderson, 1998).

The last factor concerns parents' values. Although this factor is not directly related to language loss in children, it does have an effect on language performance. Wong-Fillmore (1991) indicated, "Many parents in the main sample reported that although English was not a language they were able to express themselves in easily, they were using it in speaking to their children" (p. 337). In other words, many parents in the American immigrant context value English more than their first language, and when
this value is communicated to the children, it increases the probability of first-language loss.

In Taiwan, a famous professor researching English development in children supported immersion programs. She experimented on her daughter. The professor immersed her daughter in an English environment, using only English in the home and enrolling her daughter in an English kindergarten. However, when the child attended a regular elementary school, she could not adapt to the Chinese school environment, and rejected learning everything related to Chinese culture, such as speaking in Chinese, recognizing Chinese characters, and even being interested in Chinese holidays. Therefore, her Chinese performance was lower than other children of the same age (Zhang, 2003). This demonstrates the very real possibility of L1 loss.

Linguistic Factors. Learning two languages simultaneously may lead to interference of the development of L1 (Swain, 1984). When children are younger than five years old, they are still acquiring the basic grammatical and phonological aspects of their first language. Teaching them in a second language must be very carefully done because the linguistic structures of both languages may interfere with each other (Snow, 1992). According to
Anderson (1998), the influence of language loss leads to changes in aspects of semantics and grammar.

Many semantic changes result from language transfer. For instance, people use L2 words for L1 words. This involves loan translation, which is "an idiomatizing phrase or vocabulary from the second language is transferred to the first language, where it is ungrammatical" (Anderson, 1998, para. 13). For example, the meaning of a Spanish word "camioneta" is "truck" in English. However, some Hispanic Americans whose first language is Spanish may use "troca" instead of "camioneta."

**Grammatical Features.** "Patterns observed in the L1 grammar of individuals who are experiencing language loss have been ascribed to both L2 transference and universal patterns of acquisition" (Anderson, 1998, para. 16). For example, the Taiwanese mother tongue of the third-grade pupils affects their writing in Mandarin. The significant influence of Taiwanese on Mandarin writing vocabulary includes using words as synonyms or antonyms for quite different meanings. In general, significant influence of Taiwanese is found in compositional writing structures (Kuo, 2001).
Positive Effects on the First Language

According to Bournot-Trites and Tillowitz (2002), to describe the contexts of second-language acquisition (SLA) is necessary before discussing the effects of L2 on L1 because various contexts of SLA may lead to different results. For instance, language-minority children’s L1 is at risk when they attend a bilingual program whose goal is to develop their proficiency in L2 regardless of their L1. In this context of SLA, children may suffer loss or attrition of skills in their L1.

The Contexts of Second-Language Acquisition. The contexts of SLA include a variety of bilingual programs. In general, these programs result in either subtractive or additive forms of bilingualism. Subtractive forms of bilingual education means developing minority-language children to achieve proficiency in the dominant language (L2). Gradually, their L1 is replaced by the dominant language (L2) (Lambert & Tucker, 1972).

Two types of bilingual programs that lead to subtractive bilingualism are submersion and transitional bilingual programs. In the former, language-minority students are placed in the same classroom with native-English speakers and receive instruction in English. In the latter, L1 is used as an instructional
support in the beginning, and after two to three years of L1 instruction, students are transferred into English-only classrooms. The ultimate goal of submersion and transitional bilingual programs is to develop language-minority students' L2 despite their L1 (Krashen, 1981).

Additive bilingualism means that "the L2 is an addition to the L1 competence, with no loss of L1 knowledge" (Bournot-Trites & Tillowitz, 2002, p. 8). The main difference between subtractive and additive forms of bilingualism is in degree of support for students' L1. The goal of additive bilingualism is to foster students to become bilingual and biliterate. In other words, these "additive" bilingual programs focus not only on students' L2, but also on their L1 (Lambert & Tucker, 1972).

The additive bilingual programs include maintenance bilingual education and immersion education. The former is designed to "support education and communication in the students' primary language as well as students' heritage and culture" (Diaz-Rico, 2004, p. 171). The goal of the latter (immersion education) is to develop functional competence in the second language and to promote or maintain normal progress in first-language development (Genesee, 1984). Two representative of immersion programs
are French immersion in Canada and two-way immersion programs in the United States. Generally speaking, all or some subjects are instructed by L2 in immersion education.

Overall, various contexts of SLA lead to different outcomes: subtractive or additive bilingualism. Negative effects of L2 on L1 occurs when students in subtractive bilingual programs. Conversely, learning L2 has positive effects on L1 in additive bilingual programs (Bournot-Trites & Tillowitz, 2002).

The Effects of Immersion Education on First-Language Development. In French immersion, students’ L1 is English, and French (L2) is used as a medium of content instruction. Basically, there are three types of immersion programs in Canada: early immersion (starting French instruction in kindergarten), mid-immersion (starting from fourth or fifth grade), and late-immersion (starting from sixth or seventh grade) (Genesee, 1984).

In terms of English literacy skills such as reading comprehension and spelling, students in early-immersion programs lag behind monolingual peers in the beginning, but after one year’s instruction of English for immersion students, the two groups attain the equivalent competence on reading comprehension of English. As regards spelling, immersion students catch up their monolingual peers in
fourth grade. With regard to oral English skills such as listening comprehension, there is no significant difference between immersion students and monolingual students (Lambert & Tucker, 1972). Furthermore, evidence showed that immersion students perform better than monolingual students in English grammatical usage, punctuation, and vocabulary (Swain & Lapkin, 1982).

According to this research, learning French (L2) for immersion may not interfere with the development of English (L1). Conversely, learning L2 enhances the development of L1 (Bournot-Trites & Tillowitz, 2002).

Cases in Other Countries. In Hong Kong, for example, a large-scale longitudinal study in late-immersion education, in which Mandarin was the L1 and English is the L2, showed that when students are instructed in English, their achievements in Mandarin (L1) and English (L2) are improved (Marsh, 2000). Verhoeven (1994) investigated 96 Turkish children who live in the Netherlands, with Turkish as their L1 and English as their L2. The result showed that a strong positive transfer from the first language to the second language in reading abilities. In addition, a case study, in which Mandarin and English was introduced to a five-year-old boy from Taiwan, indicated that providing children with opportunities to interact with
reading and writing materials in Chinese and English does not show any negative effect in either language. Contrarily, it fosters literacy development in both languages (Buckwalter & Gloria-Lo, 2002).

**Summary**

The relationship between the first language and the second language in an L2 user’s mind is neither total separation nor total integration. It may start from separation, move to interconnection, and end in the integration or vice versa. However, the integration continuum may not apply to all aspects of language knowledge, and may vary from person to person in light of individuals’ perception of the language model and personal factors.

Educators still argue about how learning a second language affects the first-language learning of children. More and more educators are concerned about the issue of language loss, language attrition, and language erosion in the first language. In other words, these educators deem that learning L2 shows a negative effect on L1 development or maintenance. Perhaps some people can learn L1 and L2 well at the same time, but many people lose their first language when they are instructed or proficient in a second language at too early an age.
On the other hand, recent research showed that learning an L2 has a positive effect on L1 development. However, the context of SLA should be concerned because various contexts of SLA lead to different outcomes: subtractive or additive bilingualism. The former result in negative effects of L2 on L1 and the latter cause the positive effects of L2 on L1. In terms of immersion education in Canada, there is a lot of authoritative evidence showing the positive effects of L2 on L1. In addition, there is evidence around the world that shows similar results. These positive findings may inspire second-language learners with the knowledge that learning a second language does not necessarily threaten competence in the first language.
CHAPTER THREE
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Aspects of Dual-Language Acquisition in Taiwan

Five topics presented in the literature review can contribute to a framework to model bilingualism and biliteracy in Mandarin and English that can help to clarify aspects of dual-language acquisition in Taiwan. The term “bilingual education” is often used as a general term that relates to English learning in Taiwan. This may lead to confusion when describing Taiwanese dual-language education. In the United States, bilingual education includes a variety of programs and types, and the goals of bilingual education vary from programs to program. Some emphasize the acquisition of the L2, but most focus on achieving competence in L2 at the expense of continuing proficiency in L1.

Surveying dual-language programs in the United States, the program model - Foreign Language in Elementary School (FLES) in the United States is probably the closest curriculum and instruction model to the English curriculum in the public elementary schools in Taiwan. However, the goal of FLES is not bilingualism and biliteracy. Therefore, the model of Canadian-style foreign-language
immersion (FLI) is probably one of the best choices for Taiwanese schools if the goal is to achieve bilingualism and biliteracy. The theoretical principles of foreign-language immersion are based on the input and affective filter hypotheses proposed by Krashen. Evidence showed that students in immersion programs perform well in aspects of academic achievement and first- and second-language development. Furthermore, considering cross-linguistic influence from the L1 to the L2 or from the L2 back to the L1, there appears to be little actual inference when students receive instruction of Mandarin and English simultaneously. In short, the project proposes that foreign-language immersion serve as a model program for teaching English as a foreign language in Taiwan, if students are to achieve bilingualism and biliteracy in Mandarin and English.

The Theoretical Model in Detail

The framework presented in Figure 5 includes five major components. The first part introduces program models of bilingual education. Canadian-style foreign-language immersion (FLI) is among these bilingual programs. The second part discusses theoretical principles of FLI, which includes the input and affective hypotheses. The third
Figure 5. Theoretical Framework

L1 Support: High
- Two-Way Immersion
- Foreign-Language Immersion
- Maintenance Bilingual Education
- Transitional Bilingual Education
- Pull-Out ESL

L1 Support: Low
- Submersion

Program Models of Bilingual Education

Theoretical Consideration
- The Input Hypothesis
- The Affective Hypothesis

Evaluation
- Academic Achievement
- L1 Development
- L2 Development

Cross-linguistic Influence
- The Effect of L1 on L2
- The Effect of L1 on L2

Outcome: Biliteracy
part examines the evaluation of FLI according to students’ academic achievement and first- and second-language development. The fourth part investigates cross-linguistic influence between the L1 and the L2. The last part displays the outcome of FLI: biliteracy. Each of these parts will be presented in turn.

Program Models of Bilingual Education

The generalized definition of bilingual education means "teaching English to speakers of other languages with variable levels of support for the primary language" (Balderrama & Diaz-Rico, in press). Furthermore, bilingual education is often used as a general term that includes a variety of programs and models, such as submersion, pull-out ESL, transitional bilingual education, maintenance bilingual education, two-way immersion, and foreign language immersion. The different programs vary in degree of support for the L1. The least-supported program for children’s L1 is the submersion model.

Submersion. The submersion model develops students’ competence in L2 regardless of their L1. In other words, English learners are placed in the same classroom with native-English speakers and receive instruction of subject matter through English. There is no support for their L1 in this model.
Pull-Out ESL. The most obvious distinction between the model of submersion and pull-out ESL is that English learners get extra instruction in English. Otherwise, English learners are submersed in English-only classrooms.

Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE). TBE utilizes English learners’ L1 as instructional support in the beginning. After English learners attain a certain level of proficiency in English, usually two to three years, they transfer into English-only classrooms. In the TBE model, English learners’ L1 is regarded as a transitional tool to assist them to enter English-only classrooms with less trouble. In other words, the development of L1 is not a goal of TBE. However, compared to submersion and pull-out ESL, English learners in TBE receive more support in L1.

Maintenance Bilingual Education (MBE). The goal of MBE is to develop English learners’ L2 and preserve or develop their L1. English learners in MBE may build self-esteem and are proud of their culture because of the support of L1.

Two-Way Immersion (TWI). TWI includes three main features: first-language development, second-language acquisition, and teaching content through the second language. In addition, a goal of TWI is to develop
bilingualism and biliteracy for both language-minority and language-majority students.

Foreign Language Immersion (FLI). FLI is also called enrichment immersion in the United States, and is designed for language-majority students to achieve bilingualism and biliteracy. FLI may provide monolingual English speakers immersion in a second language. In general, some subject matter is instructed via a second language in foreign-language immersion.

Theoretical Considerations of Foreign-Language Immersion

There are two current theories of second-language acquisition related to FLI: the input hypothesis and the affective filter hypothesis. The input hypothesis focuses on understanding messages (comprehensible input) that lead to the occurrence of second-language acquisition. In class, the comprehension input depends on communication between teachers and students. Because teachers in FLI use L2 as a medium to teach students, teachers pay more attention on communication with students in FLI than teachers in regular classes.

In terms of the affective filter hypothesis, Krashen (1981) claimed that second-language acquisition is heavily influenced by affective factors such as motivation and
anxiety. These affective factors are like filters. When the filter is down, the acquisition will occur, but when the filter is up, the acquisition will not occur.

Evaluation of Foreign-Language Immersion

Swain (1984) evaluated the outcome of immersion education by three dimensions: academic achievement, first-language development, and second-language development. Considering students' academic achievement, such as in science and mathematics, results have shown that immersion students achieve the same levels of academic achievement when compared to English-instructed peers (Swain & Lapkin, 1982).

In terms of first-language development, students in immersion programs may lag behind students in monolingual instruction in literacy skills at first, but immersion students catch up their peers in monolingual instruction after one or two years. The last factor concerns students' second-language development. Compared to students in monolingual instruction, immersion students may perform at the level of native speakers only in receptive skills (listening and reading). However, regarding productive skills (speaking and writing), immersion students do not attain native like proficiency.
Cross-Linguistic Influence

Cross-linguistic influence (CLI) is a very important aspect of second-language acquisition and is defined as "the interplay between earlier and later acquired language" (Kellerman & Sharwood Smith, 1983, p. 1). Consequently, discussing CLI involves not only the effect of the L1 on the L2, but also the effect of the L2 on the L1.

The Effect of the First Language on the Second Language. Many scholars claimed that the L1 has crucial influence on L2 learning, and the L1 is the foundation for learning L2. People tend to transfer the forms and meanings from their L1 to L2. According to Oldin (1989), CLI is known as language transfer. Transfer may occur consciously and unconsciously, both in formal and informal contexts, and among children as well as among adults. In addition, transfer occurs in all linguistic domains, such as phonology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and morphology.

However, structural descriptions cannot explain all phenomena in second-language acquisition. There are some nonstructural factors resulting in the occurrence of transfer. These factors include individual variation, social contexts, and the definition of proficiency in the second language.
The Effect of the Second Language on the First Language. The effect of the L2 on the L1 is also called reverse transfer or backward transfer. The negative effects of the L2 on the L1 may lead to the possibility of L1 loss. According to Anderson (1988), language loss is attributed to social and environmental influences as well as linguistic factors.

However, some scholars think that various contexts of SLA may lead to different results in terms of positive or negative effects of the L2 on the L1. For instance, when language-minority students participate in a submersion program, which has no support for students' L1, the possibility of L1 loss may increase for these students. On the other hand, when students participate in an immersion program, which has high support for students' L1, they may achieve academic competence both in L1 and L2. In sum, subtractive bilingual programs, which offer little or no support for students' L1, may lead to negative effects of the L2 on the L1; whereas additive bilingual programs, which support students’ L1 as well as L2, may result in positive effects of the L2 on the L1.

Outcome: Biliteracy

The ultimate goal of the theoretical framework is to achieve biliteracy, which is "the acquisition and learning
of the decoding and encoding of print using two linguistic and cultural systems in order to convey messages in a variety of contexts” (Pérez & Torres-Guzman, 1992, p. 51).

Considering bilingual education (Mandarin and English) in Taiwan, research relating to the relationship between Mandarin and English has indicated that learning two languages simultaneously does not interfere with literacy development for children.

In conclusion, the theoretical framework clarifies the contexts of English as a foreign language instructional program in Taiwan. Based on the discussion of the cross-linguistic influence between the L1 and the L2, the model of foreign-language immersion is probably one of the best choices for Taiwanese students if they want to become bilingualism and biliteracy.
CHAPTER FOUR
CURRICULUM DESIGN

The curriculum unit presented in the Appendix is based on the theoretical framework presented in Chapter Three. The title of this unit is Cultural Ambassadors of Taiwan to the World. The target teaching level is Taiwanese EFL third-grade students. Most of them are in early-production stage of learning English.

Unit of Instruction

Cultural Ambassadors of Taiwan to the World consists of five lessons, each of which focuses on a key concept presented in Chapter Two. Lesson One, Be a Culture Ambassador, teaches students how to introduce Taiwanese culture using English. Lesson Two, Spring Festival, leads students to discern the differences between Chinese and English reading and writing. Lesson Three, Geographical Features of Taiwan, uses English as a medium to teach Taiwanese geography. Lesson Four, Introducing Myself in English and Chinese, teaches students to present an introduction of themselves in English and Chinese. Lesson Five, Bilingual and Bicultural, helps students discover there is no fear of losing L1 or negative influence on L1 (Chinese) when acquiring the L2 (English).
Lesson Format

Each lesson presents a clear format that provides background, explicit objectives, and systematic procedures for instructors. The factors target teaching level, students’ English level, and time frame are presented in the beginning of each lesson. In addition, each lesson has teaching materials including focus sheets, work sheets, and assessment sheets.

Each lesson involves the connection of three elements, the objectives, activities (task chains), and assessments. The objectives of each lesson include three types: a learning-strategy objective, a content objective, and a language objective. The learning-strategy objective means using a direct or indirect strategy to enhance acquisition of new information or skills. The content objective is the subject of the lesson. The language objective means increasing some skills in English.

Task chains involve a variety of learning activities. Basically, the task chains correspond to the three types of objectives. In other words, each task chain matches an objective. To evaluate the success of the task chains, each lesson provides various assessments. Some assessment activities are used at the end of the task chain, but some are used the end of the lesson.
Lesson Content

The design of the unit of instruction is based on the key concepts presented in Chapter Two and the framework presented in Chapter Three. Thus, the content of the unit of instruction focuses on discussing the relationship between Chinese and English in aspects of culture, literacy, and reciprocal effect.

**Lesson One.** The unit plan is designed to stimulate students to think about the purpose of becoming bilingual, and shows them one advantage of being bilingual, which is being a culture ambassador to introduce Taiwanese culture using English. Through this lesson, students can learn to identify features of Taiwanese culture, and learn to use a comparison chart to compare various features of Taiwanese culture. Furthermore, students try to use English to introduce Taiwanese culture.

**Lesson Two.** The design of Lesson Two is based on the concept of biliteracy presented in Chapter Two, and intends to show the difference between Chinese and English reading and writing. Through this lesson, students learn the use of a T-chart, and create a T-chart to contrast and compare Chinese characters and English words.

**Lesson Three.** Based on the feature of foreign-language immersion, which uses L2 as a medium to
instruct subject matter, Lesson Three uses English as a medium to teach Taiwanese geography, which includes basic topographical features of Taiwan.

Lesson Four. Based on the concept of cross-linguistic influence presented in Chapter Two, the lesson provides students the opportunity to compare Chinese-style and American-style self-introduction. The content of this lesson is teaching students to make an introduction of themselves in Chinese and English. The instructor asks students to take notes when listening to other students’ speech, and leads students to compare a self-introduction between Chinese and English. Through this lesson, students are able to discover that they can use the same order when introducing themselves in English and Chinese.

Lesson Five. Most Taiwanese children know that learning English is important because of expectations from parents and teachers. However, they seldom ask themselves about the same issue. This lesson uses a K-W-L chart, and tries to help students think for themselves about the purposes of becoming bilingual. The instructor explains the function of a K-W-L chart in the beginning, and lets students reflect on what they know about being bilingual and bicultural. According to their prior knowledge about bilingualism and biculturalism, the instructor leads
students to discuss what they want to know about being bilingual and bicultural. The instructor illustrates the concepts of bilingual and bicultural based on students’ responses. Finally, students present what they have learned about being bilingual and bicultural.

In summary, the curriculum unit focuses on discussing the relationship between Chinese and English in aspects of culture, literacy, and reciprocal effect of the languages on one another. In addition, it uses English as a tool to teach subject matter such as geography. A final goal is for students to be stimulated to think about bilingualism and biculturalism. Finally, students are able to recognize that there should be no fear of losing the first language or no negative effect of the L1 when acquiring the L2.
CHAPTER FIVE

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is used to measure the extent to which students have learned. It should be used in multiple forms because diverse assessment can reflect students' learning in all aspects. A key principle of assessment is accessing what students know and can do rather than what they do not know and cannot do. Thus, teachers should be careful when designing assessment that the content of assessment includes what is taught in the class. Assessment can be used at the end of the task chain or at the end of the lesson. Based on the results of assessment, teachers can decide either to advance to the next lesson or reteach the lesson.

The project presents a unit of instruction which includes five lessons. Each lesson uses both formative and summative assessment to evaluate students' performance and understanding.

Formative Assessment

As a means of monitoring instruction, formative assessment provides feedback and suggestions for teacher to modify teaching and learning activities. In Lesson One, the teacher observation method is used. The teacher
observes students' responses and students' group discussion to see if students are focusing on the questions or topics. In addition, the teacher evaluates students' compare/contrast skills by analyzing their work sheets. In Lesson Two, the teacher observes students' pronunciation of vocabulary in the beginning, and checks students' work sheets about making a story outline. Furthermore, the teacher accesses students' compare/contrast skills by checking their work sheets of creating a T-chart.

In Lesson Three, the teacher observes at the beginning if students can correctly point out where Taiwan is on a map of Asia. During the first task chain, the teacher observes if students can identify directions and basic topography correctly on a map of Taiwan. During the second task chain, the teacher evaluates students' concept development by analyzing their work sheets, as they create a concept chart of basic Taiwanese topography. During the third task chain, the teacher observes if students can orally describe basic topographic features of Taiwan by using "there are" sentences.

In Lesson Four, students take notes when listening to each others' self-introductions in English and Chinese. The teacher circulates in the class to see if students can
take notes from people's speech appropriately. The teacher checks if students can correctly circle the common points from their notes. In addition, the teacher accesses students' compare/contrast skills by checking their work sheets on creating a comparison chart.

In Lesson Five, the teacher observes if students can express their ideas about bilingualism clearly. Furthermore, the teacher uses a K-W-L chart for students to self-evaluate their learning about the concepts of being bilingual and bicultural.

Thus, formative assessment allows the teachers monitor and adjust the teaching and learning before final (summative) assessment. This improves instruction.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment takes place in the end of the lesson with the intent of evaluating the learning outcomes with a specific grade. In Lesson One, the teacher assesses students' vocabulary about features of Taiwanese culture using their assessment sheets. In Lesson Two, the teacher uses several multiple-choice questions to evaluate students' reading comprehension. In Lesson Three, the teacher uses a map as an assessment sheet to evaluate students' understanding of the content. In Lesson Four,
the teacher evaluates students' nonverbal and vocal skills of public speech by using the rubric featured on the assessment sheet. In Lesson Five, students present their individual learning processes about the concepts of being bilingual and bicultural. The teacher uses the rubric on the assessment sheet to evaluate students' nonverbal skills, vocal skills, and the content of their presentation. The summative use of a rubric determines a student's grade.

In summary, assessment of the unit plan consists of both formative and summative assessment. Based on the result of formative assessment, such as students' responses, checking students' work sheets, and observing students' group discussion, the teacher is able to determine whether to advance to the next task chain or instruct the same task chain again. Furthermore, the results of summative assessment can provide useful information about the efficacy of instruction. Therefore, the teacher can utilize this information to decide to move forward to the next lesson or reteach the original lesson.

The project includes information about teaching English as a foreign language in aspects of instructional programs, cross-linguistic influence of Mandarin and English, and biliteracy in Taiwan. Foreign-language
immersion serves as a model program for teaching EFL in Taiwan, if students are to achieve bilingualism and biliteracy in Mandarin and English. Using an appropriate program model—that of foreign-language immersion—ensures to achievement of the outcome of biliteracy in Mandarin and English without the fear of losing L1 (Chinese) or of negative influence on L1 when acquiring the L2 (English).
INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT

Cultural Ambassadors of Taiwan to the World

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Instruction Plan One:  
Be a Culture Ambassador

Level: Elementary EFL 3rd grade

English Level: Early production

Time Frame: 40 minutes

Content Objective:
1. To identify features of Taiwanese culture

Language Objective:
2. To present Taiwanese culture

Learning Objective:
3. To compare features of Taiwanese culture by using a comparison chart

Materials:
- Poster 1-1
- Focus Sheet 1-2
- Work Sheet 1-3
- Assessment Sheet 1-4

Warm-up:
1. The instructor asks students to imagine being a culture ambassador.
2. The instructor asks students to express their ideas about what aspects of Taiwanese culture that they would like to introduce to foreigners.

Task Chain I: To identify features of Taiwanese culture
1. The instructor displays Poster 1-1 that illustrates pictures and vocabulary.
2. Students read Focus Sheet 1-2.
3. The instructor asks some questions about features of Taiwanese culture from Focus Sheet 1-2.

Task Chain II: To compare features of Taiwanese culture by using a comparison chart
1. The instructor illustrates how to create a comparison chart by using Focus Sheet 1-2.
2. Students work in groups to discuss Work Sheet 1-3.
3. The instructor leads students to finish Work Sheet 1-3.
Task Chain III: To present Taiwanese culture

1. The instructor asks students to present Taiwanese culture based on Work-Sheet 1-3, and add some details from Focus Sheet 1-2.
2. Students present features of Taiwanese culture.

Final Assessment:
Formative assessment:
During warm up:
Students will express their ideas clearly.

During Task Chain I:
The students will answer questions appropriately.

During Task Chain II:
1. The students will create a comparison chart on Work Sheet 1-3 correctly.

During Task Chain III:
1. The students will present features of Taiwanese culture appropriately.

Summative Assessment:
1. The students can answer Assessment Sheet 1-4 correctly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Representative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Good job</td>
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<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Needs improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Study harder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Poster 1-1
**Images of Taiwanese Culture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Palace Museum</th>
<th>Traditional aboriginal house</th>
<th>Bangiao at the Lin Family Garden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Longshan (Dragon Mountain) Temple</td>
<td>The Mazu Temple (Queen of Heaven Temple)</td>
<td>The Burning of the Plague God Boat in Donggang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal rituals</td>
<td>Fort San Domingo Portugal and Holland</td>
<td>The Presidential Office Building (Japan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lantern Festival</td>
<td>Taiwanese opera</td>
<td>Glove puppet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multifaceted Taiwanese Culture

A rich historical background has provided Taiwan with a multifaceted culture. Taiwanese people are from many different places and backgrounds, such as Taiwan's indigenous people, the southern Fujianese from early China, Hakka immigrants, the Dutch, Spanish, and Japanese, and the recent immigrants from mainland China.

In general, Taiwanese culture includes Chinese culture, aboriginal culture, and colonial culture, plus elements unique of Taiwan.

Chinese Culture

You can see Chinese culture in temples and architecture in Taiwan, such as National Palace Museum, the Lin Family Garden at Bangiao, the Longshan (Dragon Mountain) Temple, the Mazu Temple (Queen of Heaven Temple) in Lugang, and the Chaotian Temple in Beigang.

In terms of cultural events, some of Taiwan's most important annual holidays and festivals are the Chinese New Year, the Lantern Festival, the Dragon Boat Festival, Lovers' Day, and the Hungry Ghosts Festival. In local Taiwanese folk events, the Goddess Mazu making rounds of inspections in Beigang and the burning of the Plague God boat in Donggang are also regarded as important celebrations.

In addition, there are traditional Chinese opera, Taiwanese opera, and the famous glove puppet theater.

Aboriginal Culture

There are more than ten different tribes that have their own languages, traditions, and tribal structures that can be distinguished in Taiwan. Their unique cultures give an extra dimension to Taiwan's culture. One of the most famous celebrations is Smatto's Harvest Festival.

In addition, Orchid Island's Yami(Tao) tribe has been relatively isolated due to the island's geographical location, and was the last to come in contact with the Han Chinese; this tribe, therefore, has been best able to preserve its aboriginal culture.

Colonial Culture

Remnants of colonial periods can still be found in many parts of Taiwan. Fort San Domingo in Danshui, for example, used to be home to the Portuguese and the Dutch successively. In addition, the Presidential Office
Building, Executive Yuan, etc. are outstanding baroque architecture left by the Japanese.
Work Sheet 1-3  
Comparison of Features of Taiwanese Culture

Name:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Architecture</th>
<th>Chinese Culture</th>
<th>Aboriginal Culture</th>
<th>Colonial Culture</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Chinese Culture</th>
<th>Aboriginal Culture</th>
<th>Colonial Culture</th>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>Cultural Events</th>
<th>Chinese Culture</th>
<th>Aboriginal Culture</th>
<th>Colonial Culture</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Chinese Culture</th>
<th>Aboriginal Culture</th>
<th>Colonial Culture</th>
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</table>
Assessment Sheet 1-4

Name:

Please match the following pictures to the correct answer by drawing lines connecting pictures to description.

Each/20 pts. (Total 100 pts.)

A traditional aboriginal house

Taiwanese opera

The presidential office building

Longshan (Dragon Mountain) Temple

The National Palace Museum.
Instruction Plan Two  
Spring Festival  

Level: Elementary EFL 3rd grade  
English Level: Early production  
Time Frame: 40 minutes  

Content Objective:
1. To distinguish Chinese (reading/writing) from English (reading/writing)  

Language Objective:
2. To outline the story by writing six simple sentences  

Learning Objective:
3. To create a T-chart to compare Chinese (reading/writing) with English (reading/writing)  

Materials:
Poster 2-1  
Focus Sheet 2-2  
Work Sheet 2-3  
Work Sheet 2-4  
Work Sheet 2-5  
Assessment Sheet 2-6  

Warm-up:  
1. The instructor uses Poster 2-1 to illustrate vocabulary used in the story of Spring Festival.  
2. The instructor leads students to read the vocabulary aloud.  

Task Chain I: To outline the story by writing six simple sentences
1. Students read Focus Sheet 2-2 (Spring Festival).  
2. The instructor leads students to discuss the story of Spring Festival by using Work Sheet 2-3.  
3. Students work in groups to finish Work Sheet 2-3.  

Task Chain II: To distinguish Chinese (reading/writing) from English (reading/writing)
1. The instructor uses “Think Aloud” to demonstrate Work Sheet 2-4.  
2. The instructor leads whole class to finish Work Sheet 2-4.
Task Chain III: To create a T-chart to compare Chinese and English

1. The instructor shows some examples for using T-chart.
2. The instructor gives some hints on Work Sheet 2-5, and leads students to discuss the difference between Chinese characters and English words.
4. Students answer Assessment Sheet 2-6.

Final Assessment:
Formative assessment:
During warm up:
Students will read the vocabulary correctly.

During Task Chain I:
1. The students will outline the story on Work Sheet 2-3 appropriately.
2. The students will work in groups and discuss the subject seriously.

During Task Chain II:
1. The students will translate English into Chinese and Chinese into English on Work Sheet 2-4 appropriately.

During Task Chain III:
1. The students will create a T-chart on Work Sheet 2-5 appropriately.

Summative Assessment:
1. The students can answer Assessment Sheet 2-5 correctly.

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<th>Scores</th>
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<td>Excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Good job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Needs improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Study harder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Poster 2-1
Vocabulary Bank

- The Heavenly God
- Demon: Nian
- firecrackers
- couplet
- gong
- mountain
- drum
Focus Sheet 2-2
Spring Festival (1)

The Spring Festival is the lunar Chinese New Year. Every family sets off firecrackers and puts up couplets on their gates to usher in a happy life in the coming year.

Long, long ago, there was a ferocious demon called Nian. It did evil things everywhere. The Heavenly God locked this demon into remote mountains and only allowed him to go out once a year.

Shortly after twelve months had passed, Nian come out of the mountains. Gathering together, people discussed how to deal with him. Some said that Nian was afraid of the red color, flames, and noises. So people put up red couplets on their gates, set off firecrackers, and kept on beating gongs and drums.

The demon Nian trembled with fear. Night fell and every house was brightly lit. Nian was terrified. He fled into the mountains and didn't dare to come out. Nian was thus subdued, and the custom of celebrating the lunar New Year was passed down from then.

Name:

According to the story of Spring Festival, what occurred in the beginning?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What occurred in the middle?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What occurred in the end?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Name:

Please translate English into Chinese.

For example,

**English:** The Spring Festival is the lunar Chinese New Year.

春節就是舊曆的中國新年。

**Chinese:**

**English:** Every family sets off firecrackers and puts up couplets on their gates to usher in a happy life in the coming year.

每家每戶都要燃放鞭炮，貼上春聯，迎接新年的到來。

**Chinese:**

**English:** Long, long ago, there was a ferocious demon called Nian.

長久地在...以前有一個兇猛的惡魔被稱作年。

**Chinese:**

Please translate Chinese into English.

Chinese: 天神把這隻惡魔關在很遠的山上並且只允許牠一年出來一次。

**English:**

the Heavenly God 天神 allow 允許
lock 關 go out 外出
remote 遙遠 mountain 山
Compare Chinese characters with English words by using Work Sheet 1-4. Write down your findings to the following questions.

1. Give an example where a single Chinese character means a single word in English.

2. Now complete the following chart to summarize what is the same and different about English and Chinese:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Same</th>
<th>Different</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Assessment Sheet 2-6

Name:

According to the story of the Spring Festival, please choose the right answer for each question.

1. The Spring Festival is the ______________. (20 pts.)
   A. Lantern Festival  
   B. Lunar Chinese New Year  
   C. Dragon Boat Festival  
   D. Mid-Autumn Festival  

2. Who locked the demon Nian in the mountain? (20 pts.)
   A. The people  
   B. The Chinese emperor  
   C. The soldiers  
   D. The Heavenly God  

3. Nian is afraid of ______________. (20 pts.)
   A. the color green and fresh leaves  
   B. the color red and firecrackers  
   C. mountains  
   D. people  

4. In Chinese New Year, people like to put up ________ on their gates. (20 pts.)
   A. pictures of the Heavenly God  
   B. pictures of Nian  
   C. red couplets  
   D. gongs and drums  

5. What was the ending of the story? (20 pts.)
   A. Nian set off firecrackers with people.  
   B. Nian wrote Spring Festival couplets for people.  
   C. Nian beat gongs and drums with people.  
   D. Nian fled into the mountains.
Instruction Plan Three:  
Geographical Features of Taiwan

Level: Elementary EFL 3rd grade

English Level: Early production

Time Frame: 40 minutes

Content Objective:
1. To recognize basic topographical features of Taiwan

Language Objective:
2. To orally describe basic topographical features of Taiwan

Learning Objective:
3. To use a graphic organizer (a concept chart) for understanding of content

Materials:
Poster 3-1 (A map of Asia)  
Poster 3-2 (A topographic chart of Taiwan)  
Work Sheet 3-3  
Assessment Sheet 3-4

Warm-up: The instructor displays Poster 3-1 (a map of Asia) on the whiteboard, and asks students to point out where Taiwan is.

Task Chain I: To recognize basic topographical features of Taiwan
1. The instructor shows Poster 3-2 (A topographic chart of Taiwan).
2. The instructor points out the compass on the map (Poster 3-2) and illustrates its function.
3. The instructor points out different colors referring to different altitudes.

Task Chain II: To use a graphic organizer (a concept chart) for understanding of content
1. The instructor gives students Work Sheet 3-3, and helps students to finish it.
2. Students complete Assessment Sheet 3-4.
Task Chain III: To orally describe basic topographical features of Taiwan

1. The instructor writes several simple sentences with the beginning of "there are."
   There are many plains in the West of Taiwan.
   There are many mountains in central Taiwan.
   There are little plains in the East of Taiwan.
   There are some hills in the North of Taiwan.

2. The instructor explains how to make sentences with "There are _______ in __________ of Taiwan."

3. Students orally describes basic topographic features by using "There are" sentences.

Final Assessment:
Formative assessment:
During warm up:
   Students will correctly point out where Taiwan is on a map of Asia.

During Task Chain I:
1. The students will identify the function of the compass on the map correctly.
2. The students will identify that different colors refer to different altitudes on the map.

During Task Chain II:
1. The students will finish Work Sheet 3-4 appropriately.

During Task Chain III:
1. The students will orally describe basic topographic features of Taiwan by using "there are" sentences correctly.

Summative Assessment:
1. The students can answer Assessment Sheet 3-5 correctly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Representative</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Good job</td>
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<td>70</td>
<td>Needs improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Study harder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taiwan is an island of 36,000 km². Taiwan lies north of the Philippines and south of Japan.

Can you find out where the Philippines is?
Can you find out where Japan is?
### Poster 3-2
A Topographic Chart of Taiwan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Landforms</th>
<th>Elevation (Meter)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Mountain</td>
<td>Over 1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hill</td>
<td>100-1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Plain</td>
<td>0-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ocean</td>
<td>Below 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Poster 1-2, please fill in following blanks by using plains, mountains, and hills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taiwan</th>
<th>Basic Topographic Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The North</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The West</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Central</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The East</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The South</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Name:

Please circle the right answer.

Each question is 25 points.

This is the ______ of Taiwan.

North  West  East  South  central

This color (brown) represents ___.

plains  mountains  hills

This color (green) represents _____.

plains  mountains  hills

This is the ______ of Taiwan.

North  central
West  South
East

123
Instruction Plan Four:
Introducing Myself in English and Chinese

Level: Elementary EFL 3rd grade

English Level: Early-production

Time Frame: 40 minutes

Content Objective:
1. To take notes when listening to people’s speech

Language Objective:
2. To present an introduction of self in English

Learning Objective:
3. To create a comparison chart for English and Chinese in making an introduction of self

Materials:
A video which records five American children’s self introduction
Work Sheet 4-1
Work Sheet 4-2
Work Sheet 4-3
Work Sheet 4-4
Assessment Sheet 4-5

Task Chain I: To take notes when listening to people’s speech
1. The instructor invites five volunteers to make an introduction of themselves in Chinese, and asks other students to take notes on Work Sheet 4-1.
2. The instructor asks students to find out the common points in the volunteers’ speech and circle them on Work Sheet 4-1.
3. The instructor asks students to present their findings.
4. The instructor plays a video which records five American children’s introductions of themselves, and asks students to take notes.
5. The instructor asks students to circle the common points in American children’s speech on Work Sheet 4-2.
6. The instructor asks students to present their findings.
Task Chain II: To create a comparison chart for English and Chinese in making an introduction of themselves
1. The instructor asks students to compare Work Sheet 1-1 with Work Sheet 4-2.
2. The instructor asks students to express their findings.
3. Students finish Work Sheet 4-3.

Task Chain III: To present an introduction of myself in English
1. The instructor gives students Work Sheet 4-4.
2. The instructor teaches students how to make an effective presentation by using the rubric of Assessment Sheet 4-5.
3. Students present introductions of themselves in English by using Work Sheet 4-4.

Final Assessment:
Formative assessment:
During Task Chain I:
1. The students will take notes on Work Sheet 4-1 and Work Sheet 4-2 appropriately.
2. The students will circle the common points on Work Sheet 4-2 appropriately.
3. The students will circle the common points of American children’s speech on Work Sheet 4-2 appropriately.
4. The students will express their findings clearly.

During Task Chain II:
1. The students will present their findings clearly.
2. The students will finish Work Sheet 4-3 correctly.

During Task Chain III:
1. The students will finish Work Sheet 4-4 appropriately.
Summative Assessment:
1. The students can present a self instruction in English appropriately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Representative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Good job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Needs improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Study harder</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Work Sheet 4-1
Take Notes in Chinese

Name:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The first child</th>
<th>The second child</th>
<th>The third child</th>
<th>The fourth child</th>
<th>The fifth child</th>
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**Work Sheet 4-2**  
**Take Notes in English**

Name:

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128
**Work Sheet 4-3**  
**Comparison of Chinese and English**  
**in Introducing Oneself**

Name:

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Name:

My name is ____________________.

I am ____________________ years old.

I live in ____________________.

My hobby is ____________________.

My favorite food is ____________________.

I like ____________________.

I don’t like ____________________.

My best friend is ____________________.

or

My best friends are __________ and __________.

or

My best friends are _______, ________, and __________.
Assessment Sheet 4-5  
Teacher Assessment Rubric

Name:

During students' self introduction,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nonverbal Skills</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eye contact</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facial expression</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesture</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posture</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocal Skills</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>20 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocalized pauses (uh, well uh, um)</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes at least three autobiographical details such as name, age, and etc.</td>
<td>30 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total score:

Comment:
Instruction Plan Five
Bilingual and Bicultural

Level: Elementary EFL 3rd grade

English Level: Early production

Time Frame: 40 minutes

Background: Students recognize features of Taiwanese culture through Lesson One: Be a Culture Ambassador.

Learning Objective:
1. To use a K-W-L chart to access understanding of the content

Content Objective:
2. To identify the concept of bilingual/bicultural

Language Objective:
3. To orally present personal learning process based on personal K-W-L chart

Materials:
- Work Sheet 5-1
- Assessment Sheet 5-2

Warm-up:
1. The instructor asks students to recall features of Taiwanese culture instructed in Lesson One.
2. The instructor tells students that the prerequisite of being a cultural ambassador is being bilingual.

Task Chain I: To use a K-W-L chart to access understanding of the content
1. The instructor explains the function of a K-W-L chart on Work Sheet 5-1.
2. Students work in groups to discuss what they know about being bilingual (English/Mandarin) and bicultural (Taiwanese culture/American culture).
3. The instructor suggests students to consider the benefits and drawbacks of being bilingual/bicultural, and asks students to write their ideas on Work Sheet 5-1.
4. Each group presents their ideas successively.
Task Chain II: To identify the concept of bilingual/bicultural
1. The instructor asks students to think about what they want to know about being bilingual/bicultural.
2. Each group discusses the issue and writes down their ideas on Work Sheet 5-1.
3. Each group presents their ideas.
4. The instructor illustrates the concept of being bilingual/bicultural based on students’ questions.

Task Chain III: To orally present personal learning process based on personal K-W-L chart
1. The instructor asks students to discuss what they have learned about being bilingual/bicultural and write these ideas on Work Sheet 5-1.
2. The instructor students to self-examine their learning process based on Work Sheet 5-1.
3. Students present their learning process about the concept of being bilingual/bicultural.

Final Assessment:
Formative assessment:
During warm up:
   Students will express their ideas clearly.

During Task Chain I:
   1. The students participate in discussion seriously.
   2. The students will present their ideas appropriately.
   3. The students will write down their ideas on Work Sheet 5-1 appropriately.

During Task Chain II:
   1. The students participate in discussion seriously.
   2. The students will present their ideas appropriately.
   3. The students will write down their ideas on Work Sheet 5-1 appropriately.

During Task Chain III:
   1. The students participate in discuss seriously.
2. The students will finish Work Sheet 5-1 appropriately.

Summative Assessment:
1. The students can present their learning process appropriately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Representative</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Good job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Needs improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Study harder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Work Sheet 5-1
The K-W-L Chart

Name: ______________________ Date: __________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we know</th>
<th>What we want to know</th>
<th>What we have learned</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>
### Assessment Sheet 5-2
#### Teacher Assessment Rubric

**Name:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nonverbal Skills</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eye contact</td>
<td>5 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facial expression</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesture</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posture</td>
<td>5 points</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Vocal Skills

| Pronunciation                            | 10 points|
| Vocalized pauses (uh, well uh, um)       | 10 points|

### Content

Includes three subjects: what they know, what they want to know, and what they have learned | 60 points

**Total score:**

Comment:

136
REFERENCES


