

THE IDENTIFICATION OF TEACHER QUALITIES VITAL TO THE SUCCESSFUL
TEACHING OF THE CULTURALLY DEPRIVED STUDENT AND DEVELOPMENT
OF THESE QUALITIES THROUGH TEACHER EDUCATION

by 7214

RALPH EDWIN STEGNER

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Approved by:


Major Professor

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INTRODUCTION

The culturally deprived are those members of our society which, due to ethnic and/or socio-economic circumstances, lack many of the advantages (such as education, books, formal language) of middle class culture. The terms "economically," "socially," and "educationally" have been popularly associated with the terms "disadvantaged," "different," and "underprivileged" but these phrases generally refer to the same groups of people.

To be more specific Havighurst stated that the culturally deprived consist of the following racial or ethnic groups:

1. Negroes from the rural South who have recently migrated to the Northern industrial cities.
2. Whites from the rural South and Southern mountains who have migrated recently to the Northern industrial cities.
3. Puerto Ricans who have migrated to a few Northern industrial cities.
4. Mexicans who with a rural background have migrated into the West and Middle West.
5. European immigrants with a rural background, from East and Southern Europe.

Havighurst estimated that culturally deprived children make up 15% of the child population in general and as much as 30% in the large industrial cities.¹ Though not in Havighurst's list the American Indians, located on reservations primarily in the Southwest, should be included.

¹Robert J. Havighurst, "Who are the Socially Disadvantaged," The Disadvantaged Learner, ed. Staten W. Webster (San Francisco: Chandler Pub. Co., 1966), p. 27.

In recent years national attention has been focused on the population of children who come from the lower socio-economic class with an attempt to uplift their psychological, social, and economic status. Federal funds have been made available to provide resources to assist bringing about needed change and improvement in educational opportunities and experiences for deprived children.

The classroom teacher is in a strategic position to assist in improving the educational opportunities and experiences for these children, but all too often he lacks those qualities vital to effective teaching of the deprived. To be effective the teacher must know and understand the deprived child--who he is, his social and psychological characteristics, and what he thinks and feels. He should also know appropriate learning theory and how to apply it, and be familiar with materials and methods well suited for alleviating anxiety and improving the child's self concept. Because teachers are likely to teach as they have been taught or as they are being taught, the responsibility for the development of many of these vital teacher qualities lies within the realm of teacher education.

The writer became interested in the subject matter of this report as a result of experience in teaching culturally deprived youth in Cortez, Colorado (Ute and Navajo Indians) and in Paso Robles, California (Mexican Americans and Negro). The classes were primarily composed of middle class students and due to the writer's middle class orientation, all students, including the culturally deprived, were dealt with in a uniform manner. Needless to say, the writer often became frustrated and regretfully indifferent to the culturally deprived, rationalizing "if

they don't care, why should I." Soon came the realization that perhaps he was also "culturally deprived." There was a definite lack of knowledge and understanding of minority group cultures. Their behavior was not considered in the light of past social heritage or as adjustments to present social pressures and problems.

Statement of the Problem

There were two purposes of this study: first, to identify those teacher qualities which appear to be vital to the successful teaching of the culturally deprived student; and second, to suggest ways these desired qualities may be developed through teacher education.

Definition of Terms

Culturally deprived--individuals lacking many of the advantages of American middle class culture such as books and formal language.

Effective or successful teacher--the teacher who establishes rapport with his students and plans educational experiences which meet their needs.

Teacher education--instruction concerned with preparing individuals to teach.

Procedure

Materials for this study were gathered primarily through library research. The qualifications of the successful teacher were derived from three main source areas: the first was implications from available research on teacher behavior; the second was insights from impressionistic observations of educators; the third was inferences from investigations of the characteristics of disadvantaged students and their culture.