

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 098 796

FL 006 466

AUTHOR Purbhoo, Mary; Shapson, Stan
TITLE Transition from Italian: The First Year.
INSTITUTION Toronto Board of Education (Ontario). Research
Dept.
PUB DATE Sep 74
NOTE 75p.

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.75 HC-\$4.20 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Bilingual Education; Bilingual Students; English;
*English (Second Language); *Italian; *Kindergarten;
Language Instruction; Language Programs; Primary
Education; *Program Descriptions; Second Language
Learning; Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

This report describes the first year of a two-year experimental, transitional kindergarten program for children whose mother tongue is Italian. Begun in Toronto, Canada as the result of pressure from both the ethnic community and from educators, the program is designed to run for the two years of kindergarten (junior and senior). The bilingual teacher, with the help of a bilingual teaching assistant, conducts classes using mainly Italian. English is introduced gradually with the intention that by the third year of school (i.e., grade 1), the pupils will be able to enter a regular program and learn to read and write in English. Comparisons made between the experimental group and children of similar backgrounds in regular English kindergarten programs revealed two major differences, favoring the experimental group: availability of the mother tongue resulted in a larger proportion of children participating in group conversations and in their parents having more contact with the school. Appendix A consists of background reports relating to the implementation of the program, and Appendix B contains copies of the observation schedules, teachers' rating instruments, and parents' questionnaires used for the project. Findings are detailed in Appendix C. (Author/PMP)

ED 098796

SCOPE OF INTEREST NOTICE

The ERIC Facility has assigned this document for processing to:

FL RS

In our judgement, this document is also of interest to the clearinghouses noted to the right. Indexing should reflect their special points of view.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TRANSITION FROM ITALIAN: THE FIRST YEAR

Mary Purbhoo
Stan Shapson

#126

September 1974

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATOR. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED ARE SOLELY THEIR OWN AND DO NOT EXPRESS THE VIEWS OR OPINIONS OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION.

RESEARCH SERVICE

issued by the
Research Department

FL006466

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

2/3



FOR THE CITY OF TORONTO

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
BACKGROUND	1
RESEARCH ACTIVITIES	6
<u>A Statement of the Programme's Goals</u> ..	6
<u>Informal Observations</u>	7
<u>Selection of a Comparison Group</u>	11
<u>Classroom Observations: Group</u>	
<u>Discussion Periods</u>	12
<u>Classroom Observations: Activity</u>	
<u>Periods</u>	15
<u>Language and Comprehension: Peabody</u>	
<u>Picture Vocabulary Test</u>	18
<u>Ratings of Language Development</u>	20
<u>Parent Questionnaire</u>	22
SUMMARY	27
REFERENCES	30
APPENDIX A	32
APPENDIX B	39
APPENDIX C	58

BACKGROUND

In September 1973, two junior kindergarten classes at General Mercer Public School began in a different way. Instead of being greeted with the usual "Hello, come in," or "Good morning," the incoming children heard the familiar sounds of Italian, their mother tongue. They did not have to leave behind the language they were most familiar with just because they had reached the classroom door.

These children were part of an experimental project, an Italian transitional kindergarten programme with a bilingual teacher and a bilingual teaching assistant. The programme is designed to run for the two years of kindergarten (junior and senior). It begins with the teacher speaking mainly Italian to the children. During the two years of transition the use of the mother tongue means that the introduction of new concepts need not be delayed merely because a word is not yet in a child's English vocabulary. At the same time English is introduced gradually with the intention that by the third year of school (i.e. Grade 1), the pupils will be ready to enter a regular programme where they may begin to read and write in English.

This programme developed as a result of various pressures both from the ethnic community and from educators.* Parents from various ethnic communities in Toronto have become increasingly vocal in recent years about the right to maintain their language, and the school's responsibility to aid their children in this goal.

* The reader wanting more information is asked to refer to Research Report #122, Shapson & Purbhoo (1973) which includes a comprehensive literature review about the issues of bilingualism, second language programmes, and the present situation in Toronto concerning minority language programmes.

Educators have found that students coming to school without sufficient command of the language of instruction (i.e. English) have in many ways been at a disadvantage. Some of them even felt that immigrant children were intellectually inferior since they did not advance through the educational system at the average rate. In many areas, these children were viewed as problems that the school had to cope with. Only more recently has it been recognized that the academic failure of children from ethnic communities might result from other factors such as alienation, anomie, low self-concept or more basically, not knowing the dominant language and not being a member of the dominant culture (Zirkel & Greené, 1971; Meyerson, 1969; Ramirez, 1970, 1973).

Academic failure for these reasons was surely avoidable and independent of academic ability (though not of achievement). Bilingual education programmes acknowledged and used the child's mother tongue to improve this situation. Gudschinsky (1971) has documented some early examples of successful second language programmes. Modiano (1966) also showed that a child will read better in the dominant national language if he is first taught to read in his mother tongue. Other advantages of second language programmes have been higher self-concepts (Skoczylas, 1972; Zirkel, 1972) and an increased number of contacts between the parents and the schools (Cordova, 1970).

Thus it was not surprising that T. Grande, a Toronto teacher, proposed that ethnic children be introduced to the educational system through the medium of their mother tongue. He hoped thereby to reduce the academic failure which he himself found sadly typical of too many non-English-speaking pupils. Grande suggested that use be made of the child's preschool linguistic and cultural experiences to advance his ability to speak, read and write in English.

To meet this objective, Grande proposed that the children begin school with a bilingual teacher and assistant who would introduce curriculum content in the native language while the children were learning the English language. Based on the results of Modiano's (1966) study, he also felt that reading and writing should be introduced in the child's mother tongue. Reading and writing in English would begin later, and shortly afterwards, the traditional all English programme would be followed. In Grande's own words:

"The child would be introduced to reading and writing in his mother tongue while at the same time oral language development in English would be accelerated in an atmosphere that is relatively secure from the point of view of the child....It is anticipated that the pace of learning to read and write English will be considerably accelerated due to the fact that pupils have grasped the principles of reading and writing in the mother tongue, until the students will be functioning better, or at least as well as, their English-speaking age-mates."*

In the Spring of 1973, a report on the feasibility, financial and legal implications of implementing foreign languages programmes in elementary schools was presented to the Toronto Board of Education by the Educating New Canadians Committee. Among the items considered in this report was Grande's proposal for a "Transition Programme for Young Children."**

As it turned out, Grande's proposal could not be accepted in its original form because the introduction of reading and writing in the mother tongue would not be in accordance with the language require-

* Grande's proposal, "A Transition Programme for Young Children." Action Profile No. 4, Inner City Schools Work Group, February, 1973, is presented in Appendix A.

** The relevant section of the report of the Educating New Canadians Committee (April 26, 1973) is presented in Appendix A.

ments of the Schools Administration Act*. This aspect of his proposal had to be amended before the programme could be implemented; reading and writing would therefore begin in English. Although this had been one of Grande's major specifications, he accepted the modification.

The Board approved the special programme as modified in the report from the Educating New Canadians Committee and adopted a set of guidelines for consideration of proposals for programmes in languages other than English and French at the elementary school level**. The method proposed by the Board for the operation of this transition programme was outlined as follows:

- "(a) that a bilingual teacher instruct the children for two years.
- (b) that a bilingual lay assistant remain with the children for two years.
- (c) that the children be of similar linguistic and cultural background.
- (d) that the ethnic community be involved in the operation of the program.
- (e) that oral instruction be in the children's mother tongue initially.
- (f) that there be a research component involved in the program.
- (g) that the regular pupil-teacher ratio be maintained in the junior kindergarten.
- (h) that the program be of a developmental nature.
- (i) that ethnic resource materials be used, such as books and films at a minimal budget increase."

(Minutes of the Board, May 3, 1973,
p. 316)

In some ways, the programme would resemble the regular kindergarten programme. The pupil-teacher ratio would be the same in junior kindergarten, and the programme would be based on principles of

* According to Section 21, Subsection (e) of the Schools Administration Act, no languages other than English and French are to be used for purposes of instruction. The relevant subsection of this Act is also contained as part of the report of the Educating New Canadians Committee in Appendix A.

** The Board Minutes are presented in Appendix A.

child development. Furthermore, very little additional expense should be incurred. By relying heavily on oral instruction in the mother tongue, the use of ethnic books, records, films and community involvement, the programme would be different. The Board also asked that a research component be tied to the programme to aid in its evaluation.

Late in June, 1973, the Ministry of Education approved the modified version of the programme as a two-year pilot project. Shortly thereafter, Italian was chosen as the language of instruction, General Mercer as the school for its implementation.

During the Summer of 1973, all Italian-speaking parents who had children enrolled in junior kindergarten at General Mercer were invited to attend a meeting at the school about the experimental transition programme. From the initial show of hands it appeared that interest would be sufficient to introduce two separate classes (a morning and an afternoon section). At first, some parents misunderstood the nature of the programme, thinking that it would teach Italian. After these misconceptions were straightened out, parent interest seemed to be as great as before. A number of parents decided to enrol their children in the programme immediately following the meeting. Others waited until they discussed it further at home. A bilingual teacher and lay assistant were assigned to the project. The teacher's summer preparations included working on plans for the programme in conjunction with consultants from the Kindergarten Department and collecting materials, such as books and records in Italian.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

The Research Department's involvement with the transition programme actually began in earnest after its implementation. In tracing the background information, it is apparent that the programme was introduced as a practical experiment and not as a fully controlled research project. In reviewing the literature on second language programmes (Shapson & Purbhoo, 1973, Research Report #122), it was discovered that this has been the case with the majority of similar programmes which have been implemented elsewhere. Since the only entrance requirement for students was a common Italian background, initially there could be great variations in the students' ability to speak and understand English (and/or Italian). Since a significant part of the programme's organization and implementation was open to the interpretation of the teacher, it would be important to indicate the way the two languages were used in the classroom. Research activities were conceived to provide not only an evaluation but, perhaps more important in the initial phase, to document the goals of the programme and to describe both the programme itself and the students in it.

A Statement of the Programme's Goals

Although there has been no document which provides a clear statement of the programme's goals, the following may be inferred from Grande's original proposal and from the Board's guidelines of May 3, 1973*.

1. To help the ethnic child learn to read and write in English.
2. To introduce the same concepts and curricular material as in a regular programme, i.e. there would be no delay merely because a word is not yet in the child's English vocabulary.
3. To make the child's overall adjustment to school more comfortable.

* The pertinent materials are presented in Appendix A.

4. To make the parents' involvement in the child's education easier by relying partly on them for help in the classroom and as sources of ethnic materials.

It should be pointed out that maintaining or teaching the Italian language were not direct aims of the programme. Nonetheless, because of the heavy reliance on instruction in Italian, these outcomes could develop indirectly. The programme is therefore accurately summarized by the term "transition," since the mother tongue is used only as a temporary bridge to aid the understanding of and instruction in English.

Informal Observations

It was decided that informal observations of the classroom and discussions with the teacher would provide the best source of descriptive information. The observer made notes and tape recorded a number of sessions, paying particular attention to the language behaviour of the children and the teacher.

Both the teacher and her assistant were born in Italy, spoke both English and Italian fluently, and had experience with primary age children though not at the junior kindergarten level. The teacher had studied the Italian language formally and was familiar with the formal or standard form of the language, while the assistant spoke Calabresi, one of the more common Italian dialects. This minimized any difficulties in communicating with all of the children whose backgrounds consisted of various dialects and the formal Italian. Both teacher and assistant could and did switch freely between English and Italian as the need arose for particular children.

Even though one might anticipate some problems in teacher-pupil conversations, especially if standard Italian and dialect were used, there were in fact no such difficulties. One important factor may be that much communication with young children is essentially non-verbal. It turned out that standard Italian, dialect and English were all used quite freely, and translation was rarely needed to clear up misunderstandings.

In class, the use of languages very quickly reflected the variety of linguistic backgrounds and competencies represented. To the uninitiated, it might sound very confusing since one language was never heard for long before another was used. A child might begin a thought in English, then switch to Italian if the words weren't coming fast enough, or vice versa! For example, after the teacher finished reading a story, one girl requested, "Let's....uh, let's leggere again." Switching to Italian in the middle of the sentence, then back to English, allowed her to complete her thought even though she could not think of the word "read" in English. Another pupil when asked, "What is this?" very quickly responded, "Castagna." "Rosso" and "red" would be heard simultaneously whenever the colour name was called for, whether the request had come in Italian or English.

The teacher's use of language depended very much on the individual she was speaking with. She might ask a question of the whole class in Italian, receive an answer in English, and then continue in English with that individual, or begin in English and change to Italian. In other words, choice of language was always spontaneous; no one was ever boxed into using one language exclusively.

Of course this pattern did undergo some transition throughout the first year. Initially, the teacher relied mainly on Italian to speak

with the entire class to ensure that all of the students would be involved. Stories, songs and discussions, the times when the entire class was involved in the same activity, were conducted almost solely in Italian. Language changes nonetheless were frequent, both among the children and the teacher. Often the teacher used the second language (English or Italian) to expand or extend an answer given in the first. English began to increase in frequency gradually as the children learned more and by the end of the first school year, the majority of group time was already in English! Some children, however, still felt more at ease speaking Italian and used English minimally during these periods. Stories were also told in English while both English and Italian songs had become favourites.

A typical day's activities (either morning or afternoon) could be outlined as follows: as soon as the children had arrived, they all assembled with the teacher for a group discussion period in which any child could show or tell something to the others. This period usually lasted until as many who wanted had contributed, and ended with each child choosing an activity centre. The choice here was wide; some children were forced to take their second or third choice if a predesignated number of other children were already at the more popular centres. The small size of the classroom made some of these restrictions necessary and everyone accepted the limitations readily. The only selections which differed from those in regular kindergarten classes in Toronto schools were the availability of Italian books and records. All other activities were specifically language-related only to the extent that language was used by the children involved. Towards the end of this activity period the children were served juice and cookies in small groups.



After cleaning up following the first activity period, the children reassembled for a story with discussion. Again, they were free to comment, and ask or answer questions in the language of their choice. The rest of the day was taken up with outdoor play or gym, a brief rest time, another shorter activity period with the same options as the first, and a final group assembly for songs before going home.

The exact timing, sequence and even presence of any one of these events was, of course, flexible and changed to accommodate special circumstances.

This structure then provided two very different types of events for the pupils, group discussions and individual activity periods. The importance of the common cultural and linguistic background became apparent in both settings. During group conversations, various experiences common to the Italian-Canadian culture could be discussed meaningfully. For example, all the children knew about gardens, tomato picking and making tomato sauces, the topic of one morning conversation period. During individual activity periods, especially in the house centre, a favourite pastime was weddings, a significant part of all of these children's backgrounds.

Language usage, however, seemed to differ in group and individual settings. Although Italian was frequently heard during the group periods, English seemed to dominate during the activity sessions. The reasons for this discrepancy are not known. One responsible factor may be the type of dialogue which occurs in each setting. While playing, very few children, if any, were expressing ideas or telling a story as was the case in the group sessions. Instead, the dialogue was simpler, and within the English vocabulary range of almost everyone.

Selection of a Comparison Group

In order to provide a broad base of comparison (or reference) to aid in the descriptive and evaluative process, students from two other schools were selected. Both schools had the same general socio-economic level, were in the same part of the City, and had the same general ethnic composition (proportion of Italian, English and non-Italian, non-English-speaking children) as did General Mercer Public School. From each reference school, one class (either morning or afternoon) in which approximately half the students were Italian-speaking was needed to provide a sample size comparable to the experimental group's size. In one school, however, it was necessary to include two afternoon classes in order to provide the number of Italian children desired. In all comparison classes, English-speaking children were very much a minority group, and most of the data collection therefore was from children whose native language was not English.

Prior to collecting any data, all classrooms were visited by the observer to establish rapport with the children and to minimize the distraction provided by the additional adult in the class. This strategy proved to be very successful, and children soon resumed their regular uninhibited play activities in the presence of the observer.

Classroom observation was among the research activities undertaken in the first year of the experimental programme. Other events consisted of vocabulary testing in English and Italian, teacher ratings of the pupils' language development, and a questionnaire completed by parents of the Italian-speaking children. All these instruments are presented in Appendix B. Since it was not desirable either for the pupils or the teacher to overwhelm the class with tests, these

different techniques of collecting data were selected to provide information about background, progress, and adjustment to school. Thus, the effects of disrupting routines and the effects of the lack of test sophistication of four-year-olds were minimized. In addition, these procedures did not require the use of English on the part of the pupils.

Classroom Observations: Group Discussion Periods

The observation schedule was devised to correspond with the major divisions in the daily procedures of the classes: group discussion and activity periods. Participation in group discussions was recorded in the following way: during each of the two groups periods, informal show and tell and story time, one-half of the class, either girls or boys, was observed, and the name of anyone who spoke during this session was written down in the appropriate space. Distinctions were made between Italian and English contributions as well as whether the child was contributing spontaneously or in response to a question from the teacher. Questions addressed to an individual or to the entire class were not separated, partly because the individual asked was not always the one to answer.

A final category was included for the remarks which could not readily be heard distinctly as Italian or English. Although most remarks could be classified easily, this additional category was useful for some one-word answers or for the children whose speech was unclear. Of course the group observations in the comparison classes had only the spontaneous-verbal-response breakdown since the English language was always used.

Individual names were only recorded once in any one category in order to give the reticent or non-communicative talkers as much credit as the more verbose individuals. Although one name might appear six times on the General Mercer schedule but only twice on the others, in the scoring scheme, no single pupil was counted more than once per day of observation.

Primary teachers often express concern about their ethnic pupils who are silent in class (Slaato & Kielland, 1973; Henderson & Silverman, 1973). The kindergarten curriculum in Toronto (Early Childhood Education, Kindergarten Department, Toronto Board of Education) devotes a great deal of attention to the importance of speech in group situations. Talking may therefore be viewed as an important signal that the child feels comfortable in a group setting and may also indicate that he feels his own thoughts are significant enough to contribute. It might be viewed as a measure of self-esteem and self-confidence. Increases in self-concept have been direct results of second language programmes (Zirkel, 1972). If, however, a child does not know the language of the group, it will be very difficult for him to express himself. The availability of his mother tongue should ease this problem; the individual should be able to talk more freely and more individuals should be able to contribute.

In other words, more pupils would be expected to participate when they can use their mother tongue. A direct test of this hypothesis was made possible from the data collected through two comparisons: the proportion of the children who spoke in the two different programmes, and the proportion who spoke in English only in the Italian class, compared with the total proportion of the regular classes who participated.

In addition to the recording of the verbal participation, the duration of each group session was also noted. A possible source of bias emerged from this data: the average length of the group sessions at General Mercer was greater than in the comparison classes. Since theoretically there should be a greater opportunity to talk if enough time were allotted, it might be expected that more children would participate because of the longer time periods. An argument can and should be made for ignoring the time factor, based on the observations of these periods.

In all classes the discussion periods were not of a predetermined length. Instead, they continued until no more children had anything to say, making the time dependent on the number of participants. Furthermore, the length of an utterance was not a significant factor in the collection of the data, and it would be possible and reasonable to have as many children speaking in five as in fifteen minutes.

Making the comparisons mentioned above confirmed that the availability of the Italian language did bring a significantly larger proportion of the class into the group conversations, .592 at General Mercer, compared with only .425 in the remaining classes*. When verbal participation in English alone was considered, the proportions of the experimental and reference groups observed talking did not differ. This finding suggests yet another interpretation for the time differences: being less fluent in English, the children would produce fewer and shorter utterances on the average and therefore the result was shorter group periods. Most of the students in the comparison classes it should be recalled, did not have English as their mother tongue.

* Detailed analysis and results are provided in Appendix C.

Classroom Observations: Activity Periods

On the same days that these group observations were made, in the late Fall, an individual observation schedule was used during the activity periods. Visits to the classroom continued until every student had been observed once for thirty minutes at the beginning of an activity period. Since each activity period lasted for at least half an hour, no observations had to be interrupted prematurely. An added advantage of this sampling method was that pupils were generally not watched at the end of a session when they became more restless, and yet the time was long enough that most had taken part in more than one activity, giving a broad range of behaviours.

The individual classroom schedule, presented in Appendix B, consisted of two parts used in the following way: for each activity period, a different set of two or three individuals was selected in order from a randomly sequenced class list. Absentees were interchanged with students who would have been selected in the next scheduled day of observation.

The first part, a modified sociogram, a plan of activity areas in each class, provided a description of the movement of the selected individuals around the classroom. It showed the activities engaged in, and significant contacts with peers and with adults. Supplementary notes were kept to fill in details where necessary, and at the end of half an hour, a summary was made of whether the individuals had been playing with or beside their peers (i.e. engaged in co-operative versus parallel play) or were playing alone; whether they had been involved in their activity, or were often distracted; and whether they relied on adult attention throughout their task.

In the second part, a rating form, five distinct categories were recorded: asking for activity, i.e. did the individuals request activities verbally or use gestures; initiating activity, i.e. did they initiate their own activities or did they need help; peer interaction, i.e. did they initiate play with peers or interact negatively; verbal peer interaction, i.e. did they avoid talking or talk freely and quietly or excitedly; and finally, were they able to accept and follow classroom limitations or rules of procedure.

Although many other aspects could have been measured, the schedule was restricted mainly to those items which could be affected by the language and cultural homogeneity of the experimental class. It was felt that classroom interactions, both verbal and other, were the chief variables of interest. Specifically, it might be expected that children would play together and talk together more during activities if they had a common language base.

In practice, this was not the case. It should be recalled that the dominant language used by students during activity periods was English. When the experimental and comparison groups were compared on all aspects of the observation schedule no differences were found. In general, chi-square analyses were performed on frequency tables for each observed category. From the sociograms, the following comparisons were made: the number of discrete activities engaged in during the half hour, the division of this number between "group" and "individual" activities*, type of peer interactions, distractibility, number of contacts with adults. Other categories examined were those listed on the observation form (Appendix B).

* Group activities were those which lend themselves toward co-operative play or playing together, e.g., doll centre, sand, water play, blocks. Individual activities were more obviously engaged in by single persons, e.g., reading, puzzles, most crafts, records.

The modal activity period behaviour observed may be described as follows. Pupils took part in three or more self-selected activities, approximately evenly divided between group and individual centres. They moved directly between centres and were not readily distracted during any particular activity. Most play groups were small, two or three children playing calmly beside one another, but talking freely and quietly in a friendly way. Very few special types of peer interaction were observed, either positive, e.g., initiating play with others, or negative, e.g., fighting or rejecting peers. Violation of classroom limitations was infrequent. Within the thirty minute interval, pupil-adult interactions were frequent, most pupils having three or more such contacts.

It proved difficult to compare the type of activity requesting behaviour engaged in by the pupils since on most occasions, all students moved directly to their centres as opposed to being asked one at a time where they would like to play. Both verbal and gestural communication, however, was observed in all classrooms*.

Various interpretations could be applied to the similarity of interaction patterns in the two groups of classrooms. The most logical may be that children are very much unaware of differences between languages and communicate quite naturally and easily in any way they are able (Swain, 1971). The labels "Italian" and "English" do not yet have any meaning for them. A request from a visitor to "say it in Italian" drew only a confused expression. For the same reasons, children are not readily impeded by the language barriers which adults often feel.

* See Appendix C for detailed results.

As for the interaction in play, most four-year-olds engage in parallel rather than co-operative play, the former being less dependent upon language.

In general it may safely be concluded that the Italian kindergarten programme has not negatively influenced classroom interactions.

Language and Comprehension: Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test

While classroom observation was in progress, the vocabulary testing in Italian was started. For this measure, the first sixty items of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test were translated into Italian, together with all the instructions. The Peabody was selected because it requires non-verbal responses, assumes only minimal test sophistication, and has no time constraints*.

In general, the suggested administration procedures were followed except that the children were all tested in the classroom rather than alone in a separate room. The test became an accepted part of the activity period, with most children quite eager to participate. Children were not withdrawn from the classroom partly on the teacher's advice that too many of them would be afraid and anxious to leave the classroom setting with an adult and partly to minimize the adverse effects of a completely unfamiliar testing situation. It was decided that despite distraction resulting from the classroom setting children would likely perform better when they felt at ease.

Since the same procedure was used for all the children tested, and since the test was used as an indicator of vocabulary rather than the traditional intelligence quotient, valid comparisons could still

* Each test item required the child to select by pointing, the one of four pictures on a page which represented the work spoken by the tester.

be made. The length of each session ranged from five to twenty minutes, depending on the number of items correctly answered. All of the Italian tests were completed before testing in English began, because of the availability of a bilingual tester.

The Italian version of the Peabody was expected to be more difficult than the corresponding English items for the children involved, since most of them had been exposed only to dialect; however, to account for every different language background represented in the sample would require an unreasonable number of different tests. Instead, a standard form was used, cultural bias was uniform, and the very unfair items could be sorted out afterwards through an item-by-item analysis.

The standard Peabody test was used as an indicator of vocabulary level in English. Most of the children were more than eager to play the picture game again and some wanted to repeat it even a third and fourth time. Each Italian child was tested with both Form A and B, one in Italian, the other in English. Forms were assigned randomly to the children before testing was started.

When results were compared for the General Mercer and the comparison classes, the similarity of performance was somewhat surprising. The children at General Mercer did not score significantly differently from the Italian-speaking comparison children on the Italian version (18.53 versus 17.19 respectively)*, nor on the English vocabulary test (26.83 and 27.38 respectively). Furthermore, the English performance of General Mercer students (26.83) did not differ from that of all the non-English-speaking background children in the reference classes (27.25).

* See Appendix C for detailed results.

The only difference emerging was between the native speakers of English in the comparison group and the General Mercer students, the former attaining higher scores, 46.50 on the average.

In other words, the General Mercer children at the mid-point of their first year in the programme were at the same level of understanding of the English language as were the children of similar backgrounds in regular all-English classrooms!

The difficulties anticipated with the Italian version of the Peabody were confirmed in the results. As a group, the Italian children obtained lower scores in Italian than in English, possibly for the reasons mentioned earlier. The fact that English vocabulary was always tested after Italian would predict some advantage for English scores (Zigler, Abelson & Seitz, 1973) but does not explain the overall depression of Italian scores.

Specific language background information, available for all the children at General Mercer, was used to separate the students into dialect versus standard Italian-speaking groups. Statistical comparisons of their mean Peabody scores (17.1 for the Italian-speaking children, 18.9 for the dialect-speaking pupils), indicated clearly that the presence of a dialect background did not hinder performance in any way, as had been anticipated. The reasons for the generally low scores must therefore lie elsewhere. Translation may have increased the level of difficulty of individual items for all students taking the test. A similar effect of translation has been documented by Macnamara (1966).

Ratings of Language Development

Further indication of the language development of the children was provided by the final two measures collected in the Spring: teacher

questionnaires and parent questionnaires. In all classes, teachers rated their Italian background pupils on the five language questions of the California Preschool Social Competency Scale and on the language section of the Teachers' Rating Questionnaire (Fall Questionnaire, kindergarten form^{*}). In the experimental class, the teacher filled in two sets of forms, one for English, the other for Italian language development. In the comparison classes, the English sets were completed.

Competency and Teachers' Rating Questionnaire scores were compared separately because they measure different types of skills. The competency scores indicate the ability to understand the language and to use it to communicate wants. The Teachers' Rating Questionnaire, on the other hand, measures the sophistication of language use in class with respect to various aspects of the child's environment. Conceivably a child could perform well on one and not on the other, especially since understanding precedes usage.

The General Mercer group was rated lower by their teacher on the English competency scale than the comparison children (11.78 and 14.81 were the mean scores respectively.** On the Teachers' Rating Questionnaire their scores were not different, 21.05 and 21.38 respectively. The mean scores assigned to the General Mercer group on the Italian versions of the competency and the rating scales were 17.33 and 27.60 respectively. That is, the General Mercer children were rated higher in their language ability in Italian than in English on both measures, when comparing their Italian scores with their own English scores and with the English scores of the comparison students.

Once again, despite the fact that the pupils at General Mercer spent much of their school time exposed to the Italian language, they are progressing in English as well.

* Both questionnaires are shown in Appendix B.

** See Appendix C for further details of these results.

Combining vocabulary and teacher rating information provides a description of each child's language balance. That is, is he clearly dominant in Italian over English or vice versa, or does he have approximately balanced ability in the two languages? Consistently higher scores in one language over the other would indicate dominance, whereas balanced ability would be suggested by approximately equal scores, taking into account that Italian vocabulary scores were low.

According to the teacher ratings, 60% of the General Mercer students fell into the "dominant in Italian" category, 32.5% were judged to have "balanced ability", and only 7.5% were rated as "dominant in English". In contrast, vocabulary test scores classified 43.2% as "dominant in English", 35.1% as having "balanced ability", and only 21.6% as "dominant in Italian", almost a complete reversal of the above pattern. At least three explanations help to resolve this discrepancy: the Italian Peabody was generally too difficult, causing these scores to be suppressed; English Peabody scores, taken later in time, should be higher (test-retest phenomenon); and finally, the teacher, expecting the Italian-background children to perform better in Italian, may have rated them accordingly. By the end of the programme's second year, the pattern of language balance should have become more clear.

Parent Questionnaire

Parents provided the final information during the first year. The questionnaire* they completed pertained to family background information; the language interaction patterns in their home, including media exposure; and the degree of contact between parents and the school. Initially, a section about parent attitudes towards their child's programme was planned but it has been postponed to reduce the overall

* The questionnaire completed by parents is presented fully in Appendix B with detailed results in C.

length. The questionnaire was available for the parents in English or Italian so that comprehension difficulties would be minimal.

Rather than sending the questionnaires to the homes to be completed and returned, letters in Italian were sent inviting the parents to attend a meeting at the school to answer the questions. In many cases, parents were also contacted by telephone to ensure that they could come. For each of these small group meetings, an Italian-speaking person was present to assist.

The format chosen worked out to be almost an interview situation, with one person assisting each parent in a group. Since most of the parents were not familiar with the English language or completing questionnaires of any type, this degree of guidance ensured that all questions were understood and answered. From the handful of forms completed without any help, we realized that sending all the questionnaires home would have been futile. These few questionnaires were never fully answered. Generally, the parents from both the experimental and the comparison classes were very co-operative and eager to help in any way they could.

On the descriptive background information, the General Mercer and comparison groups did not differ*. All of the parents questioned in the study were born outside of Canada, mainly in Central and Southern Italy, and most arrived in Canada more than five years ago. The children in the study therefore almost exclusively were born in Canada (Toronto). At the time of the interview, all the fathers were employed, mostly in semi-skilled or unskilled occupations; the majority of the mothers stayed at home.

* See Appendix C for the complete results of the parent questionnaire.

The question about household members had been included to determine the sources of language development of the children at home. The section on language usage provided the type of influence. Since few individuals reported anyone beyond the nuclear family living with them, most of the influence would come directly from parents and older siblings. Throughout the forms, the use of Italian was predominately reported. It was the first language most of the children learned, and were still speaking at home. ~~Italian was still the parents' dominant language, and the one they used at home.~~ The exceptions to this pattern were also quite predictable. The two-thirds of the children who had older siblings heard more English than Italian from these siblings, and the parents judged their children as comprehending Italian and English equally well. This latter response may be an over-estimation of the true level of understanding English since most parents themselves spoke relatively little English.

The other major sources of language learning, reading and television, could also provide input in both Italian and English. Reading in Italian again was more common than in English, but English television programmes were viewed daily and more frequently than Italian. Nonetheless, nearly all of the children watched at least some Italian television programmes.

In other words, the Italian-speaking children who begin school have relatively little contact with English except from television and older siblings. The students entering the programme at General Mercer were not different in this experience from the Italian-speaking students in regular programmes. A similar survey for members of some other minority language groups might reveal similar patterns of language usage and experience.

Differences were found between the General Mercer and comparison groups on the section dealing with parental contacts with the school. Most parents from General Mercer had talked with the teacher three or four times since September; at the comparison schools, most parents had talked once or twice with their child's teacher; fewer parents had spoken with the teaching assistant, and almost none of the parents had ever talked to any other person involved with the school. On all of these measures, the trend was for General Mercer parents to have had more contacts.

General Mercer parents had visited the school more frequently for general purposes. In addition, two important specific school events, open house and interviews, were less well attended by the Italian parents in the comparison groups than in the General Mercer classes. Parents at General Mercer had also helped with classroom events more often, an indication that this Board guideline had in fact been met.*

Interest in school did not vary between the two groups of parents. All were eager to offer their services to the class and most had already offered. Furthermore, both children and parents discussed school almost every day and indicated that all of the topics mentioned on the questionnaire were included in these daily talks. Only the direct involvement, made easier by way of a common language at General Mercer, had increased in the experimental programme. This result is reminiscent of the finding of second language programmes previously documented (Cordova, 1970).

One parent's comment, that she had never talked to her older daughter's teacher but had spoken with the experimental programme

* Chi-square comparisons on visits to school for general meetings, for open house, for interviews and for help with classroom events yielded statistically significant results in favour of General Mercer. On talks with teacher, with aide, and with other people, though not statistically significant, the tendencies were in the same direction.

teacher frequently, probably typified the immigrant parents' situation. A common language makes communication easier. Many parents, when bringing their child to or from General Mercer, spent a few minutes each day talking with the teacher. While these contacts were not even the ones referred to in the questionnaire, they are no less important in establishing healthy relationships between the community and the school.

SUMMARY

The Italian transitional programme at General Mercer Public School has completed its junior kindergarten year. Its students have had an untraditional but linguistically natural introduction to school, for they could use their mother tongue to communicate in class.

Because of the manner in which the programme was conceived and instituted, a description of the programme as well as a comparison with students in regular kindergarten classes has been provided for the first year. While a final research report will be provided at the end of the second year, it seemed that it was not premature to present an account of the programme and the results at this time.

The Italian-speaking students at General Mercer did not differ from the students in the comparison classes on most measures of English language development. These results indicate that despite the fact that pupils at General Mercer were exposed to the Italian language for much of the time in the first year of school, they are progressing at a satisfactory rate in English as well.

Two important differences did emerge between the General Mercer and the comparison group. On the average, more children at General Mercer school participated in the group conversation periods. This finding is especially significant in light of the fact that the kindergarten curriculum in Toronto devotes a great deal of attention to the importance of speech in group situations. In addition, while parents from the comparison group expressed as great an interest in their children's education as did the General Mercer parents, fewer of them had attended specific school events. In other words, at General Mercer, parents seemed to

become more directly involved with their child's programme. The above findings demonstrate that the availability of the Italian language has already had direct positive effects on both the students and their parents.

Even though this transitional programme has been administratively attainable, different procedures would need to be followed for any other type of second language programme. For example, in General Mercer School, Italian children accounted for a significant part of the school's population; a qualified teacher was already available within the school system; this type of programme was deemed legally feasible and thereby approved by the Ministry of Education.

On the other hand, a programme which would introduce reading and writing in the second language would require a change in the Schools Administration Act. It should be noted that the Provinces of Manitoba and Alberta have made legislative changes toward allowing for instruction in languages other than English and French. Secondly, a transitional or bilingual programme for older children might demand further teaching qualifications, perhaps bilingual teacher training, as well as more curricular materials. To implement a second language programme for a handful of children or one which involves several different language groups simultaneously would necessitate a number of administrative changes, and probably more reliance on community involvement. Finally, ninety per cent of the children in the programme at General Mercer were born in Canada; a programme for a group of new arrivals in Canada would have to be modified because of the different needs of this group.

Generalizations must be made cautiously, and every new programme organized with its target group and its objectives carefully considered.

During the programme's second year, evaluative testing will continue. The pupils' progress in English language development will be followed; measures of self-concept will be taken and cognitive testing will be used to assess the possible advantages of the "bilingual" school experience. Since some of the benefits or drawbacks of the programme may not emerge until later in the children's school career, further follow-up beyond the programme itself would be desirable. For example, the effects of isolating one language group in the classroom for two years cannot be assessed before the programme's completion. Whether or not the programme has helped to prevent academic failure or the number of pupils dropping out of school also cannot be determined until much later.

REFERENCES

- Cordova, I. R. Evaluation of the 2nd year (1968-69) of the sustained primary program for bilingual students in the Las Cruces, New Mexico Public School System. (ED052 855, RC006 497) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, 1970.
- Gudschinsky, S. C. Literacy in the mother tongue and second language learning. (ED060 753, FL003 033) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, 1971.
- Henderson, K., & Silverman, H. A first language reception programme for immigrant students. Unpublished paper, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, 1973.
- Macnamara, J. Bilingualism in the modern world. Journal of Social Issues, 1967, 23, pp. 1-7.
- Meyerson, M. D. The bilingual child. Childhood Education, 1969, 45, pp. 525-527.
- Modiano, N. Reading comprehension in the national language: a comparative study of bilingual and all-Spanish approaches to reading instruction in selected Indian schools in the Highlands of Chiapas, Mexico. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1966.
- Ramirez, M. Cultural democracy: a new philosophy for educating the Mexican American child. National Elementary Principal, 1970, 50, pp. 45-46.
- Ramirez, H. M. Multicultural education to make the nation greater. National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) Bulletin, 1973, 373, pp. 138-142.
- Shapson, S. M., & Purbhoo, M. Second language programmes for young children. Toronto: The Board of Education for the City of Toronto, Research Department, 1974, #122.
- Skoczylas, R. V. An evaluation of some cognitive and affective aspects of a Spanish-English bilingual education program. (ED066 990, FL003 539) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, 1972.
- Slaatto, E., & Kielland, S. The education of Lapp children in Norway. Educational Horizons, 1973, 51, pp. 127-128.
- Swain, M. Bilingualism, monolingualism and code acquisition. Paper presented at the Child Language Conference, Chicago, 1971.
- Zigler, E., Abelson, W. D., & Seitz, V. Motivational factors in the performance of economically disadvantaged children on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. Child Development, 1973, 44, pp. 294-303.

Zirkel, P. A. An evaluation of the effectiveness of selected experimental bilingual education programs in Connecticut. (ED070 326, FL003 503) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, 1972.

Zirkel, P. A., & Greene, J. F. The academic achievement of Spanish-speaking first graders in Connecticut. (ED054 275, UD011 768) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, 1971.

APPENDIX A

Background reports relating to implementation
of the Transition Programme --

- (1) Action Profile No. 4, Inner City Schools Work Group.
"A Transition Programme for Young Children"
(Grande's Proposal, February 19, 1973) Page 33
- (2) Report of Educating New Canadians Committee, Section C
"A Foreign Language as a Transitional Language
of Instruction", April 26, 1973 Page 34
- (3) Minutes of Board of Education for the City of
Toronto, May 3, 1973 Page 37

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ACTION PROFILE NO. 4

WORK GROUP: INNER CITY SCHOOLS

PROJECT TITLE: "A TRANSITION PROGRAMME FOR YOUNG CHILDREN"
(EXPERIMENTAL PROJECT)

RATIONALE: Children from ethnic communities experience learning difficulties in school settings. They lag behind in achievement mainly because their oral command of English is not as far developed as that of a child who comes to school from an English speaking environment. Nevertheless, these children have ~~linguistic and cultural experiences which, if properly utilized can~~ work to the child's advantage and hence facilitate the introduction of the English language. The basic principle inherent in this approach is that the school begins from WHERE THE CHILD IS and with what the child has learned prior to formal schooling.

OBJECTIVE(S): The primary objective of the special programme is to help the ethnic child learn to read and write in English to the best of his ability.

PROPOSED METHOD: It is suggested that children be selected for the special programme on the basis of similar non-English cultural and linguistic background. The teacher should be fluent in both English and the child's mother tongue. It is suggested the teacher remain with this group of children for more than one year to allow for flexibility and continuity in the programme. It is anticipated that the child's mother tongue would be dominant in the first year with English being added slowly at first as it arises out of the children's experiences. The child would be introduced to reading and writing in his mother tongue while at the same time oral language development in English would be accelerated in an atmosphere that is relatively secure from the point of view of the child.

Curriculum content such as Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, etc. would remain the same as with those children speaking English. There will be a time when all oral communication is in English and the children would have grasped the principles of reading and writing in their mother tongue. At that time reading and writing in English will be introduced and shortly after the complete programme will be in English only. It is anticipated that the pace of learning to read and write English will be considerably accelerated due to the fact that the pupils have grasped the principles of reading and writing in the mother tongue, until the students will be functioning better, or at least as well as, their English speaking age-mates.

February 19, 1973

Tony Grande

REPORT OF THE EDUCATING NEW CANADIANS COMMITTEE
Section C - A Foreign Language as a
Transitional Language of Instruction

April 26, 1973

I. Mr. Grande's Proposal

Mr. Grande's proposal, "A Transition Programme for Young Children" arose from a concern that "children from ethnic communities experience learning difficulties in school settings. They lag behind in achievement mainly because their oral command of English is not as far developed as that of a child who comes from an English-speaking environment". Under "Proposed Method" the procedure is outlined. Lengthy discussions were held around a similar proposal in late 1971 at meetings of the Educating New Canadians Committee.

Section 21, subsection (e) of the Schools Administration Act, under the duties of teachers, states:

- "(e) in instruction and in all communications with the pupils in regard to discipline and the management of the school,
- (i) to use the English language, except where it is impractical to do so by reason of the pupil not understanding English, and except in respect of instruction in a language other than English when such other language is being taught as one of the subjects in the course of study, or
 - (ii) to use the French language in schools or classes in which French is the language of instruction except where it is impractical to do so by reason of the pupil not understanding French, and except in respect of instruction in a language other than French when such other language is being taught as one of the subjects in the course of study;"

The crucial question in Mr. Grande's proposal is that stated in the sentence: "The child would be introduced to reading and writing in his mother tongue while at the same time oral language development in English would be

accelerated in an atmosphere that is relatively secure from the point of view of the child".

It is the opinion of the officials that the proposal, because the children would not learn to read and write in English until after they had learned to read and write in their mother tongue, would not be in accordance with the Schools Administration Act. This was confirmed in a letter from the Minister of Education in October, 1972 and re-affirmed recently by the Ministry officials.

Still, Mr. Grande's proposal, with modification, could have much merit if a principal, staff, and parents were willing to implement it. This modification may make it legally feasible and practical while preserving most of its features. The following table clarifies the modification.

<u>Mr. Grande's Proposal</u>	<u>Modification</u>
<u>Common Elements</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bilingual teacher (remain with children for 2 years) - bilingual lay assistant (remain with children for 2 years) - children of similar linguistic and cultural background - involvement of ethnic community - oral instruction in mother tongue - research component - regular pupil-teacher ratio in Junior Kindergarten, lower in Senior Kindergarten - developmental program - ethnic books, films, etc. - minimal budget increase 	
<u>Point of Difference</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learn to read and write in mother tongue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learn to read and write in English

If Mr. Grande would accept such a modification of his proposal, and if a principal and staff volunteer to undertake the scheme, and if formal approval were received from the Ministry, this Board might well benefit from a pilot based on this proposal. It would be important, of

course, that the parents involved thoroughly understood and approved the experiment. There are some operational concerns with such an experiment. In various discussions some staff members have been worried about segregating one ethnic group. They feel that the isolation of any group is dangerous. They are also concerned about the possible dislocation of valuable staff members to accommodate the program. Others feel that the children need an English program as early as possible.

Other concerns are more specific. The pupil-teacher ratio may prove to be inflexible from grade to grade. There has been little or no discussion with parents to this date. Any evaluation by research will take at least three or possibly five years. The Board's ability to expand the program to other ethnic groups may be restricted, and thus the Board would appear to be favouring one group over another. Pupils who begin in such a program might be in difficulty if they moved. A survey completed at Earls court in 1972 showed that, in the first three years from 10 to 20% of the students moved each year. In Grade Two, 62% of the children who had begun Junior Kindergarten or Senior Kindergarten at Earls court, remained.

**REPORT No. 2 OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE RE EDUCATING
NEW CANADIANS, PART II**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Monday, April 30, 1973

1. At the Board meeting held on March 22, 1973, (page 166) Trustee Atkinson requested a report on the feasibility, financial and legal implications of implementing foreign language programs in elementary schools, bearing in mind the many children with varied foreign language backgrounds attending Toronto schools.

Your Committee received a report from the officials which outlined the situation in Toronto and included alternative suggestions for dealing with the problem, such as a foreign language as a transitional language of instruction, a foreign language as an optional language, and general guidelines offered for suggestion in consideration of foreign language programs.

General Guidelines

Your Committee considered Section E of the report of the officials in regard to general guidelines to follow when considering proposals for the study of foreign languages other than English and French at the elementary school level.

It is recommended that the guidelines to be followed when considering proposals for the study of foreign languages other than English and French at the elementary school level be approved as outlined in Appendix C.

Foreign Language Transition Program—Pilot Project

Your Committee considered a proposal for a transition program of instruction in a foreign language for children from ethnic communities who experience learning difficulties due to lack of facility in the English language.

The proposed method for the operation of this transition program is outlined as follows:

- (a) That a bilingual teacher instruct the children for two years.
- (b) That a bilingual lay assistant remain with the children for two years.
- (c) That the children be of similar linguistic and cultural background.
- (d) That the ethnic community be involved in the operation of the program.
- (e) That oral instruction be in the children's mother tongue initially.
- (f) That there be a research component involved in the program.
- (g) That the regular pupil-teacher ratio be maintained in the junior kindergarten.
- (h) That the program be of a developmental nature.
- (i) That ethnic resource materials be used, such as books and films at a minimal budget increase.

The original proposal suggested that the instruction be in the child's mother tongue and that the child learn to read and write in the mother tongue before learning to read and write in the English language. This aspect of the proposal would not be in accordance with the Schools Administration Act. The officials suggested, in the report, that a modification would make the proposal acceptable to the Ministry of Education. The modification recommended that the child should first learn to read and write in English rather than in his mother tongue.

It is recommended that the proposal for a transition program of instruction in a foreign language for children from ethnic communities be approved as modified in the officials' report, that the program be implemented as a pilot project, that the school at which it is to be implemented and the language of instruction be chosen by the officials and reported to your Committee as soon as possible, and that the officials consult with the staff and community where the proposal is to be implemented and report the conclusions

of these discussions to your Committee. Implementation of the transitional language program is to be subject to the guidelines as outlined in Appendix C to the General Guidelines noted above, with the following condition:

That the transitional program obtain a class size of at least 35 children.

• • • •

APPENDIX C

See section 1, Report No. 2 of the Special Committee re Educating New Canadians, Part II, page 316.

Guidelines for Consideration of Proposals for Instruction in Foreign Languages Other Than English and French at the Elementary School Level.

- (1) That programs to be considered should be a co-operative venture of school and community.
- (2) That co-operative proposals presented by staff and parents of a school must outline the responsibility of the community in providing volunteers to conduct the programs.
- (3) That there should be no increase in staff establishment.
- (4) That there should be no dislocation of staff to the detriment of the regular program.
- (5) That programs will be subject to the approval of the Ministry of Education.
- (6) That no amounts in excess of regular budget to be allotted for supplies and equipment without the approval of the Board.
- (7) That any increase in facilities to accommodate programs, e.g., provision of a portable, must be approved by the Board.

• • • •

(Minutes of the Board,
May 3, 1973)

APPENDIX B

Instruments

(1) Observation Schedules

- (a) Group Classroom Observation
Schedule Page 40**
- (b) Activity Period Sociogram Page 42**
- (c) Individual Observation
Schedule Page 43**

(2) Teachers' Rating Instruments Page 45

(3) Parent Questionnaire Page 50

A

GROUP CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SCHEDULE
(Form used at General Mercer)

Date _____

Time _____

Spontaneous Talking

Response to Question

Italian

--	--

English

--	--

"?"

--	--

Names of Absentees:

GROUP CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

School _____

Date _____

Time _____

Spontaneous Talking

Response to Question

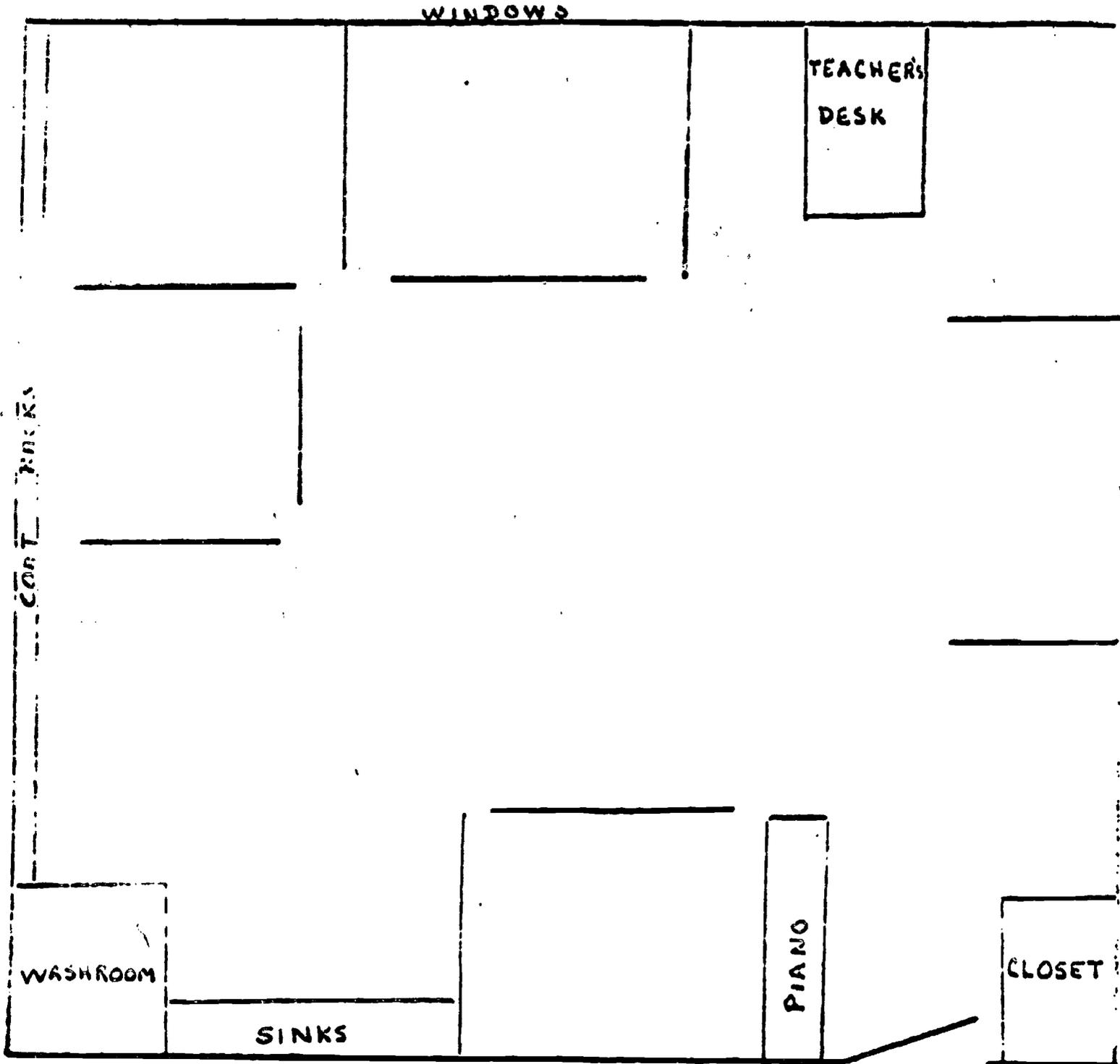
Spontaneous Talking	Response to Question

Names of Absentees:

Activity Period Sociogram

Date _____ Time _____

Names _____



PLAYING WITH PEERS	DISTRACTABILITY/ATTENTION SPAN	ADULT ATTENTION SEEKING
_____	_____	_____

* Separate floor plans for the Sociogram analysis were drawn for each of the classrooms involved.

INDIVIDUAL OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

School: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Names: _____

A. Transition to Activity

1. Communicating: Asking for Activity

T: _____ Italian _____ English S: _____ Italian _____ English _____ ?

_____ little verbal, mainly action or gestures

_____ verbal plus gestures

_____ mainly verbal, very little action

_____ no observation

2. Initiative/Dependence

_____ chooses own activity

_____ suggests own activity with teacher prompting

_____ needs to be told what to do

_____ asks for activity already filled or for same activity chosen previously

_____ activity selected by teacher for special reasons

B. During An Activity

1(a) Interaction with Peers

_____ initiates play with others

_____ invited to join others in play

_____ rejects or tries to reject new member to group

_____ is rejected by member of group

_____ tries to get attention of peers

_____ interacts negatively, disrupts play, fights, etc.

_____ none of above

1(b) Talking with Peers

_____ doesn't talk, and is not spoken to

_____ responds minimally when spoken to (e.g., nods, says one word)

_____ doesn't initiate conversation but responds fully when spoken to

_____ quiet, friendly interchange, chatting

_____ excited emotional talking

_____ angry or shouting (emotional talking)

_____ screaming, crying (outbursts)

General

Accepting Limits

- ___ ___ recognizes and obeys class rules, e.g., numbers in play areas, returning borrowed objects, cleaning up after each activity
- ___ ___ sometimes follows limits
- ___ ___ doesn't accept limits, inactive or withdrawn when reminded
- ___ ___ actively opposes limits by fighting, crying, etc.

COMMENTS:

Teachers' Rating Instruments

The two rating instruments which follow were completed by the teachers for all Italian background students. For the rating of ability in Italian, the word "English" was replaced by "Italian" wherever it appeared on both questionnaires. The Italian versions were completed only for the students at General Mercer.

- 46 -
TEACHER RATING QUESTIONNAIRE
LANGUAGE SECTION - RATING GUIDE

NOTE: Instructions for all questions in the Language Section

- Rate 0
- if the child cannot or will not speak at all in the situation(s) outlined in the question, or
 - if the child has unintelligible speech in the situation(s) outlined in the question.

- Rate 2
- if the child's speech in the situation(s) outlined in the question is consistently impaired due to extreme tension - mannerisms, stuttering, stammering, when talking, or
 - if the child's speech in the situation(s) outlined in the question is consistently impaired by "baby talk", substitutions, limited vocabulary, physical defects.

Ratings of 6 or 7 must include clarity and fluency of speech along with the specific requirements outlined for each question.

Question 1 Speaks clearly enough to be understood.

- Rate 0 - see note
- Rate 2 - see note, or
- seldom willing to speak
- Rate 4 - speaks as described in question
- Rate 6 - often speaks fluently
- Rate 8 - consistently speaks fluently in simple sentence form

Question 2 Tells something about concrete materials in the classroom (e.g., own handwork, large pictures used for picture study, science materials, articles or toys brought from home).

- Rate 0 - see note
- Rate 2 - see note, or
- seldom will attempt to tell something about concrete materials, or
- attempts are limited to one or two words
- Rate 4 - speaks as described in question
- Rate 6 - frequently able to tell something about a variety of concrete materials and descriptions contain some qualifying words (e.g., big house, red dress, hard rock).
- Rate 8 - frequently able to tell something about concrete materials in simple sentences that contain some qualifying words (e.g., "I made a green house. This is a small leaf. This is a big fire truck."

Question 3 Tells something about own school activities (e.g., dramatic play in the doll or block centre, with educational toys).

- Rate 0 - see note
 - Rate 2 - see note, or
 - seldom will attempt to tell something about own school activities, or
 - attempts are limited to one or two words.
 - Rate 4 - speaks as described in question.
 - Rate 6 - frequently able to tell something about a variety of own school activities in simple sentence form.
 - Rate 8 - frequently able to tell something about a variety of own school activities in simple sentence form.
-

Question 4 Tells something about out-of-school activities or events (e.g., home, trips, coming to school).

- Rate 0 - see note
 - Rate 2 - see note, or
 - seldom will attempt to tell something about out-of-school activities, or
 - attempts are limited to one or two words.
 - Rate 4 - speaks as described in question.
 - Rate 6 - frequently able to tell something about a variety of out-of-school activities.
 - Rate 8 - frequently able to tell something about a variety of out-of-school activities in simple sentence form.
-

Question 5 Participates in teacher guided conversation periods (e.g., answers questions, offers ideas).

- Rate 0 - See note
- Rate 2 - see note, or
 - seldom will attempt to participate in discussions, or
 - always needs a lot of teacher encouragement and support to participate in discussions, or
 - attempts are usually "silly".
- Rate 4 - Speaks as described in question.
- Rate 6 - participates in most of the daily teacher guided conversation periods.
- Rate 8 - participates in all teacher guided conversation.

TORONTO BOARD OF EDUCATION
TEACHER RATING QUESTIONNAIRE.
LANGUAGE SECTION - ENGLISH

For each question, circle the appropriate rating number as it applies to the child's ability in the English language. It is necessary to refer to the accompanying rating guide for descriptions of each category before answering these questions.

1. Speaks clearly enough to be understood.

0 2 4 6 8

2. Tells something about concrete materials in the classroom (e.g., own handwork, large pictures used for picture study, science materials, articles or toys brought from home).

0 2 4 6 8

3. Tells something about own school activities (e.g., dramatic play in the doll or block centre, with educational toys).

0 2 4 6 8

4. Tells something about out-of-school activities or events (e.g., home, trips, coming to school).

0 2 4 6 8

5. Participates in teacher guided conversation periods (e.g., answers questions, offers ideas).

0 2 4 6 8

Name of Child _____

School _____

ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPETENCY SCALE*

For each question, circle the number of the option that is most characteristic of the child being rated, as it applies to the child's ability in the English language.

1.) FOLLOWING VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH

He can follow verbal instructions --

1. When they are accompanied by demonstration.
2. Without a demonstration, if one specific instruction is involved.
3. Without a demonstration, when it involves two specific instructions.
4. Without a demonstration, when it involves three or more instructions.

2.) FOLLOWING NEW INSTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH

1. He carries out one familiar instruction.
2. He carries out one new instruction the first time it is given.
3. He follows new instructions given one at a time, as well as familiar ones.
4. He follows several new instructions given at a time, as well as familiar ones.

3.) REMEMBERING INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH

1. He nearly always needs to have instructions or demonstration repeated before he can perform the activity on his own.
2. He frequently requires repetitions, a reminder, or affirmation that he is proceeding correctly.
3. He occasionally needs repetition of instruction for part of the activity before completing the activity.
4. He performs the activity without requiring repetition of instructions.

4.) MAKING EXPLANATION TO OTHER CHILDREN IN ENGLISH *

When attempting to explain to another child how to do something (put things together, play a game, etc.) --

1. He is unable to do so.
2. He gives an incomplete explanation.
3. He gives a complete but general explanation.
4. He gives a complete explanation with specific details.

5.) COMMUNICATING WANTS IN ENGLISH

1. He seldom verbalizes his wants; acts out by pointing, pulling, crying, etc.
2. He sometimes verbalizes but usually combines actions with words.
3. He usually verbalizes but sometimes acts out his wants.
4. He nearly always verbalizes his wants.

NAME OF CHILD _____

53

SCHOOL _____

Parent Questionnaire

The following questionnaire was completed by the parents of all Italian background children involved in the study. In nearly all cases, the Italian translation was used.

THIS SECTION ASKS FOR SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT _____ HOME.

1. From the following list, put a check mark () beside the people who live in the same home as your child.

- _____ child's father
- _____ child's mother
- _____ child's brother(s) or sister(s)*
- _____ child's grandparent(s)
- _____ other people

* If the child has any brothers or sisters, please list their ages below:

brothers' ages (in years) _____

sisters' ages (in years) _____

2. What is the occupation of the child's father? (Please give the type of work and not the place of employment.)

What is the occupation of the child's mother?

3. Where was the child born?

country of birth _____ province _____

Where was the child's father born?

country of birth _____ province _____

Where was the child's mother born?

country of birth _____ province _____

4. If the child's father was not born in Canada, when did he come to live in Canada?

date: _____
month year

If the child's mother was not born in Canada, when did she come to live in Canada?

date: _____
month year

THIS SECTION ASKS ABOUT THE WAY DIFFERENT LANGUAGES ARE USED IN _____
HOME.

BECAUSE LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH AND ITALIAN MAY BE USED IN SOME HOMES,
SPACE IS PROVIDED TO COVER THESE SITUATIONS.

1. What language did your child first learn to speak?

- Italian
 - English
 - Italian and English at the same time
 - none of the above. What did your child learn to speak first?
-
-

2. At the present, which of the following best describes the child's
understanding of languages?

- understands only Italian
 - understands mainly Italian with some English
 - understands Italian and English equally well
 - understands mainly English with some Italian
 - understands only English
 - none of the above. Describe your child's understanding of
languages.
-
-

3. Which of the following best describes the languages the child speaks in the
home?

- speaks only Italian
 - speaks mainly Italian with some English
 - speaks Italian and English equally well
 - speaks mainly English with some Italian
 - speaks only English
 - none of the above. Describe what your child speaks.
-
-

4. For the child's father, which of the following is the best description?

- speaks only Italian
 - speaks mainly Italian with some English
 - speaks Italian and English equally well
 - speaks mainly English with some Italian
 - speaks only English
 - none of the above. Describe what the father speaks.
-
-

5. For the child's mother, which of the following is the best description?

- speaks only Italian
 - speaks mainly Italian with some English
 - speaks Italian and English equally well
 - speaks mainly English with some Italian
 - speaks only English
 - none of the above. Describe what the mother speaks.
-
-

6. What language does the father use most often when speaking with the child?

- English
 - Italian
 - English and Italian equally often
 - none of the above. What does the father use with the child?
-
-

7. What language does the mother use most often when speaking with the child?

- English
 - Italian
 - English and Italian equally often
 - none of the above. What does the mother use with the child?
-
-

8. What language do the mother and father use most often with each other?

- English
 - Italian
 - English and Italian equally often
 - none of the above. What do the mother and father use with each other?
-
-

9. Answer this question only if the child has at least one older brother or sister.

Do all of the child's older brother and sisters usually speak the same language with the child?

Yes If yes, what language is used most often?

- English
- Italian
- English and Italian equally often
- none of the above.

No If no, please explain your answer. _____

10. Who looks after the child during the day when he/she is not at school?

- mother
- father
- older brother or sister
- grandparent
- other person

Answer this question only if someone other than the child's parents or brothers and sisters, looks after the child.

What language does this person use most often with the child?

- English
- Italian
- English and Italian equally often
- none of the above. What does this person use?

11. Has the child gone to any other school or taken any lessons before this school year? (e.g., nursery school, swimming lessons, etc.)

- No
 - Yes If yes
- when? _____
- where? _____
- what type of experience was this? (e.g., nursery school)

what was the language of instruction? _____

12. How often does someone read to the child at home? (answer separately for English, Italian and some other language)

	In English	In Italian	In Some Other Language*
never	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
less than once a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
once or twice a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
once a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
two to three times a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
every day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

what is the other language? _____

13. How many hours of T.V. per day does the child watch during school days (not including Saturday and Sunday) in English and Italian?

	In English	In Italian
less than one hour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
one hour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
one to three hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
more than three hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

On the average how many hours of T.V. per day does the child watch on Saturday or Sunday?

In English In Italian

none	_____	_____
less than one hour	_____	_____
one hour	_____	_____
one to three hours	_____	_____
more than three hours	_____	_____

THIS SECTION DEALS WITH THE CONTACTS BETWEEN THE HOME AND _____
SCHOOL.

1. How many times have you (either the child's father, mother or both) talked about your child or his programme since he started junior kindergarten in September?

with the child's teacher:

_____ never
 _____ once or twice
 _____ three or four times
 _____ more than four times

with the teacher-aid:

_____ never
 _____ once or twice
 _____ three or four times
 _____ more than four times

with the principal:

_____ never
 _____ once or twice
 _____ three or four times
 _____ more than four times

with anyone else involved in the school:

_____ never
 _____ once or twice
 _____ three or four times
 _____ more than four times

who was this person? _____

2. How many times have you (either the child's father, mother or both) visited the school? (for reasons other than bringing your child or taking him home)

_____ never
 _____ once or twice
 _____ three or four times
 _____ more than four times

From the following list, check the activities which you have attended.

- open house
 - parent-teacher interviews
 - general school meetings
 - other separate meetings with the teacher
- Please specify the nature of this meeting. _____
- _____

3. How many times have you been able to help with classroom activities such as parties or field trips with the class?

- none
- once
- twice
- three or four times
- more than four times

Describe briefly what you did? _____

Did the teacher ask you to help with any classroom activities?

- Yes
- No

Did you volunteer to help?

- Yes
- No

Would you offer to help if something else came up and parents were needed?

- Yes
- No

4. When your child talks to you about school, check the things he is most interested in talking about.

- friends
- teacher
- teacher-aide
- stories
- games
- how he behaves in school
- school in general
- other (please specify) _____

How often does your child talk to you about school or schoolwork?

- never
- less than once a month
- once or twice a month
- once a week
- two or three times a week
- every day

When you talk to the child about school, check the things you are most interested in talking about.

- friends
- teacher
- teacher-aide
- stories
- games
- how he behaves in school
- school in general
- other (please specify) _____

How often do you ask your child at home about school or school work?

- never
- less than once a month
- once or twice a month
- once a week
- two or three times a week
- every day

APPENDIX C

Detailed Presentation of Results

(1) Results of Classroom Observations

Group Discussion Periods Page 59

Activity Periods Page 60

(2) Results of Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test .. Page 63

(3) Results of Teachers' Ratings Page 64

(4) Results of Parent Questionnaire Page 65

RESULTS OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: GROUP DISCUSSION PERIODS

For all categories, the proportion of the total number of students present in the classroom who responded was determined. The mean proportions were then calculated and are presented below.

TABLE 1

Category	General Mercer	Comparison Classes	t
Italian - spontaneous talking	.143	---	
Italian - response to question	.182	---	
TOTAL -- Italian Only	.127	---	
English - spontaneous talking	.370	.283	2.02
English - response to question	.283	.276	.14
TOTAL -- English only	.467	.425	.89
Total Spontaneous Talking	.449	.283	3.69*
Total Response to Question	.413	.276	2.85*
TOTAL -- Overall	.592	.425	3.71*

* $p < .01$

These calculations were based on 20 and 18 observations in General Mercer and comparison classes respectively.

RESULTS OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS: ACTIVITY PERIODS

All table entries are percentages of the total number of observations (N). Chi-square analyses were performed on the raw frequencies for every table. No significant differences were found in this set of analyses.

TABLE 2

RESULTS OF ACTIVITY PERIOD SOCIOGRAM

Items on Activity Period Sociogram	General Mercer (N = 41)	Comparison Group (N = 35)
<u>Total Number of Activities:</u>		
1	31.7	14.3
2	17.1	40.0
3 - 4	39.0	25.7
5 - 7	12.2	20.0
<u>Number of Individual Activities:</u>		
0	14.6	25.7
1	46.3	31.4
2	17.1	20.0
3 - 5	22.0	22.9
<u>Number of Group Activities:</u>		
0	39.0	17.1
1	31.7	45.7
2 - 5	29.3	37.1
<u>Changing Activities:</u>		
No Change	31.7	14.3
Direct Change	46.3	65.7
Indirect Change	22.0	20.0
<u>Degree of Distraction:</u>		
Minimal	75.6	60.0
Moderate	12.2	20.0
Frequent	12.2	20.0
<u>Number of Peers in Group:</u>		
0	17.1	14.3
1 - 2	73.2	57.1
3 or More	9.8	28.6

...continued

TABLE 2
(continued)

Items on Activity Period Sociogram	General Mercer (N = 41)	Comparison Group (N = 35)
<u>Type of Peer Contact:</u>		
Plays Alone	17.1	14.3
Plays Beside Peers	44.0	51.4
Plays With Peers	39.0	34.3
<u>Total Number of Contacts with Adults:</u>		
0	17.1	14.3
1	14.6	22.9
2 - 3	24.3	20.0
4 or More	22.0	31.4
Adult With Group	22.0	11.4
<u>Number of Adult-Initiated Verbal Contacts:</u>		
0	70.7	62.9
1 - 4	7.3	25.7
Adult With Group	22.0	11.4
<u>Number of Adult-Initiated Contacts:</u>		
0	48.8	34.3
1 - 4	29.3	54.3
Adult With Group	22.0	11.4
<u>Number of Child-Initiated Verbal Contacts:</u>		
0	61.0	62.9
1 - 4	17.0	25.7
Adult With Group	22.0	11.4
<u>Number of Child-Initiated Contacts:</u>		
0	34.0	65.7
1 - 4	43.9	22.9
Adult With Group	22.0	11.4

TABLE 3

RESULTS OF INDIVIDUAL OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Items on Individual Observation Schedule	General Mercer (N = 41)	Comparison Group (N = 35)
<u>Requesting Activities:</u>		
Mainly Verbal	26.3	31.4
Mainly Gestural	39.0	14.3
No Observation	34.1	54.3
<u>Initiating Activity:</u>		
Self-initiated	80.5	71.4
Not Self-initiated	19.5	28.6
<u>Peer Interaction:</u>		
Positive	22.0	20.0
Negative	9.7	8.6
Neither	68.3	71.4
<u>Talking to Peers:</u>		
No Talking	24.4	17.1
Minimal Talking	17.1	20.0
Friendly Interchange	56.1	60.0
Other	2.4	2.9
<u>Accepting Limits:</u>		
Doesn't Accept Limits	0.0	
Sometimes Accepts Limits	17.1	17.1
Accepts Limits	82.9	82.9

RESULTS OF PEABODY PICTURE VOCABULARY TEST

TABLE 4

ENGLISH TEST - MEAN SCORES

General Mercer mean score = 26.83 (N = 37) is compared with the following:

Comparison Group	(N)	Mean Score	t
Total Comparison Group	(39)	30.36	-1.23
Italian Background Children	(16)	26.38	- .16
All Non-English Speaking Background Children	(32)	27.25	- .15
English-Speaking Background Children	(6)	46.50	-3.72*

* p < .005

TABLE 5

ITALIAN TEST - MEAN SCORES

General Mercer (N = 40)	Italian Background Comparison Group (N = 16)	t
18.53	17.19	.52

TABLE 6

COMPARISON OF MEAN SCORES OF DIALECT AND ITALIAN-SPEAKING PERFORMANCE OF GENERAL MERCER STUDENTS

Italian (N = 17)	Dialect (N = 17)	t
17.1	18.9	.62

RESULTS OF TEACHERS' RATINGS

The mean scores assigned by teachers are presented and compared below. The maximum scores were 20 and 40 on the competency and rating questionnaires respectively.

TABLE 7

Test	General Mercer (N = 40)	Comparison Group (N = 16)	t
	<u>Italian Scores</u>	<u>English Scores</u>	
Language Competency	17.33	14.81	3.07*
Teacher Rating Questionnaire	27.60	21.38	2.30*
	<u>English Scores</u>	<u>English Scores</u>	
Language Competency	11.78	14.81	-2.05*
Teacher Rating Questionnaire	21.05	21.38	-.08

* $p < .025$

TABLE 8

COMPARING GENERAL MERCER ITALIAN AND ENGLISH SCORES

Test	Italian	English	t
Language Competency	17.33	11.78	6.31*
Teacher Rating Questionnaire	27.60	21.05	2.87*

* $p < .025$

RESULTS OF PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

All table entries are percentages of the total number of observations (N). Statistical calculations were made on the raw frequencies. Yates' correction was used for tables with one degree of freedom and Fisher's Exact Test was performed on larger tables. Whenever this latter test suggested significance, the traditional Pearson chi-square procedure was followed. Significant tables are marked with an asterisk (*).

TABLE 9

RESULTS OF PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Items on Parent Questionnaire	General Mercer (N = 40)	Comparison Group (N = 15)
<u>Number of Older Siblings:</u>		
0	30.0	33.3
1	37.5	46.7
2 or More	32.5	20.0
<u>Grandparents Live with Child:</u>		
Yes	10.0	6.7
No	90.0	93.3
<u>Other Persons Live with Child:</u>		
Yes	17.5	26.7
No	82.5	73.3
<u>Father's Occupational Level:</u>		
Unskilled or Semi-Skilled	85.0	66.7
Higher	15.0	33.3
(A collapsed 7-point Blishen Scale was used to determine occupational status. Most parents fell into the lowest category.)		
<u>Child's Mother Works:</u>		
Yes	35.0	13.3
No	65.0	86.7
<u>Child's Birthplace:</u>		
Canada	90.0	86.7
Italy	10.0	0.0
Elsewhere	0.0	13.3

...continued

TABLE 9
(continued)

Items on Parent Questionnaire	General Mercer (N = 40)	Comparison Group (N = 15)
<u>Father's Birthplace:</u>		
Southern Italy	45.0	53.3
Central Italy	45.0	26.7
Northern Italy or Sicily	7.5	13.3
Elsewhere	2.5	6.7
<u>Mother's Birthplace:</u>		
Southern Italy	37.5	60.0
Central Italy	47.5	26.7
Northern Italy or Sicily	12.5	13.3
Elsewhere	2.5	0.0
<u>Father Came to Canada:</u>		
Less than 5 Years Ago	17.5	6.7
5 to 10 Years Ago	40.0	66.7
More than 10 Years Ago	42.5	26.7
<u>Mother Came to Canada:</u>		
Less than 5 Years Ago	17.5	6.7
5 to 10 Years Ago	50.0	73.3
More than 10 Years Ago	32.5	20.0
<u>Child's First Language:</u>		
Italian	95.0	73.3
English	2.5	0.0
Both at the Same Time	2.5	13.3
Other	0.0	6.7
No Response	0.0	6.7
<u>Child Understands:</u>		
Mainly Italian	40.0	20.0
Italian & English Equally	40.0	60.0
Mainly English	17.5	6.7
Other	0.0	6.7
No Response	2.5	6.7
<u>Child Speaks:</u>		
Mainly Italian	52.5	26.7
Italian & English Equally	32.5	33.3
Mainly English	12.5	26.7
Other	0.0	6.7
No Response	2.5	6.7

...continued

TABLE 9
(continued)

Items on Parent Questionnaire	General Mercer (N = 40)	Comparison Group (N = 15)
Father Speaks:		
Mainly Italian	67.5	40.0
Italian & English Equally	25.0	40.0
Mainly English	2.5	0.0
Other	0.0	6.7
No Response	0.0	13.3
Mother Speaks:		
Mainly Italian	87.5	66.7
Italian & English Equally	10.0	6.7
Mainly English	2.5	6.7
Other	0.0	6.7
No Response	0.0	13.3
Father Speaks to Child:		
In Italian	72.5	60.0
In Italian & English Equally	20.0	33.3
In English	7.5	0.0
In Some Other Language	0.0	6.7
Mother Speaks to Child:		
In Italian	85.0	66.7
In Italian & English Equally	12.5	20.0
In English	2.5	6.7
In Some Other Language	0.0	6.7
Father Speaks to Mother:		
In Italian	95.0	93.3
In Italian & English Equally	2.5	0.0
In English	2.5	0.0
In Some Other Language	0.0	6.7
Older Siblings Speak to Child:		
In Italian	5.0	13.3
In Italian & English Equally	27.5	13.3
In English	37.5	20.0
No Siblings	30.0	0.0
No Response	0.0	13.3
Child's Babysitter:		
Family	75.0	93.3
Grandparent	10.0	0.0
Other	15.0	0.0
No Response	0.0	6.7

...continued

TABLE 9
(continued)

Items on Parent Questionnaire	General Mercer (N = 40)	Comparison Group (N = 15)
<u>Babysitter Speaks to Child:</u> (for this item only N = 10 for Gen. Mercer and N = 1 for Comparison Group)		
In Italian	70.0	0.0
In Italian & English Equally	20.0	0.0
No Response	10.0	100.0
<u>Previous School Experience:</u>		
None	95.0	100.0
Italian Kindergarten	5.0	0.0
<u>Reading to Child in Italian:</u>		
Never	32.5	33.3
1 - 2 Times per Month	17.5	13.3
1 - 3 Times per Week	37.5	33.3
Daily	10.0	6.7
No Response	2.5	6.7
<u>Reading to Child in English:</u>		
Never	52.5	40.0
1 - 2 Times per Month	10.0	20.0
1 - 3 Times per Week	27.5	20.0
Daily	7.5	6.7
No Response	2.5	6.7
<u>Watching Television on Weekdays in Italian:</u>		
None	62.5	73.3
Less than 1 Hour per Day	32.5	13.3
More than 1 Hour per Day	5.0	6.7
No Response	0.0	6.7
<u>Watching Television on Weekends in Italian:</u>		
None	52.5	66.7
Less than 1 Hour per Day	32.5	20.0
More than 1 Hour per Day	15.0	6.7
No Response	0.0	6.7
<u>Watching Television on Weekdays in English:</u>		
None	0.0	13.3
Less than 1 Hour per Day	20.0	13.3
More than 1 Hour per Day	80.0	66.7
No Response	0.0	6.7
<u>Watching Television on Weekends in English:</u> *		
None	2.5	13.3
Less than 1 Hour per Day	25.0	0.0
More than 1 Hour per Day	72.5	80.0
No Response	0.0	6.7

...continued

TABLE 9
(continued)

Items on Parent Questionnaire	General Mercer (N = 40)	Comparison Group (N = 15)
Number of Talks with Teacher:		
0	0.0	0.0
1 - 2	40.0	40.0
3 - 4	45.0	20.0
More than 4	15.0	26.7
No Response	0.0	6.7
Number of Talks with Teaching Assistant:		
0	32.5	46.7
1 - 2	50.0	33.3
3 - 4	10.0	6.7
More than 4	7.5	6.7
No Response	0.0	6.7
Number of Talks with Principal:		
0	90.0	86.7
1 - 2	10.0	6.7
3 or More	0.0	0.0
No Response	0.0	6.7
Number of Visits to School:*		
0	5.0	20.0
1 - 2	37.5	46.7
3 - 4	37.5	13.3
More than 4	17.5	13.3
No Response	2.5	6.7
Attended Open House:**		
Yes	87.5	26.7
No	12.5	66.7
No Response	0.0	6.7
Attended Interviews with Teacher:**		
Yes	90.0	40.0
No	10.0	53.3
No Response	0.0	6.7
Attended General Meetings:*		
Yes	62.5	20.0
No	37.5	73.3
No Response	0.0	6.7
Attended Other Meetings:		
Yes	15.0	6.7
No	85.0	86.7
No Response	0.0	6.7

* p < .05

** p < .01

...continued

TABLE 9
(continued)

Items on Parent Questionnaire	General Mercer (N = 40)	Comparison Group (N = 15)
<u>Helped With Class:</u>*		
Never	45.0	60.0
Once or Twice	45.0	6.7
More than Twice	7.5	13.3
No Response	2.5	20.0
<u>Was Asked to Help:</u>		
Yes	77.5	46.7
No	15.0	26.7
No Response	7.5	26.7
<u>Volunteered to Help:</u>		
Yes	52.5	53.3
No	40.0	13.3
No Response	7.5	33.3
<u>Willing to Help:</u>		
Yes	87.5	73.3
No	10.0	6.7
No Response	2.5	20.0
<u>Child Talks About School:</u>		
Less than Once per Week	5.0	0.0
2 to 3 Times per Week	15.0	6.7
Daily	80.0	86.7
No Response	0.0	6.7
<u>Parents Asks About School:</u>		
Less than Once per Week	5.0	6.7
2 to 3 Times per Week	22.5	13.3
Daily	72.5	73.3
No Response	0.0	6.7
TOPICS DISCUSSED BY CHILD:		
<u>Friends:</u> Yes	80.0	66.7
No	20.0	20.0
No Response	0.0	13.3
<u>Teacher:</u> Yes	90.0	66.7
No	10.0	20.0
<u>Teaching Assistant:</u> Yes	57.5	60.0
No	42.5	26.7

...continued

TABLE 9
(continued)

Items on Parent Questionnaire	General Mercer (N = 40)	Comparison Group (N = 15)
TOPICS DISCUSSED BY CHILD (continued):		
<u>Stories:</u> Yes	80.0	66.7
No	20.0	20.0
<u>Games:</u> Yes	85.0	73.3
No	15.0	13.3
<u>Child's Behaviour:</u> Yes	47.5	33.3
No	52.5	53.3
<u>School in General:</u> Yes	62.5	46.7
No	37.5	40.0
TOPICS DISCUSSED BY PARENTS:		
<u>Friends</u> *: Yes	75.0	33.3
No	25.0	53.3
<u>Teacher:</u> Yes	75.0	46.7
No	25.0	40.0
<u>Teaching Assistant:</u> Yes	50.0	46.7
No	50.0	40.0
<u>Stories:</u> Yes	85.0	53.3
No	15.0	33.3
<u>Games:</u> Yes	80.0	46.7
No	20.0	40.0
<u>Child's Behaviour</u> *: Yes	72.5	26.7
No	27.5	60.0
<u>School in General:</u> Yes	62.5	46.7
No	37.5	40.0

* p < .05

175