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THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE SPECIALIST AND THE BEGINNING TEACHER,
REPORT ON THE SECTION MEETING AT THE NATIONAL TEPS CONFERENCE
(NEW YORK CITY, JUNE 25, 1965).

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THE SECTION MEETING WAS CONCERNED WITH THE ROLE OF THE
FOREIGN LANGUAGE SPECIALIST IN THE COMMUNITY AS A SOURCE OF
INFORMATION ON FOREIGN CULTURES AND PROBLEMS OF PUPILS FROM
NON-ENGLISH-SPEAKING HOMES, AND AS A HELP TO THE BEGINNING
TEACHER IN EXPLAINING DISTRICT RESOURCES, SERVICES, AND
ELECTRONIC AIDS. SUGGESTIONS FOR HELPING THE BEGINNING
TEACHER INCLUDE REDUCING HIS TEACHING LOAD, GIVING HIM THE
MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION PROFICIENCY TESTS, OFFERING PRE-
AND IN-SERVICE COURSES, AND ENCOURAGING CLASS VISITATION.
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"The Foreign Language Specialist and the Beginning Teacher"

Report on the Section meeting at the National TEPS Conference

June 25, 1965, New York City

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I. NOTES FROM THE MEETING

The section meeting on the Role of the Foreign Language Specialist in Helping the Beginning Teacher (Friday, June 25, 1965, 1:30--2:30 p.m.) under the chairmanship of Professor Howard L. Nostrand, was attended by 18 persons.

In opening the discussion, the chairman pointed out that, apart from assisting beginning foreign-language teachers, the foreign-language specialist can also provide information and guidance to non-language teachers, on the subject of foreign cultures and cross-cultural education. Discussion guidelines on this subject prepared by Professor Nostrand for some recent NDEA Foreign Language Institutes may be of interest in this connection.

One specific need of many classroom teachers that the Foreign Language specialist should attend to, another discussant (Pap) remarked, is a better understanding of the language-and-culture problems of pupils from non-English-speaking homes (such as the Puerto Ricans in New York).

Some lively discussion revolved around the problem of elementary school teachers, in various parts of the country (e.g., Chicago), who are asked to assist French or Spanish TV programs in their classrooms without having had adequate pre-service training in the language or in FLES methods. It was the feeling of the group that such FL programs should not be launched until properly trained teachers are available. One discussant (Pap) pointed out that the lingering of this problem is at least partly due to the fact that most states still have not gotten around to setting up FLES certification requirements (California is one exception). A temporary stop-gap measure, which at least permits pupils to hear the foreign language spoken with correct pronunciation and grammar, is the use of foreign-born parents or other native speakers of the language, as volunteer "informants" to assist the teacher in the classroom. These of course add to the number of beginning teachers a school has to assimilate.

Another discussant (Balakian) suggested - and this was acclaimed by the group as a recommendation which the chairman might pass on to the organizations involved - that the various AAT's (American Association of Teachers of French; of Spanish and Portuguese; etc.) be urged to imitate the recent action of the mathematics teachers' association, viz., to offer an initial year of free membership to beginning teachers of the language in question.

Other recommendations arising out of the discussion were:

That the teaching load of beginning FL teachers be kept at a moderate level, so that these can spend some time on improving their preparation by visiting FL labs, observing specialized FL teachers in class, etc. (Appropriate FL organizations should be invited to support and formalize this recommendation).

That all future FL teachers be subjected to the new MLA proficiency tests (or some equivalent) before graduating from college, to make sure they have adequate language competence when starting out on their careers.

That more time be given to subject-matter sections in subsequent TEPS Conferences.

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II. SUPPLEMENT TO THE NOTES

Mr. Jermaine D. Arendt, Consultant in Foreign Languages, Minneapolis Public Schools, in a preliminary contribution to the section meeting, outlines as follows the procedures used in his school system to help a beginning teacher get a proper start:

- "1. New teachers report for two days of meetings previous to the opening of school. One-half day of these meetings is spent in discussion with the foreign language specialist.
- "2. Two or three after school in-service meetings are held for new teachers for the purpose of dealing in some depth with instruction problems, objectives, use of equipment, and so on.
- "3. Early visits are made to the teacher in his school. This visiting may or may not include visitation of the class.
- "4. New teachers are encouraged to visit classes of more experienced teachers particularly senior or junior high schools in their own area. The teacher may be provided with substitute service in order to free him for such visitation."

Mr. Philip Baudin, Helping Teacher in Foreign Languages, Seattle Public Schools, likewise in an advance contribution to the section, summarizes as follows:

"I. Contributions of Foreign Language Specialist:

- "A. Help to the new teacher in knowing district or county resources for audio-visual materials or helpful organizations (consulates, etc.)
- "B. Explanation of special district services (tape duplication, curriculum guides, bibliographies, native visitor program).

- "C. Familiarization with electronic aids, from tape recorders through complete labs, and projectors of various types.
- "D. Thorough orientation to the philosophy, objectives, and acceptable methods of Foreign Language instruction in the school system.

...An "issue of one of the already existing journals might be devoted to in-depth discussion of the role of the career teacher or consultant. (DFL of NEA?)

- II. "...local FL associations and the AAT's might well consider placing before their memberships the recommendations of the TEPS group, and perhaps get the viewpoints of teachers who have taught only for one or two years on the kinds of help which they did not get and which would have been of inestimable value to them."

Toward A Bibliography of Suggestions For Assisting The Beginning FL Teacher

The following items have been suggested by Miss Helen M. Kwapil, Director of Foreign Languages, Seattle Public Schools; Professor Clemens L. Hallman of Pennsylvania State University; and Mr. Douglas Vernon Parker, a teacher in Victoria, British Columbia, who has recently completed an M.A. thesis which presents a critical bibliography of developments in language teacher training since 1960.

Boyer, Mildred V. "Language institutes and their future," PMLA, September, 1964, 7 pp.¹ Suggested emphases for planning FL institutes for which there is increasing need, among them for Teachers of FLES, for Teachers of American children whose mother tongue is not English, and for television teachers. Attention is also given to problems related to teacher qualification and certification.

Green, Gerald R. "Supervision in the foreign language classroom: guidelines for the department chairman," Modern Language Journal, XLVII (December, 1963), p. 366-368.

Grittner, Frank M. "The influence of the State FL Supervisor upon FL instruction in America," MLJ, February, 1965, 4 pp.¹ The highlight of this article is a list of twelve recommendations, formulated by the National Council of State Supervisors of FLs, for providing good FL instruction at the elementary and secondary levels.

Hallman, Clemens L. "The role of State foreign language supervisor," paper presented at first Southern Conference on Language Teaching; Atlanta, Georgia, February 4-6, 1965. Ditto'd, 5 pp.

Holm, Lydia. "How do you rate?" Hispania, XLVI (September, 1963), p. 605-609. For beginning FL teacher seminar.

McKim, Lester W. Blueprint for Greater Foreign Language Teaching Articulation, "The work of the local supervisor. . .," page 19, Bloomington, Indiana, Indiana Language Program, May, 1965.

McKinney, James E. "In-service training: Ways and Means," MLJ, December, 1964, 4 pp.¹ Recommendations for in-service training of FL teachers at the local level.

1. Available at the Publications Section, Materials Center Modern Language Association, 4 Washington Place, New York, N.Y. 10003.