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ABSTRACT

The core of this report is three papers which focus on the current status and function of the foreign language supervisor. Klaus Mueller's paper, "Responsibilities of the Foreign Language Teacher Trainer", advocates the design and development of achievement tests that would validate teacher competency. Jermaine Arendt's, "The Local Supervisor's Role in Foreign Language Teacher Education", reexamines the role of the supervisor, particularly in the light of government withdrawal of support from foreign language programs. Kenneth Lester's, "Responsibilities of the State Foreign Language Supervisor", proposes joint sovereignty for teacher education, shared by colleges, state departments of education, and public school systems. Final recommendations concerning this subject, prepared by discussion groups at the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) 1970, Los Angeles, preconference workshop, are included. (RL)

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THE SUPERVISOR'S ROLE IN FOREIGN-LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING

Workpapers and Presentations

of the

ACTFL Pre- Conference Workshop

23-25 November 1970, Los Angeles, California

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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I. INTRODUCTION

Lester McKim

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The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) combined efforts with the National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Languages to conduct a three-day symposium on FL teacher training from 23 to 25 November 1970 immediately preceeding the 1970 ACTFL Conference in Los Angeles. More than 100 participants, from all parts of the United States, met to consider the topic "The Supervisor's Role in Foreign Language Teacher Training." The Symposium in Los Angeles was part of ACTFL's continuing effort to find and publicize possible solutions to professional problems.

The ACTFL Symposium was designed to build on the work done during a Seminar of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) held in California in May 1970, and a Symposium in Seattle in October 1970 sponsored by the Washington Foreign Language Program. Leaders of those symposia gave oral reports in Los Angeles and provided written reports for distribution to the participants. Those written reports are now available in published form: Donald D. Walsh and Carl Dellaccio, "The Preparation of the Teacher in Spanish and Portuguese: A Conference Report," Hispania, 53(Dec 1970), p. 972-75; and Victor E. Hanzeli and William D. Love, New Teachers for New Students, Seattle, Wash.: Wash. Foreign Language Program; New York: ACTFL, 1970.[1]

In addition to consideration of the past conferences, participants heard and discussed papers prepared by Klaus Mueller, University of California at Berkeley, "The Responsibilities of the FL Teacher Trainer;" Kenneth Lester, Connecticut State FL Supervisor, "The Responsibilities of the State FL Supervisor for Teacher Training;" and Jermaine Arendt, Minneapolis City FL Supervisor,

[1]Available from the Modern Language Association Materials Center, 62 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10011.

"The Responsibilities of the Local Supervisor for Teacher Training."

The Symposium consisted of a series of alternating large and small group discussions which focused on the papers presented. In each case, discussion leaders were from the same branch of the profession as the presenter. A group of recorders kept notes on all discussions and helped form final recommendations.

These three meetings held in 1970 reflected the general professional concern for the state of FL teaching today. Hanzeli and Love began an Epilogue to their report with this statement: "Ancient Chinese wisdom states that 'It furthers one to have somewhere to go.' Many times during the Seattle Symposium, people asked just where that 'somewhere' was, for it seemed that as both a symposium and a profession we were not getting very far." (p. 75)

A similar feeling of malaise in Los Angeles resulted in heated discussions and disagreements as well as in areas of consensus. For example, participants recognized the current emphasis on teacher accountability, but they were not willing to recommend final FL teacher certification based on a measurement of student performance. On the other hand, there was a general call for a closer cooperation among local and state supervisors and college teacher trainers.

Supervisors are more involved in FL teacher training than ever before, especially at the post-B.A. level. Through cooperative planning, teacher-training programs can benefit from the strengths of all three groups.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINER

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(Note: In an important sense, what follows is a discussion of responsibilities of foreign language teacher trainers. I am, however, taking some liberty and am interpreting "responsibilities" to include an issue which seems to me to be of utmost importance in our struggle for survival and in our search for the improvement of foreign language teaching.)

Recent years have witnessed much improvement in teacher-training courses on every level. The most difficult aspect in such training is the fixing of responsibility for subsequent teacher competency in the classroom.

The content of teacher-training courses has been described in much detail. Guidelines for teacher-education programs in modern foreign languages have been issued by the Modern Language Association of America (MLA) and by many experts in methodology. Objectives of teacher-education programs are extensively specified in these descriptions. Through the MLA Proficiency Test for Teachers and Advanced Students, teacher candidates' achievement in seven areas of competence can at least be partially evaluated and their teaching skill can be appraised by training experts, supervisors, and others charged with the administration of programs. Finally, guidelines for certification are becoming better established and a teacher's "readiness to teach" is now certified in a wide variety of ways.

There continues to be, however, a surprising lack of unanimity as to the minimum or maximum content of teacher-training programs, inservice teaching, practice teaching, and the like. As a consequence, we find a wide range of teacher competencies due to the differing contents of programs and greatly varying state and local requirements.[1] One of the most serious problems confronting us is that once the teacher has been trained, the methods teacher, supervisor, or department head responsible for the courses which the new teacher is assigned to teach is virtually unaccountable for the competency of the teacher. This state of affairs constitutes lack of responsibility of the system.

What we desperately need is a program for testing the performance of newly trained teachers in terms of student achievement. I suggest that the best way to evaluate teacher performance is through thorough testing of student achievement after each semester, each year, and at the end of each course sequence to determine whether desired proficiencies are actually achieved.

In order to put teeth into such procedures, advancement and pay of teachers would, at least in part, be based on the results of performance tests of students. One of the criteria of good teaching, after all, is not whether the teacher is potentially able or is certified to be proficient in his field, but whether he, in fact, does impart the knowledge and skills to his students which are specified as goals in curriculum.

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[1]For a survey of State certification practices and requirements for modern foreign languages, consult Douglas C. Sheppard, "Certifying Teachers of Modern Foreign Languages for American Public Schools--1969." Foreign Language Annals, 3 (May 1970), 609-24.

I would suggest going a step further. I would propose that tests of student achievment, in fact the entire testing program, be developed by the professional organization most directly involved. The American Association of Teachers of German, as an example, would be responsible for the testing program of German students; the American Association of Teachers of French for French students, and so forth. This would assure that experienced teachers would have a hand in formulating and agreeing upon the contents of the tests, thereby specifying the competencies to be achieved and stating how a given series of tests should be used. The professional organization would then become the certifying agency to the schools, the school boards, and to the parents of students and the ultimate guardians of the foreign language curricula.[2]

The success of a teacher and programs should be judged by the extent to which students prove to have competencies as measured by achievement tests. Eventually, students should be free to attend any school or program they consider best, based on the results of the testing program. This would make it possible for students not achieving the prescribed or hoped-for results to transfer to other schools or be assigned to other teachers. Any such

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[2]An example of this type of activity would be the work of the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) Committee on Teacher Training, chaired by Royal L. Tinsley, Jr. (University of Arizona, Tucson); or the current discussions of the FLES Committee of the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers, chaired by Gladys Lipton (New York City Board of Education) and Will-Robert Teetor (Ithaca City School District), with the Bureau of Certification of the New York State Department of Education.

shift of students--especially in the public schools--is, of course, costly and administratively complicated. A plan of this type would, however, put salutory pressures on school systems, administrators, and teachers to succeed the first time around. Teachers, no matter how well trained, who are unable to perform would, as a consequence, be weeded out early. After the probationary period, the results of test scores of a teacher's students should become the permanent record of the teacher and would be seriously considered for purposes of earning salary increases, promotions, and the like.

In order for such a system to succeed, it is necessary that the professional organizations make available remedial programs, refresher courses, and additional training for teachers who, because of their initial poor training or for other reasons, prove to be deficient. Such remedial courses and training should be required and the teacher should receive "inservice" credit of one sort or another as an incentive. The ultimate test of the teacher's ability would consist of the record of the achievements of his students on the achievement test scores.

Obviously, care must be taken that the competencies to be achieved are clearly defined and set forth in detail. A school or a program having an audio-lingual aim must obviously test students in the audio-lingual skills. Programs having reading goals must test reading skills. At advanced levels universal tests measuring overall ability of students to function in the language in all sense modalities should be administered in order to measure not only specific outcomes, but general competencies.

Undoubtedly many teachers would resist this approach to improve teaching. Some, perhaps most, teacher unions, school systems, and professional organizations

are likely (at least at first) to protest. The familiar objection that teaching for high scores on tests would result in "bad teaching" would be advanced by some, despite the success of such testing programs as the New York Regents Examinations, the Advanced Placement Tests, the MLA Proficiency Tests, and other existing and successful evaluation instruments. During numerous private discussions of this issue with teachers (neophytes as well as experienced teachers), I have come to the conclusion that there exists today greater open-mindedness regarding achievement testing than existed only a few years ago. In any event, today's foreign language teachers are willing to reexamine their teaching practices and move closer to the concept of student achievement as a measure of the success or failure of teaching strategies and course designs. For this reason it is all the more important that achievement tests be well developed. Teaching for the tests must become a desirable and specified objective.

Given such a program of responsibility with proper checks and balances, the painfully familiar problem of articulation and placement of students would in part be solved. This would be achieved through the more unified and national approach of testing and through agreement on the competencies to be achieved at any given level and after a given sequence of instruction by teachers and their professional associations. Some professional associations are now developing definitions of the various stages and content of the foreign language curriculum.[3] Ultimately, these efforts could lead to the development of national model curricula by each of the language groups. These model curricula would take into account the varieties of instructional settings and program goals found in various states and schools, and would achieve a desirable degree of uniformity of goals and definitions of achievement levels.

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[3]One example of this is the work of the AATG Committee on Articulation and Curriculum, chaired by Frank M. Grittner (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction).

The establishment of national model curricula would go hand in hand with the development of national achievement or proficiency tests and would make the foreign language curriculum competitive and effective in the light of our mobile society and in the light of the keen competition for the educational dollar and time. These efforts would constitute a fresh and sorely needed move to reduce the dismally large number of underachievers and dropouts in foreign languages.[4] At the same time, accountability would be clearly established and the purposes and objectives of foreign language programs would be specifically defined. Parents and students are legitimately fed up with the seemingly unsolvable problems of articulation and the observable lack of achievement of so many of our foreign language learners.

A great amount of time has been spent in analyzing the performance of teachers by such devices as closed-circuit television teaching, micro-teaching followed by critiques, interaction analysis, and other diagnostic and training efforts. Too little time has been spent in surveying and constructing questionnaires for students and developing tests to examine student competencies. To put it bluntly, we need to spend less time in the future on specifying objectives for teacher performance and more time on describing performance by students and measuring such performance on a routine and regular basis.

To sum up: I'm advocating the design and development of student achievement tests that are sufficiently comprehensive and varied in order to validate teacher competency. Our considerable efforts in designing teacher-training programs and providing detailed analyses and descriptions of course objectives have formed the basis for specifications of teacher performance. The failure of so many of our programs is not due to a lack of detailed program descriptions, but rather to the inability of teachers to perform in the classroom to the extent necessary to achieve the specified goals.

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[4]For an examination of this situation see Edgardo E. Torres, Foreign Language Dropouts: Problems and Solutions (New York: MLA/ERIC; Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1970).

The responsibilities of the foreign language teacher trainer would take on an additional dimension. Not only would he need to continue to train new foreign language teachers properly, but he would henceforth be concerned that such training is evaluated and proven adequate through the systematic student testing program just described. Through this program he would receive the much needed feed-back to effect changes in the methods courses. Just as the professional organizations would take on the responsibilities of teacher performance "certification," the teacher trainers through these organizations and in cooperation with schools and institutions of higher learning would take on the responsibilities of coordinating training and monitoring the performance of teachers on all levels so that in the future they will be successful as measured by the achievement of their students.

III. THE LOCAL SUPERVISOR'S ROLE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

by

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The increased interest in foreign language learning and teaching furthered to a large extent by federal funds during the 1960's, had as one of its results the creation of supervisory positions in foreign languages at the state and local levels. Many of these supervisors have played important roles in teacher-education programs, both in cooperating with established programs at colleges and universities and in creating their own courses, workshops, and institutes. The supervisor-created teacher-education programs were set up to remedy real or imagined shortcomings in past and existing college programs for teachers.

Now that the profession is faced with elimination of the federal monies which supported a great part of foreign language teacher education during the last eleven years, it is appropriate to examine the continuing and perhaps enlarged role that supervisors may play in this area.

The leaders of this conference suggested that it might be enlightening to provide a supervisor's assessment of current college and university programs of pre-service and graduate education for foreign language teachers.

Any such assessment must recognize the great improvement in undergraduate and graduate programs since the advent of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA). Ten years ago it was fairly common to meet both experienced and inexperienced secondary and elementary foreign language teachers who possessed only minuscule competence in any of the language skills. Now supervisors are meeting increasingly competent young applicants for teaching positions. Most of them, even if they have not yet been abroad, have acquired considerable competence in all four skills. They have had methods courses and practice

teaching, a condition not so often encountered a few years ago. In metropolitan centers one can now insist on foreign travel and/or study as a prerequisite for all major and most minor positions. The now sizeable number of graduates in foreign languages means that we can become increasingly selective in filling positions.

Colleges, even without federal aid, are taking an increasing responsibility for post-graduate programs of many kinds: summer workshops, conferences, institutes, M.A.T. programs and more. We applaud the attempts to continue NDEA-type institutes overseas, to develop other overseas-study possibilities, and to seek avenues which can lead to solutions for other special needs.

On the other hand, some colleges have only recently begun to seriously question the appropriateness of content of regular pre-service programs for secondary school foreign language teachers. As a result, methods courses often stress a kind of ritual methodology which, in its pure form, is altogether inappropriate for regular school use. The stress has too often been on patterns of teacher behavior rather than on student learning. Language content is often heavily literature oriented rather than area studies-humanities oriented with the result that new teachers know little about arts in general, history, and contemporary civilization. When asked to recommend an ideal undergraduate, foreign language, teacher-education program, participants in an institute for cooperating teachers suggested a program of study quite different from that found in most colleges.[1] It did not, however, differ greatly from recommendations of the Modern Foreign Language Teacher Preparation Study of the Modern Language Association and the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification.[2]

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[1]Dale L. Lange, Final Report, EPDA Institute for Cooperating Teachers (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1970).

[2]F. André Paquette, ed., "Guidelines for Teacher Education Programs in Modern Foreign Languages," Modern Language Journal, 50 (1966), 342-44.

Arendt and Lange[3] have charged that student-teaching experiences, the culminating activity in a teacher-education program, suffer from a policy of benign neglect. What should be a carefully designed learning experience could more often be described as sink or swim. Indiscriminate selection of cooperating teachers and lack of communication between methods teachers and cooperating teachers ensure an unstable situation.

Very serious is the reluctance of colleges, state departments of education, and local school districts to demand proficiency of graduates. No amount of excuses really pardons the fact that the overwhelming majority of graduates with bachelor's degrees are not really proficient in the language they expect to teach.[4] Examination of school programs in Western Europe shows a higher degree of teacher competence in foreign language skills. Why should the world's most affluent society settle for less?

Carroll's study shows the sizeable benefits of foreign study for improving proficiency, yet the vast majority of American colleges and state certification agencies do not require such study and/or residence.

Especially necessary and usually absent in the program of the undergraduate is a period of pre-professional counseling and orientation to foreign language teaching. Such counseling should come at the latest in the sophomore year and probably include a period of observation and teacher-aide work in the schools and a chance to meet with foreign language teachers and supervisors to establish a realistic attitude regarding proficiency requirements and employment possibilities.

Many critics are presently pointing to what they call the "crisis" or even "failure" of American public education. All institutions concerned with teacher education must share responsibility for the fact that preservice teacher-education

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[3]Jermaine D. Arendt and Dale L. Lange, "An EPDA Institute for Cooperating Teachers in German," Unterrichtspraxis, 3 (1970), 160-66.

[4]John Carroll, "Levels Attained by Language Majors Near Graduation from College," Foreign Language Annals, 1 (1967), 131-51.

programs have not kept pace with the rapid developments in public education. Problems of teaching in the center city, use of instructional technology, flexible schedules, and independent study often receive rather scant attention. As a result, teachers are being asked to perform an increasingly difficult job with a background of experience that is years out-of-date.

Present college programs suffer from a lack of what business calls market research. College staffs need to consult with teachers and supervisors in the field to determine needs in schools. They should ask recent graduates to evaluate college courses as to their usefulness in preparing teachers. Such feedback would bring into serious question some of what is currently taught to those preparing to teach.

The Local Supervisor

In all honesty, however, supervisors would also receive mixed reviews from teachers with whom they work. Criticisms are likely to be: "he's never out in the schools," "hasn't taught a class in years," "treats you as though you don't know a thing," "he's in an ivory tower." Although we want to cry "foul", we need to listen because such comments are symptomatic of something in our pattern of operation that is not right.

Note the thread that runs through the comments. They indicate a failure in communication between supervisor and teacher, a failure mainly on the part of the supervisor to demonstrate the relevance of his work to the real work of the schools, helping students learn. That failure can be disastrous, especially for the supervisor. Recently a large school district went through a fiscal crisis and teachers were asked to help determine where economies should be made. The teaching staff rated supervisors only one step better than the cutoff point below which programs were recommended for elimination. Needless-to-say, a sizeable and vocal minority urged that supervisors be sent back to full-time teaching. Now a special committee in that school system has recommended that those supervisors be given special training in leadership and group processes. We notice that the diagnosis was not a lack of subject matter expertise but of

interpersonal relationships. Participants in an NDEA leadership institute seemed to agree.[5]

The pertinence of the above incident is that in teachers' eyes the supervisor's effectiveness is mainly based on his responsiveness to what our jargon calls their "felt" needs rather than projects which he alone may conceive. It is based on his ability to get things done which teachers want done. We will return to this subject a little later.

Teacher education is, in any case, generally recognized as one of the major responsibilities of the supervisor. His educational activities can be divided into informal and formal programs.

Informal Programs. Informal activities are those which are not clearly designated as courses and workshops in pre-service and in-service education. They include visitation of classes and post-observation discussion, arranging teacher visits to other classrooms, other teacher-supervisor conferences, department meetings, meetings with department chairmen, program evaluation by outside consultants (i.e., state education officials or regional evaluating agencies), and the like.

Much of the effective work of the supervisor will be on a one-to-one basis with a teacher. Specific learning problems, teaching techniques, and curriculum can be discussed at the moment that it is relevant for that particular teacher. Treated like a colleague, the teacher has a real opportunity to question, voice objections, state opinions, and ask for help. The idea exchange is more likely to affect the thinking and performance of both supervisor and teacher than the formal course.

The difficulty is that the supervisor usually does not have time to work intensively for an extended period with each teacher. Sometimes because of scheduling problems he misses that relevant moment mentioned earlier. The formal course allows the teacher other opportunities to seek solutions to his

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[5]Salvador Alvarez, et al., "Report of the Leadership Committee," Foreign Language Leadership Institute Working Committee Reports, ed. Lester W. McKim (Ellensburg, Wash.: Central Washington State College, 1967), pp. 150-67.

teaching problems.

Formal Programs. As a person concerned with prospective foreign language teachers in his school system, the foreign language supervisor must maintain warm professional relationships with local colleges educating foreign language teachers. He must inform these colleagues of changes occurring in local elementary and secondary schools and urge changes in college programs to meet those challenges. He must try to arrange appearances before methods classes to present a picture of concerns in the public schools. He should at least occasionally teach a methods class himself if his schedule and a college will permit. The supervisor can provide a valuable service to foreign language teachers in his district by informing them of post-graduate opportunities which meet their needs.

However, the local supervisor must not become so involved with college courses that he cannot tend to the particular in-service needs of his own school district. Only he, working with his teachers, can develop a staff education program which will meet these needs.

An important qualification in the preceding paragraph is the phrase "working with his teachers." There is a rising demand on the part of teachers for involvement in decision making. This rising professionalism means that the character of leadership must change. Teachers want the supervisors to do things for them, not to them. They want a facilitator, not a boss. This attitude creates a whole new milieu in which we must function. Teachers are very busy and have a tremendous drain on their energies during a typical day. Consequently only a superb in-service course can be justified and it must be a course that the teacher recognizes as valuable. Otherwise he will not enroll or he will be an early dropout. Even if the supervisor can somehow force attendance, he cannot force real involvement by a reluctant participant.

The formal, school district in-service program commonly runs anywhere from a single half-day session to the length of a normal college course. It may be taught by the supervisor, district teachers, or other lay or professional persons including college staff members. Besides working with teachers to initiate the course, the supervisor will plan it with the course leader, publicize it, and seek an evaluation from participating teachers.

Some of the many kinds of possibilities for teacher-education programs within the school district are the following:

1. Orienting new teachers to the school district's ongoing foreign language program
2. Creating opportunities for teachers to practice their foreign language and thus maintain and improve skills
3. Providing information on contemporary culture and civilization in the foreign country
4. Providing a flow of information and experiences regarding current trends in teaching and learning foreign languages
5. Helping teachers adapt their instruction to other changes occurring in the schools
6. Helping teachers update the foreign language curriculum (including choosing instructional materials)
7. Helping teachers develop and use a wide range of textbook-related materials including those for instructional technology.

Some successful staff development courses offered at the district level are the following:

Transparency Workshop (Two Phase). In the first phase, three teachers demonstrated transparencies they had developed for foreign language teaching. Participants had an opportunity to examine and discuss various materials for the transparency production. In phase two, participants visited various work stations to learn about and produce various kinds of transparencies. All teachers went home with 20 to 30 finished transparencies which they could use in their classes. The

entire workshop required 1½ days of released time.

Developing Textbook Related Materials. After one year of use, teachers had many complaints about the textbook and other materials purchased from a commercial publisher. A teacher team working during the summer developed teaching packages for a sizeable number of chapters. Packages contain a list of chapter objectives stated in behavioral terms, suggested techniques, transparency masters, worksheets, games, flashcards, and tests. Materials were demonstrated and distributed to all teachers in a pre-school workshop. Teacher teams were paid for 10 half-day sessions, and a clerk worked for nine additional weeks preparing the material.

Culture and Civilization Courses. Teachers requested staff development courses stressing modern life in the foreign country and giving them an opportunity to hear and speak the foreign language. Native speakers in the community were employed to give presentations and lead discussions on such topics as Popular Music, The Mass Media, Black Literature in French, Sports, Cooking, The Modern Film. Teachers from surrounding districts were also invited to enroll at a fee. Credits were awarded by the school district.

Education Professions Development Act (EPDA) Institute for Cooperating Teachers. A school district, a neighboring university, and the state department of education jointly developed an EPDA proposal for improving supervision of student teachers. The application was approved, resulting in a year-long cooperative effort to develop new strategies of teaching and supervision. Participating teachers received graduate credit. A number of changes in the teacher-education program are planned as a result.

Local teachers and supervisors are exhibiting creativity in dealing with teaching problems. Supervisors must encourage teachers who wish to try new approaches to problems and not demand orthodox behavior. Successful efforts then need to be quickly made known to others even if the procedures challenge established ideas.

The State Foreign Language Supervisor

The responsibilities of the state and local supervisor have many apparent similarities. Many of the innovative projects of recent years have been encouraged by state supervisors working directly with teachers. Two examples are the Teaching of World History in German program in Wisconsin[6] and the non-graded language classes in Minnesota.[7]

The state supervisor, in addition, has certain leverage which uniquely allows him to effect change in foreign language programs. He can, together with colleges and universities, develop guidelines for foreign language teacher education and, working with state certification departments, see that only teachers meeting the guidelines are likely to be certified.

He can bring the regulatory apparatus of the state to bear upon poor teacher-education programs and school districts which hire unqualified teachers.

Because of his contacts with other foreign language supervisors, he is in an excellent position to maintain a flow of information to and from other states regarding developments in foreign language learning. Through newsletters and workshops he can disseminate this information.[8]

Like the local supervisor he can provide consultant services at the local district level and encourage building and district-wide leadership by promising staff members.

The state supervisor is most successful who establishes good working relationships with teachers and administrators in local school districts and colleges as well as colleagues in his own department.

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[6]Helmut A. Keitel, "Development and Dissemination of Materials for the Teaching of World History in a Foreign Language (German)," Modern Language Journal, 54 (1970), 112-15.

[7]Percy Pearing, Nongraded Foreign Language Classes, ERIC Focus Reports on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, No. 4 (New York: MLA/ERIC, 1969).

[8]Frank M. Grittner, "The Influence of the State Foreign Language Supervisor upon Foreign Language Instruction in America," Modern Language Journal, 49 (1965), 91-93.

Conclusions

1. Colleges will continue to provide the bulk of teacher education.
2. College programs probably will undergo considerable change to make them more relevant to the changing needs of public education.
3. Supervisors and teachers, particularly recent graduates, should be involved in the determination of changes in college teacher-education programs
4. A close liaison should be developed between college methods teachers, practice teaching departments, state and local supervisors, and cooperating teachers.
5. States, regions, and school districts should develop their own staff development programs to meet pressing needs that colleges can not satisfy.
6. New challenges for the teacher will constantly create new teacher-education opportunities for the supervisor.
7. The supervisor should encourage teachers to develop innovative ideas for instruction and to demonstrate successful approaches to his colleagues.
8. The success of the supervisor in undertaking school district and state teacher-education programs will be determined in great part by the strength of the teacher's conviction that the programs will help him become a better teacher.

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IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATE FOREIGN LANGUAGE SUPERVISOR

by

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Current Programs

Have great strides been made in foreign language teacher education in the last decade? If so, we should not be concerned that interest in foreign language study is waning--outstanding teachers will continue to find students interested. If not, what positive action have we taken to improve conditions?

We have attempted to improve foreign language education on a broad scale. The efforts that have been made are familiar to all of you. An eleven-year effort was mounted in the form of National Defense Education Act (NDEA), later Education Professions Development Act (EPDA), Institutes from 1959 to 1969. The results--mostly unchanged teacher-education programs in universities and colleges. Institutes were small, the purpose was clear, and the short duration of each funded program limited the amount of empire building which took place. The varied interests and goals of departments and individuals at the large university have proved too much of a barrier to setting up the communication among faculty and students which a truly unified program requires.[1]

Another major effort was made in the "Guidelines for Teacher Education Programs in Modern Foreign Languages," edited by F. André Paquette.[2] The extent

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[1]Richard J. McArdle, "Teacher Education, Qualifications, and Supervision," Britannica Review of Foreign Language Education, Vol. I, 1968, ed. Emma M. Birkmaier (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1968 [1969]), p. 265.

[2]F. André Paquette, ed., "Guidelines for Teacher Education Programs in Modern Foreign Languages--An Exposition," Modern Language Journal, 50 (Oct 1966). [Entire issue devoted to this topic.]

to which these guidelines have been implemented in teacher-education programs is difficult to assess. They may appear "on paper" in various programs, but the net effect has still been relatively unchanged programs of foreign language teacher education.

The responsibility for teacher education must obviously be shared by colleges, state departments of education, and local school systems. Where are these institutions failing? For one thing, the planning for foreign language teacher education is separated into small bits with discrete areas of responsibility.

First, the college tends to maintain the pre-service education of the foreign language teacher as its sacred territory, a sanctum sanctorum that no one without an academic title is allowed to enter. Further, certain portions of foreign language teacher education may be reserved for the liberal arts department, other parts for the education department--and never the twain shall meet.

The state department of education, in turn, guards its legal influence on teacher education through certification requirements. The state may certify foreign language teachers by program approval, that is, by automatically certificating a teacher who is recommended by an institution of higher education whose program of teacher preparation has been approved by the state department of education. The basis of program approval, however, is usually the same old system of required courses and accumulated credits. And the state education agency, like the college, has its subdivisions of responsibility. Most departments of education tend to have one division of teacher education and certification and another of curriculum and instruction.[3] The obviously overlapping functions are neatly separated and the foreign language supervisor may have no influence in the teacher preparation field other than in the relatively insignificant area of getting the number of required college credits in foreign

[3] Howard E. Bosley, ed., Teacher Education in Transition. Volume II, Emerging Roles and Responsibilities (Baltimore: Multi-State Teacher Education Project, 1969), pp. 10-11.

language study raised.

The local foreign language supervisor is isolated more or less by the positions of the universities and state departments rather than by his own wishes. He has no access to the teacher certification portion of the state department of education. His chief contact is with the state foreign language supervisor. His complaints about unreasonable certification requirements which can force him to dismiss a good teacher and hire an inferior one fall on deaf ears in the certification office. His pleas to institutions of higher education that they are not properly preparing foreign language teachers are not heeded because he does not have the correct credentials to give status to his opinions. In fact, he is often not even consulted about which foreign language teachers in his system should have student teachers placed with them.

With the system of discrete responsibilities and programs which exists, it should at least be expected that a system of checks and balances will result which will assure that a prospective foreign language teacher is ready to teach when he gets his first job. This is not the case! We still have teachers, although fewer than in the past, who come to teach a beginning class in French but who cannot speak the language with any degree of fluency. We have German teachers who expect their students to read Goethe and Schiller with comprehension after six months of language study. We have teachers of Spanish who would not think of letting their students read any Puerto Rican authors unless they could first prove a thorough understanding of Cervantes. There are still foreign language teachers who are anxious to "teach the best and fail the rest." Speak of individualized instruction and many new foreign language teachers look stunned. . .Et cetera.

Competence of the foreign language teacher to teach a class in a modern American school is not assured because people at the "cooperating" institutions, the colleges and the state departments of education, are unwilling to admit that they have failed with a prospective teacher.

At the college, there is a unique way to avoid facing up to the fact that

a student has completed the prescribed course of study in the prescribed length of time and is still not ready to teach. One simply makes a good part of what the prospective teacher studies irrelevant to the task he will perform. "One of the apparent major weaknesses of teacher training programs is the lack of relevance of the program to what actually takes place in the classroom. This charge is equally true of both the academic and professional preparation offered in the typical college program."[4] Actually, it is improbable that the relevant is consciously avoided so the college will not be called to account for its failure, although that may be the outcome. It is more likely that the "practical" is being avoided because it has a stigma in academe. The tradition of the practical as part of the training of slaves and the gloriously, liberally impractical as the proper education of the elite has come to us through the ages from ancient Greece. In the area where the college is forced to the practical--student teaching--the program is generally weak. The professors who conduct it are overworked compared to their academic colleagues. There are too many students for each college supervisor to visit, and the cooperating teachers with whom students are placed are more often those who are willing to tolerate a student teacher than those who are best qualified. And no one fails! It is difficult to understand how all candidates could be ready for teaching in the same length of time, having taken the same number of weeks in student teaching. Yet this is what we are led to believe. This is confirmed by a survey conducted by James A. Johnson in which he asked teacher educators to estimate how many of their student teachers fail. "For the entire country, 23% of the respondents indicated that 'none' of their student teachers fail and are thereby eliminated from teacher education; 57% reported that less than 1% of their student teachers are eliminated from teacher education because they failed student teaching; 10% indicated 1% are in this category. . ."[5] Recognizing that individual learning rates and varied backgrounds of students exist, it is hard to accept that less than one out of every one hundred of our teacher candidates is actually not

[4]McArdle, "Teacher Education," p. 267.

[5]James A. Johnson, A National Survey of Student Teaching Programs (Baltimore: Multi-State Teacher Education Project, 1968), p. 49.

ready to teach. Student teaching appears to be a formality in most instances. The college is failing to apply appropriate criteria to judge these student teachers or, more likely, the criteria for passing or failing student teachers are very vague.

The state department of education, in turn, fails to assure competence when it grants a certificate based solely on credit-gathering. The state, as well as the college, fails to specify what it is a competent foreign language teacher must do on the job. This, again, is an evasion of responsibility for a function which must be performed.

The local FL supervisor observes the new teacher on the firing line and certainly can tell if he is performing adequately. What if the teacher is not doing a good job? The local supervisor must provide an inservice education program which will help correct the faults, and must provide supervisory help which will assist the teacher to upgrade himself. Unfortunately, the local FL supervisor is so busy budgeting, going to administrative meetings, hiring teachers, and evaluating teachers for salary increments that he often does not have time to help the neophyte or to plan a worthwhile inservice education program which will help his staff. Unless the new teacher is terribly incompetent the supervisor is likely to keep him on, figuring that he might end up with someone even worse as a replacement.

The State Foreign Language Supervisor

The preceding gloomy picture of foreign language teacher education has been drawn as a prelude to specifications as to how the state foreign language supervisor can improve the situation and suggestions for college teacher-educators and local supervisors.

First, the foreign language supervisor must move to join with the "teacher-education" unit of his department of education.[6] It is ridiculous to have one unit influencing preservice teacher education and another responsible for

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[6]Bosley, Teacher Education: Volume II, pp. 16-17.

inservice education. The foreign language supervisor uniformly falls under the unit of the state department of education responsible for curriculum, instruction, and supervision. The task of teacher education clearly covers both the preservice and inservice aspects. The state education agency should be organized so that members of both divisions can collaborate on programs designed to improve all of teacher education.

A chance for immediate involvement of the foreign language supervisor is at hand. On July 1, 1970, there were 27 states which had taken the necessary action for Interstate Agreements on Qualification of Educational Personnel. The interstate compacts resulting from this will permit any elementary or secondary teacher prepared in a state-approved program and recommended by the state department of education, or holding an initial teaching certificate, to be granted a certificate in any other state which has signed an agreement with the state where the teacher was prepared. Connecticut, for example, has already signed agreements with fourteen other states. The part of this trend which is significant for the foreign language supervisor is a provision that each state must re-evaluate programs in teacher-preparing institutions at least every five years. The foreign language supervisor must get involved in taking a hard look at foreign language teacher-education programs in his state as part of the program evaluation process. The state supervisor cannot afford to lose this chance for involvement.

Although program approval opens an opportunity for the state FL supervisor, channels of communication will ideally already be open. The state supervisor should have the chance to work with the teacher-preparing institution on the improvement of its foreign language program. It is not within the scope of this paper to suggest what advice the state FL supervisor should give the college personnel. Much has already been written about this. However, it is important to mention that the best help might be given by assisting the college in writing a detailed description of what the foreign language teacher should be expected to do in his job. This is the first step toward specifying program objectives and

defining the learning tasks which will probably help the student to accomplish these objectives. The state FL supervisor could be helpful in all of these steps because of his practical understanding of foreign language instruction in the public schools. He also may help mediate internal conflicts since he has an interest in both the liberal arts and professional education departments, but he has a vested interest in neither of them. As suggested earlier, the language department often exists completely independently from the education department. If the state supervisor can gain acceptance as one who genuinely has an interest in preparing better FL teachers, he should be able to overcome interdepartmental jealousies. Perhaps he can convince the language department that specialized courses in literature will be of little help to the teacher of beginners in French, for example, Or he might even prove to the education department that a general history of education course will do little to make a better foreign language teacher. The advantage of the state FL supervisor's position here is obvious--he stands to gain nothing personally in status or salary through changes which he can get either department to make.

It is also important for the state supervisor to make contact with prospective foreign language teachers before they start to teach. He should at least seek the opportunity to appear as a guest lecturer in a methods course, a curriculum course, an advanced seminar, or even in informal meetings, as the student approaches the end of his preservice experience. The state FL supervisor can reveal the services which the state offers the teacher and can bring to the student a different perspective on foreign language instruction from that of the college professor.

Finally, the state FL supervisor bears a major responsibility for the continuing inservice education of foreign language teachers in his state. He must be prepared to respond to the requests of local FL supervisors and administrators by providing programs to meet local needs. He should organize and participate in statewide, regional, and local workshops. He should know

the resources of his state and of other states where help might be available. He should particularly understand the staff resources of the institutions of higher education in his state. If a college offers to run a workshop or a full semester course as part of an inservice education program, the state supervisor should be in a position to know if this course will actually meet a local need or if it will just be another irrelevant course which characterizes so much of the teacher's preservice education. This would be a luxury which the local inservice program could ill afford.

Of course, foreign language teachers will continue to follow formal courses as graduates. A vital function to be performed by the state supervisor is to stimulate an increase in the number of graduate foreign language education programs. In the preliminary report of a survey done for ACTFL by Paul Luckau of Brigham Young University, only 67 such programs were identified in the United States. Fifteen of these offer MAT programs only, usually inappropriate for the foreign language major who is already a certificated teacher. A good graduate foreign language education program is an extremely valuable resource in the inservice education of the language teacher.

The College Teacher-Educator and Local Foreign Language Supervisor

Most of the suggested responsibilities of college teacher educators and local FL supervisors listed below are related to areas fully described in the first two sections of this paper. Therefore, each is mentioned without a great deal of elaboration.

College Teacher Educator

The college teacher-educator could substantially increase the value of teacher education by developing a description of the job performance expected of the foreign language teacher. Using this description he should define the instructional experiences which will lead to this performance and base the college program on these experiences.

The cooperation of the whole university should be sought to implement a

good teacher-education program.

The college supervisor should find means of making the student teaching program a real learning situation. If the supervisor has too many student teachers to help, he could seek to extend effective supervision by working through the cooperating teachers. Two or three visits to each student by the college supervisor over a six-week period will not provide effective supervision.

State and local supervisors should be called upon to bring added depth and a different point of view to methods and curriculum courses.

The college teacher educator should be prepared to offer practical inservice workshops. Lectures on a theoretical level, unrelated to the tasks the teachers are facing every day, have no place here. The workshop must be based on the teacher's actual needs.

Teacher educators in higher education should press for more graduate programs in foreign language education which will provide courses leading to increased competence and professional awareness in school teachers of foreign languages.

Local Foreign Language Supervisor

The local supervisor should consider a good inservice education program as his prime responsibility. He may call upon the state supervisor for help in setting up good programs.

Supervision should help the teacher to improve. Some of the newer techniques such as interaction analysis and micro-teaching may be effective in providing this kind of supervision.

The local supervisor should recommend his best teachers to the colleges as prospective cooperating teachers for the student-teaching experience.

Feedback to the college is essential. The local supervisor should inform the college teacher-educator about the appropriateness of the background of student teachers and of new teachers whom the college has prepared.

The local supervisor can provide assistance to the college by helping in

the writing of a job performance description.

Conclusion

Joint sovereignty for teacher education, shared by colleges, state departments of education, and public school systems, is the concept which has guided the development of this paper. Two components which must eventually be considered in addition to these three are the professional associations for foreign language teachers and the prospective teacher himself. Cooperation among all of these groups requires maturity, self-confidence, and dedication on the part of many individuals. But the results will be rewarding--unified, flexible, effective foreign language teacher-education programs.

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APPENDIX A

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SYMPOSIUM

Each of the following recommendations was endorsed by two or more of the discussion groups at the Los Angeles Symposium. These, and several others, were passed on to the ACTFL leaders for their consideration.

1. That help be provided FL teachers in answering the question, in the light of these changing times, "Why study a foreign language?" This recommendation called for an updating of the popular filmstrip-tape presentation, "Why Study Foreign Languages: ACTFL's Message to the American Public." (Available as item A-35 through the MLA Materials Center, 62 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011.)

2. That ACTFL seek funds to produce one-minute commercials for ETV and public service announcements dealing with the urgency of FL learning.

3. That ACTFL continue its efforts to upgrade teacher competence and to help teachers grow as professionals.

4. That ACTFL organize a program for interaction between FL and non-FL school personnel.

5. That FL teachers take every ethical opportunity to state considered opinions on matters concerning the preparation of FL teachers to teacher-training institutions and to representatives of the State Boards of Education.

6. That the profession move in the direction of performance criteria in lieu of or in addition to credit course requirements.

7. That ACTFL encourage certification of FL teachers on the basis of demonstrable proficiency, however acquired.

8. That we all work to give recognition to effective teachers by encouraging them to conduct inservice classes and to publish their favorite "tricks-of-the-trade."

APPENDIX B

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