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ABSTRACT

The reports from the 1971 Annual Meeting of the Washington Association of Foreign Language Teachers are presented in this compilation of nine abridged speeches given at the meeting. The papers include: (1) "The Three Dimensions of Successful Teaching," (2) "State of the Profession," (3) "Individualizing Instruction in Some Puget Sound Schools," (4) "Adams--Two Years Later," (5) "Bilingualism," (6) "Custom Tailoring Instruction," (7) "FLES and Grass Roots Education," (8) "Hello, Gozaimasu!", and (9) "The Role of Applied Linguistics in Foreign Language Teaching." (RL)

PROF. MADELINE HUNTER: The Three Dimensions of Successful Teaching.

Recorder: Richard Boyd

In her speech entitled "The Three Dimensions of Successful Teaching," Prof. Madeline Hunter, Principal of the University Elementary School, U.C.L.A., Los Angeles, pinpointed the invariable qualities of teaching that must be constantly present to attain a successful program of individualized instruction. According to Prof. Hunter, a teacher should never assume that a student is ready for a certain level of learning simply because his birthday came during a certain month, or simply because his previous teacher "covered" certain material. The important point is what the child knows. The instructor should think of teaching somewhat as a mason thinks of building a block wall: commence laying on new blocks (new learning) only when and where the previous job (past learning) has been thoroughly completed. Now, if the stage of completion of previous learning is not accurately determined, the student may be pushed beyond his rate of progress, in which case "retroactive interference" sets in and disrupts previous learning. If more advanced learning tasks are piled on, just like the blocks on a shaky foundation, the structure may come crashing down, burying the student in bits of disrelated educational rubble. When this collapse occurs only one course of action is indicated: sort out the rubble and find some pieces sufficiently sound on which to start building, but this time finishing one row of blocks before going on to another.

According to Prof. Hunter the question is not "Have they done it?", but rather, "Have they learned it?" Each student should be constantly measured for what he knows and further learning should always be tied to previous learning. This process, of course, poses a problem as to what should be done with the faster learners and assumes that a group of students must not necessarily always stay together. An important point: don't let an intellectual motor idle. She suggested asking fast learners to make up a test over the units just covered.

Prof. Hunter closed her speech by making plea for diagnosis of the individual student's method of learning. That is, does he learn best alone or in a group? Does he do best by listening, by choral participation; by doing or by watching?

"What is needed," stressed Prof. Hunter, "is equal opportunity--not equal treatment!"

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LESTER W. MCKIM: State of the Profession

Recorder: Carl Dellaccio

Mr. McKim started his talk by relating a hoped-for dream. He asked whether or not the profession could prepare itself for future educational changes and wondered if we could better prepare our own niche made up only of the foreign language profession. Could this foreign language niche fit it into the bigger one containing the total educational profession? He then posed the question of how this concept fits into the public and society as a whole. In short, his aim was to show how foreign languages relate to the total educational process. He also asked if the crisis in the classrooms were great enough to make us accept comfortable learning centers. He wondered if we could put together a curriculum that might be adaptable to a non-structured school. Foreign language instruction, he said, means structured learning; we break away once in a while when we plan a camp or a trip abroad--but it is much more difficult to break away from it within the structured bonds of the school.

Foreign language teachers are probably psychologically ready for something a little different from what they have been doing. But the question he put to the audience was whether or not the crisis in foreign language classrooms is great enough to force each of us to study, to experiment, and to organize and accept change.

Mr. McKim ended his talk with several observations. Professional apathy, the "Let George do it!" attitude, remains a major problem. He noted a lack of co-responsibility among foreign language teachers, a lack of a sense of responsibility by the profession as a whole in the foreign language field. He asked if junior high school teachers were really upset when a FLES program was phased out. He asked if high school teachers complain to the administration when a junior high school program is in trouble. And further, are we as a profession greatly disturbed if we read in the newspaper that a foreign language program has been severed, as was recently the case at Yakima Valley College. He also stated that in the 1960's we were too content and that perhaps in the 1970's we are sufficiently malcontent or frightened to begin recovery.

Mr. McKim noted many hopeful signs for the profession. Among them are increased awareness, more complete knowledge of goals, willingness to fight for our programs and organize for support, new flexibility to try new approaches to teaching, and recognizing that often the present system is actually not working.

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PANEL DISCUSSION: Individualizing Instruction in Some Puget Sound Schools

Recorder: Cynthia Coleman

In his short introduction of the Panel, Mr. Richard Molter, Chairman from Northshore School District, stated that several secondary schools in the Puget Sound area are already implementing programs to individualize instruction in foreign languages.

"Continuous progress" is the form of individualization used in the Edmonds School District, represented on the panel by Harry Reinert, Coordinator of Foreign Languages and teacher of German and Latin. Continuous progress means that a student may spend as little or as much time as necessary earning each credit, which represents a certain amount of work. This amount was determined by the teachers as being that which the average student could complete in one semester.

Along with the regular materials (book, tape, workbook), each student has a checklist for each unit, telling him what to do and in what order. There are also taped and written quizzes, unit quizzes, and diagnostic exams at the end of a credit's work. Eighty per cent correct is required on all tests before going on to the next step of the checklist or the next unit. If a student receives a score of less than 80%, the score is not recorded and the student reviews the material he missed. He may repeat the same test as many times as necessary; but, as Mr. Reinert stated, there is no problem with cheating because, without competition, it would be like cheating at Solitaire. Students or teaching assistants take care of all clerical work, including administration of tests, with immediate feedback from teacher or test key. This process frees the teacher to work individually or in small groups with the students. Mr. Reinert pointed out that his enrollment in German has increased from 51 to 71 in the three years of this program and that the drop-out count has decreased from 13 to 3, showing that the program will hold the students' interest.

The second panelist was Miss Patricia Campbell, a German teacher from Rose Hill Junior High School in Redmond. Miss Campbell supplied details of the classroom set-up and management. She is fortunate to have a language laboratory in her room, consisting of eight recording cassettes with headsets and six listening-responding booths. However, she contends that a revised program could be carried out with one or two tape recorders and a jackbox with headsets. Advanced students, acting as assistants, are necessary to an efficient class. A chart of each unit's components is available; however, the order for completion on the unit is left to each student. Each is required to buy a tape on which he takes tests, answers questions, etc. Miss Campbell then grades the tapes and records her comments. Grammar presentations and other material are recorded for the students' use also. First-year classes are not individualized until about the ninth week of school, after orientation, introduction to language learning, and pronunciation practice. There are no scheduling problems, as students may be placed in any period German class, no matter what level they are studying. They are graded on both effort and accomplishment. Miss Campbell warned that district-wide articulation is necessary; in Redmond, she noted specific and general behavioral objectives have been written for each unit.

Dr. Bianca Rosenthal, German and French teacher at Decater High School in Federal Way, spoke about the Learning Activity Packages (LAPs) being developed there. According to Dr. Rosenthal, the purposes of and reasons for LAPs are: (1) to define learning objectives in students' terms--how well must he learn the material, how will he be evaluated?; (2) to offer options to him of materials and methods; (3) to free the teacher for small groups; (4) to develop more student responsibility; (5) to lessen the need for large scale duplication of texts and materials; and (6) to better use the available space, staff, resources, and time. A LAP includes the following:

I. Main idea: what's it about?
II. Purpose: why is it important to me as a student?
III. Objective: what behavior, how well must I learn it, and how will I be evaluated?
IV. Pretest: do I already know the behavior?
V. Learning Activities: how do I reach the objective?
VI. Self-evaluation: have I learned it? am I ready? TEST
VII. Post-test: have I reached objectives?
VIII. Additional Learning Opportunities: extra vocabulary and material, the student's ideas, etc.

One hundred per cent mastery is not necessary at all levels; similarly, a student may skip all steps and take the post-test first, with credit for the full unit if he passes it.

Several of the guidelines for preparation and use of the LAPs follow: The preparation of each package requires money, research, time, work, and help. Each objective must be at a higher level than the previous one and must be stated in the student's language. Tests must be carefully prepared to measure "what they are supposed to" and not some other previous learning. An answer sheet should be included for immediate feedback. Everything must be standardized so that other teachers and students can use it. "Instructions to Other Teachers" should be included listing equipment needed, facilities, necessary preparation, evaluation procedures, test keys, follow-up ideas, etc. Much help in the form of other students, para-professionals, or parents is needed to affectively use LAPs.

During a question period, it was brought out that oral communication among students could be practiced through small group meetings, teacher checks or original dialogs. If films or filmstrips were included in the presentation of a lesson, it might be necessary to view these in a small conference room or empty classroom.

For a short summary of Miss Campbell's program, write to:

Miss Patricia Campbell
Rose Hill Junior High School
13505 NE 75th
Redmond, Washington 98052

For information on a possible future group meeting to discuss individualized instruction with Mr. Reinert, write to:

Mr. Harry Reinert
Edmonds High School
7600 - 212th SW
Edmonds, Washington 98020

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ROBERT SCHWARTZ, Principal of John Adams High School, Portland, Oregon:

Adams--Two Years Later

The structure, curriculum, and philosophy of John Adams High School, now in its second year of operation, resulted from a proposal made by a small group of doctoral candidates at Harvard. They suggested an experimental high school in an urban situation, which would not only provide for the Transmission of knowledge to its student body, but which would also generate new ideas concerning the education of secondary students and their teachers. The school should, they said, serve as a research and development center for studies in high-school curriculum and management. They hoped that the school might, in its turn, influence the structure and philosophy of other schools in the area and beyond.

Due to its size and characteristic urban problems, Portland was chosen among a number of districts which would have accepted the proposal. Yet Portland was also small enough for these problems to seem solvable and had an intellectual climate open to innovation and change. The planners wished to operate in a natural public-school setting, subject to the same financial and community pressures as other city schools. In so doing, they felt conclusions reached might perhaps be applicable to other situations.

The student population of John Adams is about one-fourth black and represents a wide range of lower and middle class socio-economic backgrounds. The planners worked for a year prior to the opening of the school. They selected and trained the staff and planned the program. They operated within a new building, planned, however, before the acceptance of the proposal, hence not designed specifically for their type of program.

They sought particularly to avoid certain problems by eliminating from their curriculum structure: (1) ability tracking; (2) age grading (the general education course, which all students spend a two-hour block of time, has students from ninth through twelfth grades); (3) letter grading (all students in all courses may choose a conventional letter grade or simply a credit-no credit option); (4) compartmentalization (all of the state high-school requirements except physical education are met in the General Education course); (5) petty rules inhibiting the students' freedom of movement, choice of activities, etc.; and (6) sharp role distinctions between teachers and learners (teachers consistently and systematically continue in the learning process, and student learners are expected to teach other students).

The core program in general education has cross-section groups of about 115 students, with an instructional team, and is organized around problems or topics, such as environment, poverty, race relations, etc., rather than around traditional subject-matter divisions. Next year there will be more differentiation between the various general education teams. Some will concentrate on basic skills, some may be more ethnically oriented, etc.

In concluding his thought-provoking presentation, Mr. Schwartz posed two questions that underlie most of the decisions made: first, given compulsory attendance laws, is it possible to create a situation that genuinely offers the student freedom to make significant choices about his goals and learning styles? And, secondly, given the essentially "prison-like" nature of a school, can a real relationship of trust be established between "prisoners" and "jailers"? While disclaiming that any miracles have been wrought or that all problems have been eliminated, Mr. Schwartz feels that both of these basic questions rate an affirmative answer.

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PROF. VICTOR HANZELI: Bi-lingualism

Recorder: Cenobío C. Macías

In current usage the term "bilingual education" refers to three different kinds of activities.

1. The occasional use of a foreign language in a high school or college for the purpose of teaching subject matter other than a foreign language, e.g., biology, Latin American history. It provides excellent motivation but there are too few teachers adequately prepared.

2. The involvement of underprivileged ethnic minorities whose children do not speak English when entering school. The greatest concentration is in the Southwest, the North, and the East. 95% of these children have Spanish as their native language. Before World War I bilingual schools were highly visible in ethnic communities both in the larger Eastern cities and in smaller towns in the Northern part of the midwest farmland. After World War I public education absorbed, linguistically speaking, the children of most ethnic groups, emphasizing teaching all grades and all subjects only in English. The assumption: the social fabric of our people would be weakened if minorities were <u>not</u> taught to reject their linguistic heritage. Many schools forbid a foreign language to be spoken outside a language class. In some instances children are placed in retarded classes if they do not speak English. Presently, however, increasing numbers of Americans of non-English parentage are beginning to show interest in preserving their culture and language without lessening their commitment to America as a whole. They have exerted pressure towards the improvement of their offsprings' educational lot. One Brooklyn school has responded to the need for bilingual programs in elementary schools. Puerto Rican students

study courses in Spanish and receive intensive instruction in English as a second language.

President Johnson signed the Bilingual Education Act January 2, 1968. Though now suffering financially, bilingual education has spread widely. Most of these programs do not concentrate on the preservation of certain subcultures in our country but use the student's first language to teach the subject matter required of the English speaking majority.

These programs do not make a serious impact on the learning of foreign languages and cultures, which is the main job of language teachers. The programs do not affect the monolingual and ethno-centric orientation of 90% of the school population whose native language is English. The effects are minute outside the specific areas of experimentation and so a radically different approach is needed.

3. Language study should be a tool for other experiences, for other learning, rather than an absolute end in itself. It should be introduced early enough to facilitate the learning of other subjects by the time the child reaches the middle school level. It should not, as at present, compete with these other subjects. Not only in ethnic minority areas, but all over this country, genuinely bilingual public schools where languages other than English are school languages from kindergarten on are needed. Excellent working examples of such schools are the French-English bilingual school near Montreal and the German-English bilingual school in Berlin.

Don Walsh observes: "Our profession, to a much greater extent than today, will be firmly rooted in and will draw its own strength from its own people, from our own greatly enhanced folk-bilingualism."

Bilingual education tends to de-emphasize the teaching of a foreign language as a step in a longer sequence of academic subject matter. The foreign language exposure simply serves to expand the child's world of experiences, which in itself is, or should be, an important educational goal in the early grades. From this natural early childhood experience the bilingual school goes on to develop foreign language skills as a set of intellectual tools available to the child for use within the entire range of school experiences and subjects.

Bilingualism suggests an important way in which foreign language teachers can re-orient themselves, making a genuine and lasting impact on American education.

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PROF. MADELINE HUNTER: Custom Tailoring Instruction

Recorder: Alan Hooper

In her second address of the WAFLT conference, Prof. Madeline Hunter stressed three important considerations for individualizing instruction: (1) Material

to use; (2) Style of presentation (dependent upon material); and (3) Skill of teacher (fitting process).

Prof. Hunter stated the impossibility of determining whether a program is individualized until checked against these three factors. Since each student is different, one should tailor each program to meet that student's needs, abilities, and manner of learning.

1. According to Prof. Hunter, the material used must be carefully selected, considering both the objectives and the levels of the students. 2. After the material is selected, the teacher may decide the style of presentation best suiting the material and learning style of the student. The following questions should be taken into consideration: Would the student be able to learn this material best by himself, in a large group, or in a small one? Could he profit more by individual tutoring sessions with the teacher? Could any special equipment help this individual? Once a student is doing well with one learning style, a teacher may want to use one of his weaker learning styles to strengthen it. 3. The most important part of "custom tailoring" instruction still remains with the teacher, whom Prof. Hunter compared to a tailor measuring the student for a suit. The teacher must view and evaluate each student's program objectively, she stressed, making any adjustments that may be necessary as the program progresses. This procedure she called the "fitting process" and, according to Prof. Hunter, this is where the strength of custom tailoring lies. She concluded: "You as the fitter are the most critical element. Don't turn the learner loose except when it is his best style."

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PROF. WILLI FISCHER: FLES and Grass Roots Education

Recorder: Gordon Dickman

Grass roots education? In German? It's happening again and again in Washington according to Prof. Willi W. Fischer. In his one-hour presentation Prof. Fischer sketched the history of German language schools in Washington and detailed their present scope and operation.

An educational curriculum in German outside the organized school systems is not a new concept. Present German schools have a history of such schools from which to draw ideas. Native Germans in the United States have generally sought to pass their language heritage on to their children. This desire provided the rationale for the earliest German language schools. Such schools were organized by families, by German firms doing business in America, or by ethnic clubs and groups.

The contemporary version of the German language school differs from its historical counterpart in that it enjoys active participation from and support of the whole community in which it is organized. Each of the

several schools in Washington has its own style and program but all share these characteristics: they are private, non-political, non-religious, and non-partisan; they are not sponsored by private, ethnic clubs or groups; they are non-profit; they draw staff and students from the community-at-large. As of February, 1971, German language schools were located in Seattle, Yakima, Bremerton, Spokane, Everett, Tacoma, Ellensburg, and Edmonds.

The community-school relationship is mutually beneficial. The schools receive used and discarded texts. Equipment is often donated. Meeting facilities are usually found in church buildings or community buildings. In return the community finds parents involved in an educational program, American children involved in a foreign culture, teachers who don't want or can't find full time work gainfully employed and German children continuing their language heritage. Meaningful help and support has come from the American Association of Teachers of German, Washington Chapter, and the German FLES classes at the University of Washington

Seattle boasts the pioneer German language school in Washington. It meets each Saturday from 9:00 to 11:30 at the University Unitarian Church. Under the direction of its principal, Ursula Erdmann, some 230 Seattle area children receive instruction in German each week.

For further information contact:

Willi Fischer
German Department
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington 98105

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PROF. LURLINE SIMPSON: "Hello, Gozaimasu!"

Recorder: Mary Farrington

The third year Japanese class from Franklin High School, in Seattle, under the direction of their teacher, Mr. Terry Weston, presented a dance, "The Miners' Song" and a play from Southern Japan. These delightful performances set the mood for the luncheon speaker, Prof. Lurline V. Simpson, who had just returned from Japan where she spent four years working for the Japanese Ministry of Education. As a "permanent alien resident," Miss Simpson asked to have, and was granted, her own junior high school class, one of 56 girls. She wanted to have this class for the benefit of the practice teachers who were taking a methods course from her at the University of Tokyo. In this junior high class the University students could observe the pupils in a classroom situation and be therefore better prepared to do their own teaching. The traditional situation had previously been for each cadet teacher to be "thrown" suddenly into a classroom just anywhere to instruct for two weeks without ever having seen the class or consulted with its teacher.

Miss Simpson's class in methods contained 180 students who expected only lectures. She asked to have the class divided into smaller groups, preferably six to a group, so that real discussions could begin. She asked each student to present a problem, and the group would then discuss its solution--seemingly a completely new concept in democracy for the Japanese students who were accustomed to having solutions handed to them--solutions, Prof. Simpson maintained, established by habit, authority, or prejudice. They needed to find acceptable democratic alternatives to this authoritarian decision making.

A campaign to require policy makers to listen to the students' requests, before there was utter destruction, was initiated by Miss Simpson. The fulfillment of this goal became one of the primary concerns in her work with the Japanese Ministry of Education. Miss Simpson concluded her remarks with a quotation from Kenneth Clark's book on civilization, "I prefer order to chaos..."

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PROF. WILLIAM BULL: The Role of Applied Linguistics in Foreign Language Teaching

Recorder: William D. Love

To clear up any confusion, Prof. Bull began his speech with a concise definition of his field. "Applied linguistics," he stated, "is what linguists do!" It differs from theoretical linguistics in that it concerns itself with "the encoding and decoding activity of the speaker and listener" and concentrates on the act of communication among people. Theoretical linguistics, on the other hand, aims to "describe, analyze, and collect" what has already been generated. Theoretical linguists regard "meaning as meaningless" and do not concern themselves with the activities of the speaker or listener; rather, they view their function as the construction of formal grammars and other taxonomic operations.

Prof. Bull feels that the influence of linguistics on language teaching has been considerable and very largely negative. It began during World War II when the United States government needed a large pool of experts in various esoteric languages, and discovered that linguists and anthropologists--none of them experts in language teaching--were the only ones who knew the languages well enough to act as teachers. From the experiences gained in this time, linguists formulated the audiolingual method: dialogues and pattern and substitution drills were designed for practice in the formal grammars, but the steps from practice to meaningful (i.e. outside of the drill situation) application were not considered seriously. Prof. Bull feels the effect of the audiolingual method has been "disastrous," and he called for a basic rethinking of our assumptions in language teaching. The most telling of the new considerations is the recognition that teachers cannot teach anything but can only help the learner to learn.

Applied linguistics can help the teacher in this task by identifying and organizing the different components of speech and language behavior into three basic mental (not necessarily linguistic) activities: pre-coding, encoding, and decoding. These activities rest on three questions implicit in pre-coding: What is the nature of the reality in question? How does the culture organize that reality? How does the language organize it? Pre-coding, then, is not necessarily linguistic, but has to do more with the organization of perception. For instance, the terms sunrise and sunset are used in English although the sun does neither; the terms do not reflect the reality in question or the language's organization, but rather indicate the way in which the culture perceives and organizes the reality. To generate correct utterances, therefore, the student must understand how he organizes such perceptions in English as well as in the foreign language, and he must understand the differences.

Having organized the perceptions, the speaker then proceeds to encode his thoughts. The three considerations that influence this activity are: the available vocabulary in the "language bank," the morphological forms, and the syntactic patterns. A speaker's generation of language is the consequence of the encoding activity.

Decoding is the activity the listener carries out, and although it is the simplest of the three, it is here that our texts concentrate their energy. Dialogues, for instance, are already pre-coded and encoded, and present no meaningful practice except in decoding. Memorization is meaningless, and should be eliminated or reduced. Practice drills, on the other hand, although still essentially a decoding activity, do help people to learn the manipulation of previously encoded messages. In this way, they make a contribution toward automaticity and are useful.

But pre-coding and encoding are still the essential operations of language behavior. In Blackfoot, for example, objects are either animate or inanimate, but the categorization has no relation to the objects being alive or dead. Similar situations exist in all languages; the task of the applied linguists, therefore, is to arrange the learning experiences in such a way that the perceptual, cultural and linguistic organization of a situation is comprehensible to the learner's experience, language and world-view.

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