



Language Association Journal

New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers

VOL. 55

No. 1



Language Association Journal

A Publication of the
New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers
www.nysaftl.org
Founded 1917

VOL. 55

WINTER 2004

No. 1

Contents

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----|--|
| John Webb | 2 | Acknowledging, Nurturing, and Protecting the Teacher Within |
| Linda Lippman | 7 | The Induction Bridge: Linking Theory to Practice |
| Dorothy Rissel | 8 | Editor's Note |
| Mike Mitchell | 9 | A Product of New Teacher Induction |
| Abbe Guillet | 10 | Keynote Address—Teachers in Training: A Conference for Future Foreign Language Teachers |
| Jenny M. Castillo | 13 | Intricacies and Challenges in Training Novice Foreign Language Teachers to Use the Internet |
| Louise Terry and Judy Martialay | 17 | Post 9/11, Post Iraqi War—An Update on the Case for Foreign Languages |
| Catherine Keatley | 19 | Foreign Languages Left Behind? |
-

OFFICERS

President: Patricia Ryan
Rye Middle/High Schools
President-Elect: Linda Zusman
Gowana Middle School
First Vice-President: Louis Baskinger
New Hartford High School
Second Vice-President: Dr. Virginia B. Levine
SUNY Cortland
Secretary: Joseph Marcil
Northern Adirondack Central School
Treasurer: Frank Marino
Hauppauge MS/HS
Immediate Past President: Dawn Santiago-Marullo
Victor Central Schools

DIRECTORS:

Ana Aguiar-Mady, North Shore Schools, Glen Head
Susan Barnes, Sodus High School, Sodus
Isabel Cosentino, Centereach High School, Centereach
Irma Evangelista, IS 73, Maspeth
Kathy Fagan, Schalmont High School, Schenectady
Jo Ann Fralick, Cherry Valley-Springfield Central School, Cherry Valley
Ana Gatta, Saugerties Central School, Saugerties
Françoise Goodrow, retired
William Gunn, Minisink Valley High School, Slate Hill
Cynthia Hering, Cortland Jr./Sr. High School, Cortland
Toni Johnson, Penn Yan Academy, Penn Yan
Cindy Kennedy, Kenmore East HS, Tonawanda
Jodi LaRock, Elizabethtown-Lewis Central School, Elizabethtown
Mary Frances Lovelace, retired
Nunzia Manginelli, Christopher Columbus High School, Bronx
Marlene Moussa, Lakeland HS, Shrub Oak
Anna Reis, Horace Greeley High School, Chappaqua
Frank Ricciardiello, East Syracuse-Minoa High School, East Syracuse
Denise Stark, Bethlehem Central, Delmar
Anita Vogely, Binghamton High School, Binghamton

EDITOR

Dorothy Rissel, University at Buffalo,
nysaftljournal@nysaftl.org

EDITORIAL BOARD

Harriet Barnett, ACTFL
Bill Heller, Perry Central H.S.
Bob J. Johnson, Barger M.S., West Henrietta
Alfred Valentini, T.R. Proctor Sr. H.S., Utica
Nancy Wallace, University at Buffalo
John Webb, Princeton University

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Susanne Hochmuth
Sackets Harbor CS, Sackets Harbor

WEBMASTER

Kenneth Hughes
Lake George Central

ADVERTISING BUSINESS MANAGER

John Carlino, Interim Executive Director
2400 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14214

Subscription to the Language Association Bulletin is included in membership in the NYSAFLT. Annual Subscription rate for libraries is \$35.00

Articles submitted for publication must be typewritten, double-spaced and in gender neutral language. Electronic submission is preferred. Please email Microsoft Word or WordPerfect files as an attachment to the editor at nysaftljournal@nysaftl.org.

All rights reserved. No part of this journal may be reprinted or stored in a retrieval system without prior permission of the editor.

See Editor's Note on Page 8

The Induction Bridge: Linking Theory to Practice

Linda Lippman
Director of Human Resources
Islip Public Schools

New teacher induction programs have become a significant issue in education reform. The transition from preparing to teach to actual teaching is an important process and a key component to teacher retention (Scherer, 1999). The first few years of teaching provide major changes where the new teacher must master a variety of pedagogical techniques including classroom management, student discipline and motivation, parent communication, the management and implementation of the curriculum, and skills of teaching to diverse learning styles (Weiss & Weiss, 1999). New teachers enter the classroom with a college education that includes supervised fieldwork. In-service training provides an additional experience for teachers to acquire the skills to meet the demands of the changing curricula and standards, but does not prepare them to meet the daily challenges of classroom teaching. New teachers may enter the profession with good teaching theory, but little practical skill (Wasley, 1999). Linking theory to practice provides the transition from learning to teach to teaching to learn. Recent literature emphasizes the need to provide professional development for new teachers that includes a combination of research, training, and practice that supports the understanding of complex subject matter and student learning styles. New teacher induction programs which foster problem solving techniques and critical thinking skills and model collegial and inquiry-based activities provide the link necessary to bridge educational theory to instructional practice.

The early years of teaching provide many challenges...difficult work assignments, unclear expectations, feelings of isolation, lack of skill, experience and content knowledge, reality shock, and more. New teacher induction programs afford teachers the opportunity to understand teaching, learning, and to experience the confidence that comes from collegial sharing and support (Hargreaves, 1994). For new teachers the induction process helps them become a part of the common culture and guides them through their professional development.

Why the sense of urgency?

- The *National Commission on Teaching and America's Future* (1996) proposed that by the year 2006, all students would be provided with competent, caring, and qualified teachers...
- The *No Child Left Behind Act* (2002) projects the need for 2.4 million teachers within the next ten years...
- The rate of teacher attrition is reported between 35% and 50% within the first five years of teaching.

If the goal to educate America's children is core to educational reform and national mandates, then the goals and objectives of new teacher induction programs should be to provide the necessary transition to support effective professional development, that which will train and retain effective teachers.

Induction Programs

Induction programs hold the promise of shaping effective teachers. Induction programs hold the promise of providing all students with competent, caring, and qualified teachers. Induction programs hold the promise of reducing the attrition rate.

The actions of a teacher during the first few days and weeks of school will determine enduring attitudes for an entire career. Early teaching experiences shape the type of teacher that one will become (Sergiovanni, 1984). The most critical time for teachers is

their initial entry into the profession and induction programs can provide the appropriate support to cushion the transition and provide the skills necessary for survival and growth. Defining induction represents the challenge.

What is induction? Induction is a structured multi-year program that is organized by a school or district that is ongoing and sustained. It provides a culture of consistency and promotes the development of professional communities. Induction is not mentoring, but may incorporate the one-to-one concept of mentoring as a component. Induction reduces the sense of isolationism that sometimes characterizes the first few years of teaching and provides a support system for new teachers (Wong & Wong, 1998).

Islip School District's Program

The Islip School District is proud of its three-year induction program. Teachers new to the district participate in an orientation program, which occurs for three days prior to the beginning of school. Participation in monthly induction meetings is required of all probationary teachers. Induction is theme oriented and defined as ongoing professional development throughout the school year. Each year is defined by theme and by elementary and secondary levels.

Year One teachers have a three-day orientation, facilitated by the Director of Human Resources. It combines basic procedural information, introductions, a bus tour through the community, team building activities, *food*, first day advice, ice breakers, organizational strategies, meetings with Central Office Administrators, the Payroll Account Clerk, Building Principals, and the Union President. This group proceeds through their three-year tenure track program as a cohort, building relationships and support groups. They meet monthly with the Director of Human Resources and focus on *The Effective Teacher* video series by Harry Wong as jumpstart for conversation and discussion. Collegial circles are held informally in between formal monthly meetings. Additionally, workshops are given on Parent Teacher Conferencing Strategies, Open School Night suggestions, and more.

Year two teachers have a three-day orientation facilitated by the Director of Human Resources. The orientation is an introduction to Linda Albert's *Cooperative Discipline*, which becomes the focus of monthly meetings. This philosophy deals with classroom management techniques and interventions for encouraging appropriate behavior and understanding the discipline means 'to teach'. Team building activities are included as well to promote the sense of cohesion and belonging...and yes *food!*

Year three teachers have a three-day orientation facilitated by the Director of Human Resources and focuses on teachers as change agents. Spencer Johnson's, *Who Moved My Cheese?* is the springboard for the understanding of change profiles and the need to understand how the only constant in education is change. Year three teachers also meet monthly, but each meeting is shaped by a needs assessment of the staff and workshop presenters are invited to each meeting. Workshops include Cooperative Learning Strategies, Multiple Learning Styles, Stress Management, Time Management, Study Skill Techniques, Self-Esteem for Educators and more. And yes *food!*

A newsletter is distributed three times throughout the school year to new staff members. *TIPS* (Teacher Induction Program Stuff) is the newsletter which includes information about teaching

A Product of New Teacher Induction

Mike Mitchell

Spanish Teacher

Islip Middle School , Islip, New York

Prior to securing my first full-time teaching job, I was apprehensive about the task confronting me. My fellow classmates who had already been teaching were burdened by a LOTE department without a curriculum in place and a district lacking guidance and mentoring. As a result, they felt that the innovative theories and practices we had internalized were, for all intents and purposes, useless. Furthermore, little of what we had learned was heard of, let alone utilized in their schools.

In the winter of 2002, I was fortunate enough to be added to the more than 30 teachers hired at Islip Public Schools on Long Island, New York. During the very first interview with Dr. Linda Lippman, director of Human Resources at Islip Public Schools, my initial fears were quelled. I questioned Dr. Lippman about the kind of environment and culture Islip offered, as these issues were paramount in determining whether or not I would accept the position. To my surprise I found our meeting to be more like a conversation and less like the interview for which I had prepared. Dr. Lippman assured me that Islip would be a safe place to grow and that my learning had just begun. I was not sure what Dr. Lippman meant by that, but within my first month of working at Islip Middle School, what she said began to crystallize.

Dr. Lippman, and previously Alan Van Cott, Islip's Superintendent, began a new teacher induction program in the late 1990's. This three-year program is now a requirement of all untenured teachers in the district. New teacher inductees meet monthly with Dr. Lippman or a guest lecturer for 90 minutes after school. They are broken up into 6 groups based on experience (1st, 2nd and 3rd year) then again by grade level (K-5 and 6-12). In these groups the teachers are able to network with each other, observe model lessons, gain hands-on experience with crafts and many lesson materials, as well as apply many current educational theories to their own classrooms. In their first year, teachers are exposed to ways to overcome new teacher jitters by relying on Harry and Rosemary Wong and the teachings in their Effective Teacher video program (1996) and their book, *The First Days of School* (2001). In their second year, teachers examine ways to manage the classroom through cooperative discipline via the expertise of Linda Albert. Finally, in their third year, Islip's New Teacher Induction "seniors" explore how change is the only constant in education through Spencer Johnson's foundations on Character Education in his book, *Who Moved My Cheese?* (1998). All groups are also exposed to guest lectures from local teachers and administrators as well as nationally acclaimed authors.

Dr. Lippman's model filters down into the individual schools, departments and teams. Currently, about 75% off the Islip faculty is a product of its New Teacher Induction Program. Teachers are relying on each other more than ever, sharing and "stealing" ideas from each other. As one walks the halls of any of Islip's schools, one will see common procedures posted in classrooms and teachers working together in the library, faculty room or even on the run in the hallways.

Having been through three days of induction prior to the beginning of the school year, my first days of school seemed to go very smoothly. I thought and planned ahead to have everything in place for my first days, including seating charts, procedures and handouts. My students finished the first week with a clear understanding of what is expected of them and I was able to finish the week rather jitter-free.

In my second year, as the induction program focuses more on cooperative discipline, my class runs like a well-oiled machine. The combination of clear procedure and a method of discipline and follow up that does not interfere with classroom management

will gradually allow a class to run with minimal behavior problems.

Currently in Islip, 6 out of 12 LOTE teachers are untenured and are enrolled in all three levels of the new teacher induction program. Next year, there will be at least 2 more inductees. An orientation and training program is needed more then ever in LOTE. Dr. Lippman's model has created a culture that naturally allows the graduates of new teacher induction to guide the new inductees. In addition to the adoption of successful curricula for Italian and Spanish in levels 1 through 3 and a more stringent advanced placement preparation program, the teachers in both the middle and high schools have created and shared their own lessons that reach across all content areas as well as reach all types of learners. The LOTE coordinator, Pauline Slowey, is very involved in checking and offering feedback on lesson plans, which are handed in a week in advance. Untenured teachers who teach the same levels are teamed up during common preparation periods to share ideas and coach each other. Mrs. Slowey claims that she can walk through our schools and see the same lessons being taught with each teacher's individual flair.

This top-down modeling approach has proven successful in many ways. It takes the pressure off of the most senior teachers in the department as well as coordinators and chair people who are usually most burdened when a new teacher is hired. It naturally allows for a more collegial atmosphere. One will find more consistency across each classroom, each team, each department and each building.

The new teacher induction program is not only beneficial to the individual teachers, but also to district administration, the community and the students. Since the induction program has been in place in Islip, the district went from losing nearly half of its newly hired staff to losing less than 5%. In ten years, the Regents Diploma rate jumped from 40% to over 70% and from 80 students in advanced placement with 50% achieving level 3 or higher to 120 students enrolled in advanced placement with 73% achieving level 3 or higher.

Being a product of The New Teacher Induction Program, I know I am a stronger teacher; I know I can reach more of my students; I know I can manage my classroom; I know I can work as a part of a team; I know I can be a part of our community; I know I can touch the life of each of my students and allow them to succeed as students and be good citizens.

A school district that does not invest in their teacher's professional development is not allowing itself to grow and not allowing its faculty and students to succeed. Dr. Lippman put it best when she said, "You are making a 30-year investment in a teacher. You want to be able to craft and shape the teacher and raise expectations. So by putting the money up front with a sustained approach, your end product is a master teacher."

A special thanks to Dr. Linda Lippman, Pauline Slowey and the LOTE teachers in Islip for helping me to write this article.

References

- Albert, Linda. (1999). *A Teacher's Guide to Cooperative Discipline: How to Manage Your Classroom and Promote Self-Esteem*. Pine Circles, MN: American Guidance Service.
- Johnson, Spencer. (1998). *Who Moved My Cheese?* New York, NY: G.P. Putnam and Sons.
- Wong, H. K. and Wong, R.T. (2001). *The first days of school: how to be an effective teacher*. Mountainview, CA : Harry K. Wong Publications.
- Wong, H. K. and Wong, R.T. (1996). *The effective teacher* (video series). Mountainview, CA : Harry K. Wong Publications.

Teachers in Training: A Conference for Future Foreign Language Teachers State University of New York College at Cortland

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

December 02, 2000

Abbe Guillet
French Teacher

C. W. Baker High School, Baldwinsville, New York

I am privileged to be here this morning to address a group of future colleagues. I would also like to thank my own students who gave up a *grasse matinée* to be here; I am truly grateful. When Dr. Levine invited me to speak to you, I nervously agreed. To stand before you and convince you that you are choosing the profession that is right for you seemed a daunting task. I reflected upon the twenty-five years since I entered this profession and realized that it simply is not my place to tell you all that you should be foreign language teachers. I can only speak to you of the joy that I have experienced in the classroom.

I am a teacher. I have never wanted to be anything else. On snow days when I was little, I played school with my brother—whether he wanted to or not! I loved school and reading—and my teachers. I respected their knowledge of their subject; and there were a few who faced tragedy in their lives with a dignity that I, to this day, hold as a standard for my own behavior. I also had some teachers whom I did not like: some because they either did not know their subject well enough, some because they could not convey their knowledge, some because they didn't seem happy to be with us, and some because they treated us like kids. I remember thinking that we deserved more, that even though we were young we deserved better; and it was what I wanted to become. All my teachers have helped me to become the teacher I wanted and did not want to be.

I had to laugh as Dr. Levine asked me if I would be doing a Power-Point presentation this morning. Obviously, she has never seen me work the VCR in my classroom! Several years ago, my juniors were presenting skits based on the interplanetary voyage in *The Little Prince*. Each group consisted of a narrator, the little prince, and the sole inhabitant of an asteroid. The inhabitant's condition had to conform to the ones that the little prince had encountered in the novel. On this one particular planet, a teacher without students was thrilled to have the little prince join her empty classroom. The skit was excellent; the visual aids were entertaining, and the students were well-prepared. At one point, the "teacher" began an exercise using music on a cassette tape. Unfortunately, she pushed the eject button instead of the play button, and the tape jumped out of the player. I remember thinking that it was a shame as the skit had been flawless. She tried again, this time fast-forwarding the tape and getting very frustrated. Out popped the tape again. It was at this point that I realized that the skit was still flawless and that she was simply imitating me... It was cruel!

So no, there will not be any Power-Point presentation today; I am not Dr. Ponterio. I just cook in class! Still, I cannot help but be excited by all the advances in technology that I have seen in the classroom since I did my student teaching. I remember the day when I took my razor blade out of my pencil case because the ditto machine was replaced by the photocopier; I remember when cassette tapes replaced my reel-to-reel player; I remember my first CD player; I remember when my first TV-VCR was rolled into my classroom; I remember my first little McIntosh SE with a 20 MB hard drive. All of these advances have helped make me a better, more effective teacher, and I look forward to what the next few years will bring – even if I still do not know what a gigabyte is, or where the play button is on ANY of my machines!

Several years ago, I was working with students every evening before the French Contest when one of my colleagues told me

to get a life. I was very hurt; somehow I felt that I was doing something wrong – that I needed to be better organized so that I could accomplish all that I wanted to in an allotted time frame. Sometime later, I was working late in my classroom, when a guidance counselor who had an evening presentation stood in my doorway and told me that I really needed *to get a life*. That made two, and I drove home wondering when I would ever get this job right. Then last year, I needed to get permission to enter school on a Saturday to paint a set for our Cultural Fair play, when an administrator jokingly told me *to get a life*. That made three, and I was devastated. Why were all these people telling me *to get a life* – and whose life? The truth is I have EXACTLY the life that I have always wanted: a husband, son and daughter whom I love and a job to which I am happy to go every day.

I believe in education. Several years ago, I was fortunate to have won a grant to study francophone literature in West Africa. I spent two summers in Senegal where the illiteracy rate is over 85%. I saw what our life would be without public education. In the Martinique film: *La rue Cases-Nègres*, the respected teacher wrote on the chalkboard: *L'instruction est la deuxième porte de la liberté*. (Education is the second doorway of freedom). Lord Brougham said that "*Education makes a people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave.*" Even forty years after its independence, Senegal is an impoverished country with little hope for improvement in the near future.

- Unless you feel that teachers have a major impact on our society, you should not be one.
- Unless you understand the responsibility that teachers have to students, you should not become one.
- Unless you believe that what you have to teach your students is essential knowledge for them to know, you should not teach it.
- Unless you are willing to model the behavior that you expect of your students, you should not be a teacher.
- And unless, you can cherish the trust that your adolescent students will have in you, you should not be a teacher.

Parker Palmer, in his book *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*, writes that to chart the landscape fully, three important paths must be taken—intellectual, emotional, and spiritual—and none can be ignored. "*Reduce teaching to intellect, and it becomes a cold abstraction; reduce it to emotions, and it becomes narcissistic; reduce it to the spiritual, and it loses its anchor in the world. Intellect, emotion, and spirit depend on one another for wholeness. They are interwoven in the human self and in education at its best.*"

These three interwoven paths are the challenges I face year after year and that I place before you. Never forget that as a foreign language teacher, you are forever a foreign language learner. I find foreign language teachers so unique; they more than teachers in any other discipline, tend to make their vocation their avocation. Recently, I was doing an excellent exercise with my juniors on present participles. The activity started with the formation of a sentence such as *Robert stays in shape by running*. It next went to a personal statement: *I stay in shape by...* As we did the exercise together, I