



NEWSLETTER

Vol. I, No. 1

Massachusetts Association for Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages

FALL, 1972

President's Message

Robert Saitz

As an organization conceived by teachers of speakers of other languages, MATSOL is dedicated to the interests, concerns and problems of the people who are struggling to develop new educational models appropriate to life in multi-cultural communities.

We welcome and hope to bring together a wide range of people who have common concerns: for example, teachers who teach content in elementary and secondary bilingual classes; teachers who teach first or second languages in bilingual or ESOL school programs; teachers in community and institutional adult education programs; teachers in colleges who work with both permanent and temporary populations; and administrators, paraprofessionals and volunteers at all levels. While each of us faces unique problems, all of us are working with students who have something in common — despite the differences in our students' age, education, interests, motivations etc., all of our students live in two languages, in two worlds. And it must be our goal to ensure that this experience be an enriching one — to both the students and to all who come in contact with them.

Once again we in Massachusetts have the opportunity to lead; your responses and your suggestions will determine the ways in which MATSOL can contribute to education for life in a multi-cultural world, an idea whose time has finally come.

Transitional Bilingual Education Programs

Ernest Mazzone

More than fifty Massachusetts cities and towns have submitted program proposals to the Bureau of Transitional Bilingual Education to implement the State's new Transitional Bilingual Education Law.

For the 1972-73 school year the Law requires local school districts to make a semi-annual census of children of limited English-speaking ability. Where there are twenty or more children of a language classification other than English, a transitional program must be offered.

A program must include instruction in the history and culture of the country of the child's native language and in the reading and writing of his first language, and in the history and culture of the United States and in the reading and writing of English.

State reimbursement funds are available for per pupil costs in excess of the average per pupil cost in the school district. Much of the excess costs will be for teachers and aides. The Law requires a 15 to 1 teacher-student ratio, or a 20 to 1 ratio where a teacher-aide is present.

While most cities and towns have responded positively to the mandates of Chapter 71A, some cities and towns have had some difficulty implementing the provisions of the Law. In a few cases there is philosophical foot dragging. In other cases there are practical problems of budgets, facilities, curriculum material and development and other related issues.

The State Board of Education has

granted some waivers on specific regulations to allow local cities and towns to gear up to full implementation.

The Massachusetts Advisory Council on Bilingual Education has been quite active in assisting the Department of Education to carry out its responsibilities to administer the Act and in assisting cities and towns to fulfill the provisions of the Law.

The Committee on Higher Education assisted the bureau in the preparation of criteria to determine bilingual teacher competencies in language skills and culture. This committee is also working closely with teacher-training institutions to help to develop teacher-training programs in bilingual-bicultural education.

The Public Information Committee of the Advisory Council on Bilingual Education received a grant from the regional Office of Equal Opportunity for the preparation of mass media materials to inform the public of the immediate need for bilingual-bicultural education. The grant is being used to produce radio and television spots, posters and pamphlets in seven languages.

A continuing effort is being made to pave the way for the long-term acceptance of the concept of bilingual-bicultural education. Its future looks bright. One of the most satisfying outcomes of the program is the involvement of parents and the community. This kind of commitment leaves little doubt that the program will be a success.

Bureau of Transitional Bilingual Education: Calendar of Events

November 4, 1971

Passage of the Transitional Bilingual Education Act Chapter 1005 of the Acts of 1971

April 1, 1972

Local Level Census of the number of children of limited English-speaking ability

April 25, 1972

Board of Education approves

Emergency Regulations pursuant to Chapter 71A

May 12, 1972

Public Hearings — Gardner Auditorium on Regulations for Certification of Teachers of Transitional Bilingual Education

May 23, 1972

Board of Education approves Regulation for Certification of teachers of

Transitional Bilingual Education

June 7, 1972

Secretary of State published Regulations for Certification of Transitional Bilingual Education

June 21, 1972

Bilingual Workshop at the University of Massachusetts — Amherst

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John Schurmann (2 yrs.)

Mary Shannon (1 yr.)

Editor of Newsletter
John Schumann

Calendar

(Continued from page 1)

June 23, 1972

Public Hearings — Gardner Auditorium on Regulations for Transitional Bilingual Education

June 30, 1972

Deadline for filing Summer programs

July 17-26, 1972

Regional Workshops on Transitional Bilingual Education

July 18, 1972

Board of Education approves Permanent Regulations for Transitional Bilingual Education

July 30, 1972

Secretary of State published Regulations for Transitional Bilingual Education

August 15, 1972

Deadline for LEAs to file Letter of Intent for Program approval for 1972-73 school year

August 22, 1972

Board of Education approves criteria to determine bilingual teacher competencies in language skills and culture

September 30, 1972

Deadline for LEAs and Teacher Training Institutions to file plans for implementing criteria to determine bilingual teacher competencies in language skills and culture

October 31, 1972

Deadline for submitting data from the October 1 Census

November 17-18

First Annual Conference on Bilingual Education at Boston University sponsored by the Bureau of TBE, Division of Curriculum and Instruction, the State Advisory Council on Bilingual Education and Massachusetts Associa-

tion of Teachers of Other Languages (MATSOL)

December 1, 1972

LEAs submit to the Bureau of TBE Letter of Intent for programs for 1973-74 school year

Courses Related to Bilingual Education and ESL

In response to a MATSOL inquiry, area institutions have indicated that the following courses will be available for part-time students during the spring and summer of 1973. Interested persons should contact the individual institutions for exact dates and times.

1. **Salem State College, Salem, Massachusetts**

Telephone 745-0556, Ex. 237, 239, 235; after 5 PM 745-0737

a. The graduate division offers a variety of linguistics courses within its English department: transformational grammar, language and communication, applied linguistics, comparative linguistics, language and behavior.

b. Each summer an ESL workshop is offered for in-service teachers.

2. **Middlesex Community College, Spring Road, Bedford, Massachusetts**

Telephone 617-275-1016, 275-8910 ED-150 — Teaching English as a Foreign Language

3. **Boston State College, Dept. of Foreign Languages, Boston, Ma.**

Telephone 731-3300, Ext. 281

a. ESL in the Bilingual Program: Basic Methodology

b. ESL in the Bilingual Program: Advanced Methodology

c. Methods and Materials in Bilingual Education

d. Advanced Spanish for Bilingual Teachers

e. Psychological and Sociological Factors in Second Language and Bilingualism

4. **Emmanuel College, Boston, Massachusetts**

Telephone 277-9340 — Contact Sr. Margaret Pauline. Course starts January 22, 1973

Methodology for the Bilingual School. Basic skills for Spanish-speaking students, Grades 1-3; reading, writing, new math, and Puerto Rican culture.

5. **Regis College, Weston, Massachusetts**

Telephone 893-1820, Contact — Sr. Anna Mary Kelly

Summer 1973: — Two intensive courses in Spanish for people working with Spanish-speaking communities.

6. **Metropolitan College of Boston University, Commonwealth Ave., Boston, Massachusetts**

a. MET EN — 513: Modern English

Grammar — Survey of grammatical systems, uses of grammar in dialect study, in children's language and in literature.

b. MET EN — 712: Linguistic Problems in the Teaching of ESL

7. **Southeastern Massachusetts University, North Dartmouth, Mass.**

Telephone 617-997-9321, Contact — Mary Vermette, Dept. of Modern Languages

a. Applied Linguistics — linguistics for teachers of Portuguese students.

b. Bilingual Curriculum — If there are enough students this course will be offered. It will be directed towards teachers of Portuguese students.

8. **University of Massachusetts at Amherst**

Contact — Henry J. Casso, School of Education

Various courses in bilingual-bicultural education.

ESL for Adults

Ann Hilferty

English language programs are springing up in unexpected places, as institutions in the health care and education industries and large businesses hire increasing numbers of non-English speaking employees, and find themselves faced with basic communication problems. The new programs have to be planned around questions of survival and integration into work settings. It is clear that such programs must be creatively designed to meet the needs of particular people in particular situations.

An English language program recently begun at the Children's Hospital Medical Center in Boston may serve as an example of such a program, designed to integrate employee and work situation, and run on a low budget with the use of volunteer teachers.

Like most other large-city hospitals, Children's during the past few years has hired an ever-increasing number of non-English speaking employees. Presently there are some 100 such persons on the payroll in addition to a large number of medical students and physicians from other countries. Occasionally some of these people have served as translators for non-English speaking patients in the hospital, but more often an interpreter is needed between the employees themselves and their supervisors. The resulting communication problems have led to low group morale, and have contributed to a high turnover rate among employees, particularly in the service departments. Not only is the job difficult and frustrating for an employee who cannot communicate with his supervisor and fellow

ADULT ESL

workers, but also the options of job mobility within the institution are closed to him. Too, of particular concern to management, efficiency levels have been made uneven by the high turnover rate.

One way to solve the problem at Children's might have been to replace the supervisory staff with a group of bilingual supervisors, but even if the hospital could bring itself to release a group of experienced, faithful supervisors it is unlikely that a group of replacements could be found for each of the major departments who could deal with the six language groups represented (Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French, Greek, and Chinese) . . . And this would not solve the problem of communication between employees and English speaking patients.

The Director of Inservice Training at the Hospital recognized the problem as a handicap to both hospital and employees, and resolved to initiate classes in Conversational English for all interested employees. Since there appeared to be no models for such a program in other local hospitals, he conceived his own, financing it with \$10,000 donated by a local charitable organization.

A person experienced in planning and coordinating programs in Conversational English was hired and for five weeks worked simultaneously at preparing the ground for the program within the Hospital administration, while recruiting volunteer teachers from outside the Hospital and training them in methods of teaching English as a Second Language.

The teacher/consultant solicited support and assistance of Hospital administrators by presenting the program as a potential means of raising morale and efficiency levels and lowering turnover rates. She also pointed out the classes could provide avenues of job mobility to employees who might not otherwise be eligible for promotion or for entry into training programs for new positions. Hospital Department Heads and Supervisors cooperated in arranging schedules which enabled participating employees to attend classes during work time for three hours per week, as close to the beginning of their work shifts as possible, and, when possible, at the same time as other employees who were at the same level of command of English.

In recruiting volunteer teachers for the program, the teacher/consultant took advantage of the growing interest in educational circles in the fields of English as a Second Language and Bilingual Education. She offered the opportunity to work in the Hospital's unique English language program to students at Simmons College, a local girls' Liberal Arts univer-

sity. Simmons was chosen because of the high reputations of its Departments of Education and Foreign Languages, its collaboration with Children's in previous ventures, and its proximity to the Hospital which would allow volunteer teachers to travel back and forth to classes at the Hospital at different times of the day.

Agreement was reached with Simmons Officials that the program would satisfy requirements for Simmons courses in Field Work and Independent Study. As a result, the program attracted a number of volunteers satisfying course requirements, in addition to those students interested in service for its own sake.

As the program became known both inside and outside the Hospital and Simmons College, others expressed interest in teaching it, and the final group of teachers included representatives from Boston University and Northeastern University, as well as Simmons and Children's.

Prospective teachers attended a three-session training program given at the Hospital. First, they discussed the cultural backgrounds and language problems of prospective students. They then studied the structure of English and levels of language mastery, principles of teaching English as a Second Language, and diagnostic and evaluative procedures in language teaching. In addition, they practice-taught through role-playing, and observed demonstrations of language lessons which emphasized the adaptation of both commercial language texts and Hospital materials for use in the classes. Teachers were encouraged to develop individual styles in teaching conversational English, and to plan classes guided by suggestions from students themselves. Each teacher visited her students' department to become acquainted with individual work settings, and to meet supervisors.

In very few cases did the teachers know the first language of their students, and when they did they were encouraged *not* to use the first language during classes, but to save it for socializing with the students before and after class.

While the teacher training was in progress, prospective classes were advertised in the Hospital news media, and supervisors submitted names of interested employees, suggesting times and days for classes. In that initial appeal, well over half of the Hospital's more than 100 non-English-speaking employees requested admission.

It had been expected that most of those interested would be Spanish-speaking people from Puerto Rico and Cuba, but while over half were Spanish-speaking, they came from eight different countries (Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Puerto

Rico, and Spain), and the remaining students spoke five different languages (Portuguese, Italian, French, Greek, and Chinese), and came from seven different countries (Portugal, Italy, Haiti, France, Taiwan, Jamaica, and Greece).

Each class consisted of a group of employees at one of three levels of English mastery: (1) beginning students with little or no English, some illiterate in their own languages and others who had had as much as a college education in their own countries; (2) intermediate students who could speak and understand English in a variety of situations but had limited vocabulary and imperfect command of English structure; and, (3) advanced students who had rather sophisticated control of English which needed polishing up for the special requirements of their respective jobs, which included medical, secretarial, and semi-administrative positions.

In matching teachers and classes, the personalities of students and individual teachers were considered, as well as compatibility of schedules. In the two 1½ hour classes per week, the teacher/consultant was able to maintain a more-than-ideal student-teacher ratio of four to one. This allowed each student to have a large share of time for practice and teacher's attention, and left time in each class for informal conversation as well as formal drills. Tutors assisted in many of the classes which were scheduled all day, the earliest beginning at 8:00 a.m., and the latest ending at 7:30 p.m.

Commercial language texts and readers were provided for each student and teacher from the program budget. (In the future, when the Hospital may be required to operate the program without substantial outside funding, students will be expected to purchase their own texts.) The texts chosen for Beginning Students were: *Situational Reinforcement I* (I.M.L.), and *From Words to Stories*, (Noble and Noble). The texts used for Intermediate Students were *Conversational English*, and *Collier-Macmillan Readers*. For Advanced Students we selected *Language and Life in the U.S.A.*, and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

Handwriting workbooks and manipulable letters and numbers were used in some of the classes for Beginners. In addition, job-related materials such as work descriptions, floor plans, diagrams of equipment, and bilingual instruction sheets were incorporated into language lessons for Beginning and Intermediate classes.

The readers for each of the levels will be used again, but *Situational Reinforcement* and *Conversational English* have proven to be difficult for the inex-

perienced teachers, and new language texts for next year's program will be chosen. We will also add materials in Basic Math for some of the Beginners, and additional reading materials for Intermediate students.

When the first classes were finally started, it was discovered there had been a response from a broad cross-section of the entire Hospital. Participants included doctors, employees from Dietary, General Supplies, Housekeeping, Linen, Medical Records, Out-Patient, Research Labs, School of Nursing, Snack Shop, Sterile Supplies, Supply and Distribution, Unit Management, and Visual Education. By the beginning of the second group of classes, in February of 1972, the student body had been extended to include personnel from Health, Inc., a community health clinic affiliated with the Hospital, and family members of the Hospital employees.

The variety of ethnic backgrounds and personalities of the teachers complemented those of the students. Although mainly students from middle-class universities, with a number of more affluent Children's Hospital Volunteers mixed in, the teachers' names reveal family roots of English, Irish, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Jewish, Russian, and Afro-American origin. While the majority of teachers are 19 or 20 years of age, and all are women, most of the employees are in their 30's and 40's.

The major problems with the Program have been logistical, and have fallen on the shoulders of the Inservice Training Personnel and the supervisors of particular employees. Scheduling for the fourteen classes held twice a week in the Inservice Training Facility has proven a complex task, sometimes conflicting with other training activities. The classes have frequently involved hardships for super-

visors who have had to fill in for their absent employees. It has also proven unexpectedly difficult to communicate to all members when illnesses or other problems have required changes of schedules because the faculty and students are so numerous and so far-flung.

However, the successes of the classes have more than justified the logistical problems. The existence of the Program itself has been the product of a cooperative effort on the parts of people at every level of hospital administration, and has had a unifying effect among these levels, as well as among the Hospital and other local institutions. There has been an extraordinary high attendance rate on the part of the students, many of them coming to class even on the occasional day off which has fallen on English class day. Supervisors and teachers observe that students have made noticeable progress in their English language ability, and that all are making more attempts to socialize with fellow employees as well as with classmates.

Individual triumphs are reported daily. For example, one secretary has been able to continue a position from which she was about to be released, and has received a raise, because she has been able to improve her knowledge and use of the English structure, spelling, and punctuation. A doctor reports she feels increasingly competent in methods of monitoring infant metabolism which she has been instrumental in developing at the Hospital. An employee in one of the service departments, who did not know a word of English prior to the classes, was so exhilarated by his initial progress he wanted to leave the Hospital to attend an outside school and increase his number of professional options, until he was assured his continued progress in English would qualify him for entry into advanced programs within the Hospital itself.

In addition to the personal rewards for students, it is clear the teachers have gained from their role in the program. This is attested to by the continued enthusiastic participation of many of the teachers through two semesters of rigorous university class loads, as well as by the fact that professors at Simmons have been impressed by the quality of the experience which working in the program has afforded their students, and have re-endorsed it highly. In addition, observers of the program continually express interest in teaching in it.

The strongest endorsement of success, however, is the obvious raising of levels of morale and efficiency in service departments, and what promise to be lower turnover rates.

Future goals of the Hospital with relation to the English Language Program are:

1. to refine the program in terms of teacher continuity and of student diagnosis and evaluation;
2. to initiate a system of reporting regularly to individual supervisors concerning the progress of the students, thus repeatedly re-justifying the English classes;
3. to implement employee job mobility with direct relation to progress in the English Language Program.

The program has proven to be a successful experiment in conducting an In-House Language Program on a small budget. It is evident, also, that since the major expense apart from release time for employees has been the salary of the teacher/consultant, the program could theoretically be doubled in size at only an additional cost in books. In addition to the fact that the program has proven feasible in terms of expenses and logistics, and has proven a demonstrably successful model, the teacher/consultant and teachers have developed innovative teaching materials and techniques which should be disseminated among other hospitals which could benefit from them.

The Hospital is at present preparing a detailed description of the program which can be used by other hospitals in setting up English Language Programs suited to the particular needs of their various departments.

REMEMBER!

The Bilingual Conference

November 17 - 18
George Sherman Union
Boston University