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Team Teaching in the Language Classroom: A Practice-Teaching Experience

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TEAM TEACHING IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

A Practice-Teaching Experience

by

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BA The College of Wooster 1972

MAT IV

*"Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts in Teaching degree at the School
for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont."*

This report by Virginia Charlton is accepted in its present form.

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ABSTRACT

This report is about team teaching in two practice teaching experiences, one in Spanish and the other in EFL. Its purpose is to explore the pros and cons of team teaching and is primarily based on personal experience and research.

The team teaching experiences related in this report share a number of similar points. However, one was based on a hierarchical relationship between the two teachers and the other was not. Therefore, there are also a number of differences corresponding to the organization of the teams. The similarities and differences are discussed in the conclusion.

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PREFACE

This project was intended to be a team project, done by myself and Ms. Ellen Musser, a fellow Master of Arts in Teaching Languages candidate at the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont. She and I laid the basic groundwork for it, but due to circumstances beyond our control, we were not able to complete it together. Although I have amplified the project to include another team teaching experience, I have used the basic outline that she and I agreed upon. I am much indebted to her for her fine insights and work, and especially for the construction of materials used in our class at Westminster West.

The project that has resulted is basically my observations, experiences, and research on team teaching in the language classroom. During my practice teaching period, I had the opportunity to work with seven teachers. The two most valid experiences, in light of team teaching, are the ones I shall discuss. My intention is to consider the advantages and disadvantages of team teaching, to explore the dynamics of such an approach as it relates to me as a teacher, and to suggest its suitability for teacher training in particular.

INTRODUCTION

Team teaching has had its ups and downs in the last decade. Some educators consider it to be just another fad that fizzled, but others feel team teaching has had a profound effect on educational philosophy and practice. Those in favor of the team approach believe it is more flexible and creative for the teachers and the students. They consider a team of sharing and cooperating colleagues more advantageous than the traditional organization of independent colleagues working alone. Those who oppose team teaching tend to consider it an unnecessary waste of time and money. It is very time consuming and additional staff means additional salaries, so these are not trivial reasons for opposing team teaching.

There are many kinds of teaching teams and many definitions of team teaching. The following definition communicates the underlying concept rather than the details (ex: how many teachers a real team has, or how many students a real team has). "The heart of the concept of team teaching lies not in details of structure and organization but more in the essential spirit of cooperative planning, constant collaboration, close unity, unrestrained communication, and sincere sharing. It is reflected not in a groups of individuals articulating together, but rather in a group which is a single, unified team."¹

¹Stuart E. Dean and Clinnette F. Witherspoon, "Team Teaching in the Elementary School." Education Briefs, No. 38 (Washington:U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, January, 1962), p.4.

In terms of self-organization, teaching teams follow one of two general patterns, hierarchical or non-hierarchical. A hierarchical team has a leader and the members maintain different levels of responsibility, depending on ability and/or experience. For example, in this type of organization, the leader may plan lessons in consultation with a teacher aide or student teacher, and then assign duties according to the plan. The authors of Team Teaching in Action state that the hierarchical approach is superior in quality due to the fact that a non-hierarchical approach lacks firm direction and that group decisions tended to be a compromise and therefore of lower quality.² Personally, I found their first point to be true, but not the second one.

The non-hierarchical team emphasizes natural leadership, each person being responsible for what he or she does best. For example, teachers in the same department of a public school might pool resources, share materials, talents and ideas in an informal, loosely structured way.

The body of this paper is divided into two major sections. The first is the description of a non-hierarchical practice teaching experience that I had with another student teacher (Ms. Ellen Musser). The second section is the description of a hierarchical practice teaching experience I had with a teacher in an Intensive English Program.

²Medill Bair and Richard G. Woodward, Team Teaching in Action (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964), p. 29.

PART I

In order to prepare for our project, Ellen and I began to explore what had been written on our subject. Unfortunately, we found very little pertaining to team teaching in the language classroom in particular. Also, the bulk of material we located was written with public schools in mind and we were teaching in a small private school.

Since we had no text, no materials, and no money, we immediately wrote to a dozen publishers for free samples, in an attempt to start a Spanish language library for children. Unfortunately, what we did receive came during the last week of class, so we were unable to utilize most of it. The materials are now part of the Master of Arts in Teaching library at The School for International Training.

While we were teaching, we took turns writing up each class period in the form of a journal. We attempted to record what occurred, who was responsible for what, the degree of student involvement, and personal reactions and comments. We usually discussed the class period immediately afterwards and then one of us would write our impressions in the journal.

As further preparation for the project we took a field trip to the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts. The School of Education operates an elementary school, named Mark Meadows, on "the integrated day" plan. We observed that the teaching staff was divided into five teams of two to four teachers and eight to twelve interns. By choice, each team was organized differently. In some

teams there was a leader; in others, the teachers worked individually except in sharing resources; in others, all members were equal and had close working relationships. My guess is that the "equal, close working relationship" teams were maintained by the smaller groups.

Observing a variety of six teams in action was helpful to us as we began to formulate our own team. Since we were both novices, talking to experienced teacher who were on teams made us aware of certain difficulties we would encounter. We were also able to see how a whole school had adopted an integrated approach through the use of teams. The principal was enthusiastic and proud and claimed that the teams were no more difficult to manage than a traditionally organized staff of autonomous teachers.

One aspect of their team approach was "family grouping". In other words, the students of each teaching team were of different ages, the purpose being to expose children to different levels of maturity by mixing them with each other. Therefore, grade levels and age groups were not so clearly defined and separated as they usually are.

We noted that the atmosphere throughout the school was relaxed and informal without being disorganized or undisciplined. Comfortable relationships seemed to exist between students, teachers and administrators. The attitude of the school was innovative and because there was a lot of freedom of expression and experimentation, there was a high level of enthusiasm and motivation. The physical appearance was bright and airy.

WESTMINSTER WEST

Westminster West is a small alternative school located near Putney, Vermont. It is mostly parent-run, although there are several professional teachers. The children are between the ages of eight and thirteen, and are divided into two groups, Group A and Group B. The division is based partially on age and partially on achievement.

When we taught there, the school was housed in two converted homes connected by a dirt road, surrounded by farm lands, a small stream and woods. Spanish classes were held in the sun room of "School A". One wall was a sliding glass door which opened out onto a deck. The room was furnished with an old couch and two picnic tables and the walls were covered with charts, maps, and homework from the classes held there during the day. There was a very small portable blackboard (but no eraser) for our use.

In the fall of 1972, Spanish and French were taught for the first time at Westminster West by students in the Masters in Teaching Program at the School for International Training in Brattleboro. The Westminster school wanted to offer their students experience with a foreign language and the Masters of Arts in Teaching students wanted the experience of teaching, so quite a suitable arrangement was worked out.

When Ellen and I began to teach we discovered that the students had had four months of Spanish but that classes had stopped for four months. Therefore, they had some background but we had no idea how much

they would remember after a four month gap. In order to decide where to start, we consulted the previous teacher and she lent us her notes to review.

There were twelve children in the class, enough for one teacher to handle, but we were interested in the prospects of team teaching and decided to turn our experience into such a project.

My partner-teacher had team taught in a day care center and had just finished her practice teaching at a private girl's school in New England. She was versed in the audiolingual approach to language instruction and had learned Spanish in college and in Spain.

All of my teaching experience had been with low-income minority teenagers and adults. I was drawn to the "Silent Way" approach developed by Caleb Gattegno, which can be summarized as "the subordination of teaching to learning."³ I had experimented with this approach in my practice teaching experience at San Francisco Community College. I had learned Spanish by living in Mexico as a child and had continued studying in college. I also spent a year studying in Spain.

Since both of us were relatively new to the teaching field and were good friends, it was quite natural for us to maintain a non-hierarchical relationship. We soon found each other's strengths and were able to divide our work accordingly.

Our Spanish class met for an hour three times a week and lasted six weeks. The children had learned most of the Spanish they knew

³ Caleb Gattegno, Teaching Foreign Languages in Schools: The Silent Way (New York, Educational Solutions, 1972)

through songs and games. We discovered that they vaguely knew the numbers, some clothing, parts of the body and days of the week. It soon became apparent, however, that few of them could use the words they knew out of the context of a song or memorized dialogue. This led us to create a series of objectives, general and specific, that we wished to meet during the six weeks.

Specifically, we wanted them to know the numbers, colors, days of the week and months of the year. We wanted them to know the Spanish alphabet and to be able to spell. We also intended to teach them vocabulary for the weather, some animals, and food; to tell time; and to use a few basic verbs.

Generally, we desired to develop better listening habits, accurate pronunciation, the ability to differentiate between sounds, and an awareness of cultural and linguistic differences, such as masculine and feminine words, and the familiar and the formal forms of address.

We learned later that this was way too much to expect of the students in three hours a week for six weeks. The objectives we were able to meet are discussed below to give an idea of how we experimented with team teaching. The objectives which are discussed are in the order in which they were taught.

Colors and Numbers:

On a sunny day, we took the students outside and held class on the deck. We divided them into two groups, and using the Cuisenaire rods⁴, we asked them what should have been a familiar question: "¿De qué color es el palito?"⁵ Most of them vaguely remembered the colors and after ten minutes or so they could answer the question immediately. I divided my group into pairs and had them ask each other the question. Since they did so well, I moved on to "¿Cuántos palitos tienes?"⁶ Although they did not understand the question at first, once they did, they answered satisfactorily.

Ellen's group did not get to the numbers as was planned. It was evident that the children generally remembered the numbers better than the colors so it did not cause any serious imbalance in the class.

Variation:

Once the students were in pairs, the teachers did not necessarily need to be associated with one group. We could have moved around and helped or listened to any pair of students. However, close supervision and availability was extremely important.

OBSERVATION :

We immediately discovered, after the first week that we had to be very, very specific in what we were going to

⁴ The Cuisenaire rods are multi-colored rods used originally to teach mathematics to children. Caleb Gattegno introduced them to the language teaching profession.

⁵ "What color is the rod?"

⁶ "How many rods do you have?"

present so that each of us would know what the other was doing at any given time in case one had to pick up where the other left off.

The Alphabet:

In order to teach the alphabet, we devised a game and made a chart. Ellen made the chart while I mapped out the game. The chart was divided into vertical columns. On the left of each column was the Spanish alphabet, and to the right of each letter was the phonetic pronunciation in a different color.

In class, Ellen presented the chart using an audiolingual drill, while I wrote the alphabet game song on the blackboard. After quizzing them on the letters, which they learned quite rapidly, we taught them the song⁷:

Marchamos por el alfabeto
por el alfabeto
y cuando no hay más música
dí que letra tienes!

Amazingly enough, we spent the whole hour teaching them the alphabet and the song. We were greatly impressed with the ability to concentrate that they displayed.

The next day we practiced the alphabet song without the visual cues we had used previously. When they knew it well enough, we went outside and played the following game:

⁷ We are marching through the alphabet,
through the alphabet,
and when there is no more music
say what letter you have!

Materials: alphabet flash card - one letter on each card.

The cards were placed on the ground in a circle, letters facing outwards. The players made a circle around the cards, and sang the song while walking, skipping or running around the cards, and holding hands. When the song stopped, the players had to stop moving. To begin, the teacher was "it". One of us stood in the middle of the circle and pointed randomly at a player, who had to give the correct Spanish pronunciation of the letter in front of him. If he missed it, he was "out".

Variation:

With two teachers, one could take the "out" players and start another game. Also, the "out" players could be instructed to take the letter they missed with them to the other game, so they they would have to learn it. When playing outside, it would be preferable to make the cards out of something heavier than cardboard, as they tend to blow away on a windy day!

OBSERVATION:

As team teachers we discovered that we could save valuable time by organizing ourselves: for example, when Ellen was teaching the chart, I wrote the song on the blackboard. While I was teaching the song, she organized the materials for the game.

Telling Time:

The third week was devoted to telling time. Again, we created visual aides, two clocks with moving hands. After Ellen introduced "*¿Qué hora es?*"⁸ and "*Son las...*"⁹ with an audiolingual

⁸ "What time is it?"

⁹ "It is"

drill, we divided into two groups to practice. During this class period we discovered the importance of organizing and controlling the physical arrangement of the students. As Ellen noted in our journal:

"Gini and her group sat on the floor in a circle and my group and I stood by the other clock which was hanging on the wall. Gini seemed to have more control over her group, as mine was more mobile - standing gave them more freedom to move about and get distracted. Nevertheless, both groups seemed to have mastered the same amount of material."

When we assembled again, we played the clock relay race. Teams were chosen by counting off "uno, dos, uno, dos..."¹⁰ Each member of a team was given a slip of paper. Ellen and I stood near the clocks, and when the student ran up to the clock we would ask, "¿Qué hora es?". The student would then have to read what was on his paper and manipulate the clock hands until he had it right.

OBSERVATIONS:

One of the events that occurred during this week could only have been remedied with more than one teacher in the classroom. One of the older girls had been absent and missed the basic introduction to the clock. I had not paid special attention to her because she usually picked up the new material very quickly. She was hurt, however, that I hadn't paid special attention to her. While I ran the relay race, Ellen took her aside and gave her full

¹⁰ " One, two, one, two,..... "

attention. Once she had mastered the material she joined the game without disruption.

During this class it also became obvious that some children were choosing favorites. In the beginning, some wanted to be on my team, some in Ellen's group etc., but by the end of the six weeks, as they got to know us better, the "loyalty" for one diminished and we all related quite well, without any favorites.

Ellen and I discovered that we related quite differently to some of the children. Ellen was able to get much closer and give more personal attention and interest to some for whom I would not particularly have felt the inclination. On the other hand, there were several whose personalities did not appeal to Ellen, to whom I had no trouble relating. In this way I feel that all the children got as much personal attention and interest from us as they wanted or needed.

Formal "Usted" and Informal "Tu":

We found that having two people was highly advantageous in presenting this concept and information to the class.

[Ellen and I acted out a dialogue in which one of us was a child and the other an old man. This was entertaining and got the point across. They were surprised to find out that it was necessary to make a distinction between people.

OBSERVATIONS:

We tried to play a game with the formal and informal, but discovered that it was too complicated for them. Consequently,

they did not get practice using the forms, but they were made aware of the existence of the forms.

Masculine and Feminine:

When we first presented this concept, very few students even understood the words masculine and feminine. Later, when they had learned the meaning of the words, they were fascinated and ran around saying "Is this a girl or a boy?". They thought it was immensely funny that chairs were girls and walls were boys, windows, girls, and shoes, boys. Arguments arose from preadolescent libbers - why should this be a boy and not a girl? They all felt that somehow there had to be a logical division and a reason for it, but soon discovered that all things in Spanish had to be either masculine or feminine due to the form of the words, rather than the "sex" of the object.

Culture Day:

Three friends of ours from the Intensive English Program at SIT came to visit class one day and tell about their countries: Mexico, Panama, and El Salvador. The students were fascinated and a little afraid or nervous. Many of them seemed to be realizing for the first time that there really were people that didn't speak English and communicated in another language. One of the rowdies, popped up with huge eyes and asked me in a shocked voice if they were really speaking Spanish.

Although it was alot of fun having them come to visit, that made five adults. In such a small space it became

confusing for the kids especially when we started to teach them "La Cucaracha". We discovered that they needed to discern a leader to follow. We noticed that for a given activity it was necessary for them to focus on one teacher, especially with new material.

Our latino friends helped the children correct some papers from a previous class. The students were delighted to have the personal attention of such novel personalities.

Possessive Pronouns:

We introduced the possessive pronouns mi, tu, and su, using the dialogue.¹¹:

Q-¿De qué color es tu palito?"

A-Mi palito es amarilla.

Q-¿De qué color es su palito?" (pointing to another)

A- Su palito es azul.

After repeating it with appropriate gestures, we then proceeded to ask the students the questions and eventually had them doing the dialogue in pairs. We divided into two groups without meaning to. Ellen had taken the half in front of her and to the right, and I had taken the rest. Unfortunately, neither group moved to a different area, so soon there was a great deal of noise and confusion.

¹¹ Q-"What color is your rod?"
 A-"My rod is yellow."
 Q-"What color is his/her rod?"
 A-"His/her rod is blue."

OBSERVATIONS:

Open communication and flexibility are essentials for team teaching. The team members must get along and have mutual respect. Ellen and I worked well together and had no trouble communicating with each other and fading in and out of activities as called for, until someone came to observe us. We discovered that we were not operating in our usual team fashion when it came time to shift to another activity as had been planned. Ellen seemed to feel her group needed more practice with the possessive pronouns. This left me in the lurch, so I just continued to practice the pronouns too. Possibly, when being observed we tended to be conscious of our individual performance over that of the team coordination.

Weather:

Ellen and I had made a weather chart which we used to introduce and teach different weather phrases. The chart had a dial and was divided into sections. Each section had a different kind of weather drawn on it. On the chart was written, "¿Qué tiempo hace?"¹² and above each section was the phrase that described the drawing. The day after we presented the weather to the class, two girls who had been absent for a week, returned. While I reviewed the weather and held a discussion, she took the girls aside and taught them the possessive pronouns. Later, during the same class, we divided into two groups. Ellen took the same girls and the slower students who needed review, and taught them using the

¹² "How is the weather?"

weather chart. My group sat around a picnic table and had their first big written exercise - a quiz on the weather.

At the beginning of the six weeks we posed a number of questions about team teaching which we felt needed to be considered. We wanted to know how team teaching affected discipline and we found that having two teachers helped minimize discipline problems in our class. When problems arose, one of us took the disruptive student(s) aside to find out the trouble as the other continued teaching the class. In this way, learning continued for the majority while the "trouble makers" got the attention they needed instead of dominating the whole class, or being ignored or shut-up by the teacher.

There were times, however, when due to our own lack of clarity we caused minor disruption. As I stated previously, it was important for the students to be able to distinguish a leader and many times they felt they had to choose to pay attention to one or the other. This was worst between activities, when shifting over to something new. For example, one of us might be involved in trying to stop an argument or answer a question while the other would be trying to get things quiet for the next activity. In those moments, a united front would probably have been more efficient and less confusing.

Some children insisted on being loyal to one of us, particularly in the beginning. A typical problem was when Ellen was presenting something and a little girl who had chosen me as her teacher would turn to me and expect me to teach the material to her, personally. This manner of

interrupting was very rude to Ellen and distracting to neighboring students. The feelings of loyalty were more obvious, however when choosing teams or for group work. Some insisted on being with one of us in particular and refused to participate if they didn't get their way.

To summarize, although we felt certain discipline problems diminished, others were created by the presence of two teachers.

Our next question was, how does team teaching affect the interest level or involvement of the students? Interest was at least maintained if not increased due to the variety of presentation and activities. They could not get so easily bored with two teachers whose methods and personalities were so different. Also, Ellen and I did activities of a dramatic nature, such as acting out dialogues and introducing songs together. Our interaction with each other made the idea of actually speaking another language more real to them. They could actually observe two people who knew the language, use it with each other and understand each other. Especially in this situation, where the children were experiencing the new language for the first time, it proved to be an important factor.

Because of the additional supervision and individual attention, we felt there was more participation on the student's part. With two teachers available, there was a greater possibility of understanding the lesson. Also, we discovered that some students learned better from Ellen, whereas I seemed to be able to communicate with others.

We also wished to know how team teaching affected the shy or passive child. Again, we found that additional personal attention helped solve

this kind of problem, as it seemed to create more self-confidence.

We tried to find out if team teaching accelerated learning processes, but since we really didn't have much experience to compare our class with, it was difficult to measure. However, my guess is that they may learn the material better (long-term), but not necessarily learn a greater amount of items.

The last question was, how does the presence of two teachers using the given language for communication in the classroom improve the student's comprehension? I believe that it made a difference in their comprehension particularly since Ellen and I tried always to converse in Spanish. Listening to authentic dialogue is the best way to tune one's ear to a language. The children could not understand us completely but they became accustomed to hearing the rhythm of the Spanish language.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we discovered a number of advantages to our approach:

1) The class heard two different accents. Ellen and I speak Spanish quite differently due to the fact that she began learning it in the States and perfected it in Spain, whereas I learned Spanish as a child in Mexico.

2) The class was exposed to two ways of teaching. Ellen was able to drill them using a lot of group repetition. I tried to draw their knowledge out and tried to get them to analyze or be aware of what they were doing. The interaction of the two approaches meant that they had the immediate reward of memorizing something new but at the same time were asked to use their minds and struggle a little. Naturally some students leaned towards one method or the other, but I believe they benefited from the combination.

3) Cooperation developed as we became used to each other. ^{For example,} The people who were loyal to me slowly began relating to Ellen on their own initiative and then were able to maintain both of the relationships.

4) Although we were not as organized as might have been possible, we discovered many ways to save time and be more efficient. For example: one of us quietly prepared the materials for a new activity while the other finished up the activity in progress. Team teaching can save time in class (i.e., more time for teaching, fewer idle moments),

but the amount of planning and discussion that is required outside of class is greater than that required for the autonomous teacher.

5) The greater amount of centered attention was very helpful in terms of teaching a foreign language. We discovered that in addition to our own efforts, that the older students took responsibility for the younger ones, by explaining the material as they understood it. It was a pleasant situation in which a high degree of relating and interacting existed.

There were also a number of negative factors which we had to deal with.

1) The initial choosing of favorites by the children was quite awkward for both of us.

2) Although we tried to be as coordinated as possible in terms of the lesson plan, transition moments proved to be confusing for all. We could not coordinate our reactions in the same way we did our lesson planning. Consequently, if a child was acting up, I might say "Sit on the floor and be still.", whereas Ellen might say, simultaneously, "Get off the floor and stop bothering her."

4) Space was a very real problem. The small room made our attempts to divide into groups somewhat difficult since we couldn't get away from each other. Our little blackboard was inadequate and awkward since there was no place to prop it up or hang it.

5) The greatest limitation was time. Both of us had school work to do and seminars to attend and were not able to devote as

much time as we would have liked to.

The basic requirements for effective team teaching are, then:

- 1) Materials*
- 2) Very close cooperation and compatibility*
- 3) Space*
- 4) Time*
- 5) Tight organization or plan*

PART II

From September to December of 1974, I did my English-as-a-foreign-language practice teaching in the Intensive English Program of the International Office of the University of Texas in Austin. I was placed with an experienced teacher at the intermediate level of instruction.

The Intensive English course lasted for ten weeks and each class met for two hours every day. Most students were enrolled in two classes a day or four hours.

The program was housed in a wing of a dormitory. Therefore, the classrooms were converted bedrooms. Most of the English students hoped to get into an American university after mastering English. The majority were well-to-do and had good educational backgrounds. They were highly motivated to learn since their future studies depended on their acquisition of the language. The average age was twenty-three and seventy-five per cent of the students were men.

My practice teaching experience in the Intensive English Program was an example of hierarchical team teaching. My master teacher and I spent many hours talking before class began. Luckily neither of us had any other priorities and were able to devote our full attention to coordinating the class.

The title of our course was "Reading and Composition"¹³ My master teacher had taught the course previously and was able to point out certain strengths and weaknesses of the materials, and give suggestions

¹³ Florence Baskoff, American English: Guided Composition (Philadelphia: The Center for Curriculum Development, 1971)

Robert Lado, Lado English Series, Book IV (Washington, D.C.: Regents Publishing Co., Inc. 1972)

for supplemental material..

After reviewing the course as a whole, we tried to agree on general behavioral objectives. We both felt it was important to develop student responsibility for learning. We also agreed that our course should help develop and encourage student-initiated interaction with the new environment, Austin, Texas, U.S.A. We proceeded to organized our class activities with these goals in mind.

Individually and jointly, we developed ideas for the course. We each surveyed other materials available for use and then decided together how and when to incorporate them into the class.' We generally met to plan the week ahead of time. In these meetings, we outlined the major items to be worked on during the week. Then we met daily to discuss each class and to fill in the details, such as who was responsible for each exercise, and what activities needed to be altered or re-arranged. We usually overplanned our lessons, so constant revision was necessary.

Although we planned the class together, my master teacher did most of the organizing. Also, whereas we spent the same amount of time teaching in the class, she did most of the grammar while I observed.

The students were understandably confused when two teachers appeared on the first day. Once the arrangement was explained some seemed pleased, thinking they were really getting their money's worth, and others worried that maybe neither one of us was a good teacher and that was why they put us together, to make a whole! After a few days, everyone was more than happy with the arrangement (all that attention!). They treated us equally although it was obvious that the other teacher had

the final say on important things.

In the class there were several Latin American teenagers, a young man from Iran, and an older gentleman from Bulgaria. Most of them were very outgoing, so it turned out to be quite a lively class.

My master teacher and I alternated quite frequently during class. For example, if she led the first exercise, I usually did the second, and so on. This did not particularly bother or confuse the students.

CLASSROOM METHODS:

I had been exposed to quite a few techniques in the Methods course offered at the School for International Training, but I had never observed them used continuously and effectively in a real classroom situation. I was able to observe a number of excellent teachers from whom I learned the creative use of visual aids, and the potential of the audio-lingual approach.

My master teacher had learned French by the audiolingual method and felt very strongly that memorizing dialogues was essential to language learning, particularly as an introductory activity and as a pronunciation exercise. In the Lado book, the dialogues introduced the reading selections and illustrated the grammar in the chapters.

I, myself, had never learned a language through the audiolingual approach and was not convinced of the validity of memorization; therefore, when I was given a class of my own to teach a few weeks into the course, I almost completely omitted any form of memorization. Since I was teaching both classes simultaneously, I was able to observe the

progress of each. I observed that in general, the pronunciation of the team taught class, where memorization and drills were used, had slightly better pronunciation than the other (same level, same course). Also, in their final evaluation of the course several students mentioned that my course had been weak in pronunciation. These observations and comments led me to analyze the use of audio-lingual techniques and I can now recognize the value of them.

There were a number of classroom activities in which team teaching played a vital role. For example, in each chapter of Lado IV, after the reading was an exercise called "Speak Topics". The students were instructed to give a one or two minutes speech on a topic related to or inspired by the reading selection. We found the most productive way of dealing with this was to have an active leader and a passive leader. The active leader directed the activity, listened intently to what was being said, asked questions and moderated any discussion that arose. The passive leader's job was to record each student's errors, noting grammar, pronunciation, and clarity of presentation. In this way, the student could feel he had the full attention of the teacher, and, on the other hand, we could analyze the personal difficulties of each student without distracting them.

It immediately became obvious that my master teacher and I tended to be sensitive to different things. Therefore, our discussions about what had actually happened in class proved to be very eye-opening for both of us.

We used the same active-passive leader technique in discussions because we found that it was confusing to have two people leading the class. It often occurred that two discussions would arise. For example, exasperated by another classmate's long-winded argument with Beverly (my master teacher), a student would turn to me and try to get his own point across, without waiting his turn. When using the active-passive technique, the passive leader would join the discussion, submitting her thoughts to the moderator, just as the students would.

Dialogues, quite obviously, lend themselves naturally to team teaching. In class, Beverly and I would go through the dialogues together several times, each taking a part. Then, one of us usually drilled the class. Occasionally, each of us would lead a part of the drill. For example, Beverly's half of the class would ask: "Do you remember man's first landing on the moon?" and I would lead my half, playing the other individual, and answer the question: "Yes I do. I'll never forget it. It was one of the great moments in history."

Throughout the course the students were asked to do a study of American expressions. Each student was responsible for one new expression per week. We assigned the expressions and gave them a sheet to put the expression, the meaning(s), and a few examples of usage, plus any comments on usage (ex: formal, impolite etc.) Their assignment was to interview an American and get a few sample sentences in addition to the meaning. They soon found out that they could not find "Are you pulling my leg?" in the dictionary and that in order to complete the assignment contact with an American was vital. Naturally, we neglected to tell them of the many

it. Two chairs were placed back to back, so that the faces of the speakers were not visible. Example situation: You are watching the late show with some friends and get hungry. Call and order the pizza of your choice, 'to go'. After reading his situation and thinking about it a bit, he then proceeded to look up some pizza places in the yellow pages. When he found one located near his house, he then dialed the imaginary telephone and I answered, "pizza Hut". The student had to place his order with the person correctly. If it was done incorrectly, the "Pizza Hut Lady" would give him a hard time. Beverly and I tried to be as realistic as possible, which meant in some situations being as rude as possible. Under the circumstances it proved to be hilarious, but the students got the point - people are not patient, especially over the phone, so they should always try to prepare what they want to say and how ahead of time.

Stage III: After everyone had done several role plays in class, we shifted to role playing on the telephone. We were unable to get tele-trainers from Bell Telephone, so we used real phones. In Stage II it was much more efficient having two teachers because it enabled each student to role play twice as much as he would have been able to with one teacher. In Stage III, it was essential to have two teachers, one to guide the students making the calls and the other to receive the calls and role play. Again we used the active-passive technique - the role player was the active leader and the teacher giving the situations and leading the class was the passive leader who would listen to the student's manner on the telephone (and grammar of course). The role play situations were the

idiom and expression books on the market, because the point was to have an exchange with an American.

In addition to hunting down an American to interview, each student was responsible for teaching the assigned expression to the class. Consequently, the class learned ten new expressions per week, from each other. We quizzed them weekly on the expressions and tried to use them as naturally as possible in class.

Telephone exercise:

The theme of one week of class was the use of the telephone, which turned out to be very successful and a lot of fun. The point was to familiarize the students with telephone etiquette and vocabulary. We focused on this because we were aware ^{of} the importance of the telephone in American life, and we had noticed the reticence of many foreign students to utilize it, due to nervousness of not understanding or being understood. We divided the exercise into four stages:

Stage I: a) Introduction of several dialogues using typical American telephone expressions.

b) Introduction of the yellow pages. Students were assigned a general topic and were asked to look it up in the yellow pages. For example, if the student was assigned restaurants, he was supposed to choose a restaurant. A written report was due the next day.

Stage II: Role Play

The class was divided into two groups of five people. I took my group into another room because the classroom was not big enough to allow two separate groups to function very well. Each student was given a different situation and was instructed to role play

bus company, directory assistance, a doctor's office, the telephone co., and a restaurant, to name a few examples. The active leader also recorded impressions from each student. This proved to be an important factor, since the quality of voice and tone are extremely important over the phone. Some students who spoke quite correctly were inaudible, others sounded rude and abrupt without meaning to.

We also enlisted two friends to do this exercise with us and divided into two groups again. In this situation, Beverly and I were both the passive leaders and our friends were the active leaders.

Stage IV: The students were given real telephoning assignments to do over the weekend. In class they had to write telephone dialogues of their own. Some of the specific vocabulary they learned was "to make an appointment", "to make a reservation", "to give someone a ring", "to dial the wrong number", "to hang up", "to hang on" etc.

In addition to teaming up on classroom activities, we also held individual conferences a number of times. We found that each of us related differently to the students. Beverly had more rapport with some and I had more with others. Also, there were certain kinds of problems that one of us was more capable of handling than the other. For example, Beverly was more capable of reprimanding effectively. On the other hand, there were some students that she simply could not relate to, that didn't bother me as much so that I was able to deal with them more objectively.

Even though we had two teachers for ten students, we felt that an uninterrupted one to one session was necessary. The student was able

to express himself freely and we were able to provide suggestions for improvement, based on the observations made the the passive leader in a variety of excercises.

In team teaching, a certain kind of flexibility is gained in that two teachers are able to offer more variety of activities and more individual attention. Flexibility is lost however, in the dialy routine. It was necessary for us to try to follow the established lesson plan much more closely than ordinarily. The teacher in a traditional classroom reorganizes or omits excercises on the spot, if necessary. She can change the order of activities with no effort or confusion because she is the only one who knows what is coming next. In team teaching, your partner must know exactly what is to follow, therefore you must follow some agreed upon order. This was difficult for Beverly to get used to and for me too. Occasionally she would decide to change things around and take me totally off guard. This was not a serious problem during the short period of time in which we worked together, but could be the source of problems on a long term basis. However, it would probably be less problematic in a hierarchical team than a non-hierarchical one, due to the defined leadership.

The advantages of the hierarchical team were in some ways different than the advantages of the non-hierarchical team. For example, I was able to become intimately aware of an experienced teacher's techniques, in planning and in teaching methods.

The manner in which this particular teacher organized and carried out her plans was exceptionally precise and complete, so it was very easy

to keep communication open and accurate since everything was outlined on paper. The lesson plan format was as follows:

Monday, Sept 21, 1973

First hour

15 min.	(Bev.)	Grammar- indirect speech
10 min.	(Both)	Review dialogue
15 min.	(Gini)	Note taking skills
10 min.	(Bev.)	Dictation

Second hour

20 min.	(Gini)	Lead discussion on reading selection
15 min.	(Both)	SRA rate builders
15 min.	(Bev.)	Composition errors (with overhead projector)

Assignment: Go to lab, listen to article in Lesson 3 of Lado IV, take notes and write a summary.

Materials: Xerox note taking skill sheet

Get SRA lab

Overhead projector

I benefited immensely from Beverly's discipline and organization. I learned how to lesson plan effectively and I also became aware of the need to be as specific and clear as possible. If the teacher is not clear on what she is going to teach, the students most likely won't understand it clearly.

CONCLUSION:

From these experiences and my research, I have discovered what I consider to be a number of distinct advantages to team teaching. For the student teacher, it provides a superior vehicle for training, due to the constant observation and communication with another teacher. The guidance in lesson planning, classroom methods, techniques, and management of difficulties (discipline) are extremely helpful for the novice.

For the veteran teacher it can be a source of inspiration, and a period of self-evaluation and renovation. Due to these factors it has the potential of producing better qualified teachers. Each teacher receives feedback from her partner(s). This feedback allows for a more realistic and accurate evaluation of each individual's strengths and weaknesses.

The advantages for the students are that they receive more objective evaluation of their abilities, so that grading becomes less important. Because there is more than one teacher in the classroom, there is greater potential for positive relationships with a teacher. Since a student's interest in a subject many times depends on his relationship with the teacher, this is an important factor.

Another educational advantage is the experience of having two people teach related material. No two people have the same approach or attitude. This type of exposure encourages children to learn how to distinguish opinion from fact. In the foreign language classroom, it provides two accents, or ways of expression, offers more possibility of conversation, and enables the student to get to know the culture of the

We packed the two hours as tightly as we could, and every minute was accounted for. At first it seemed to me that we were moving too fast, but in fact, we were just keeping a step ahead of the students, so that they wouldn't get bored or distracted.

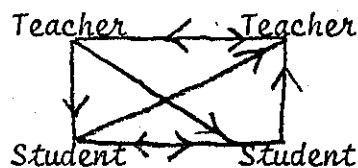
Beverly benefited from our planning sessions also. She felt that having to constantly explain her ideas to someone else required a great deal of thought on her part and helped her analyze and evaluate the activities she had done and was considering doing.

One serious disadvantage of our situation was the size of the classroom. The 'passive leader' could not fade into the background because there was no room. When one of us was leading an activity, the only way for the other to get out of the way was to sit down in an empty seat amongst the students. Many times, if a student didn't quite understand what was being explained, he would turn to the passive teacher for an additional explanation. The result was that in such a small room it was distracting to all of the students and to the other teacher. We had to make them realize that questions were to be directed at all times to the teacher in front of the classroom.

language they are learning. In addition, the interaction between two teachers enables the students to observe the use of the language between two people who speak it fluently, and helps them distinguish personal characteristics from cultural characteristics. This may prove to be important, since people tend to generalize about a culture or a country from the acquaintance of one individual.

With two people in charge, classroom equipment can be set up and operated without losing valuable class time. Also, the instructing teacher, does not have to be preoccupied with running the projector or tape recorder, etc.

There are a number of limitations to team teaching also. They are few but vital. The greatest limitation is time. It is a misconception to assume that a team approach actually provides more free time for the teachers. In fact, numerous planning sessions, in addition to individual work and secretarial duties, create a barrier for most teachers. The network of communication has to be kept wide open at all times, and with a team of just two members the interaction looks something like this:



Also, all people do not work well together. I happened to be very lucky, but in a team, members must be picked very carefully if success is desired. Petty rivalries, unwillingness to compromise and

selfishness are some of the causes of failure.

Adequate space is a problem that team teachers need to deal with. We had very limited space in both of my team teaching situations, but even in public schools, according to the books I read, this continues to be a problem.

Team teaching has changed over the years and it is even given other names. The basic concept of cooperative planning, communicating and sharing, is hopefully here to stay. As a student I remember being distressed over the lack of relationship between the subjects I was studying. Nowadays, in public schools, many History, English, and Science teachers coordinate their subject matter. This broadens the scope for both teachers and students, and makes them feel more like they are participating in the whole learning process.

Also, the spirit of cooperation counteracts the spirit of competition which runs so rampant in many schools. I do not consider competition among teachers to be a "healthy" attitude. Cooperation and integration are much more positive modes of achievement. Especially in teaching a language, it is vital to connect it with culture, history, and literature in order to give it meaning, and in order to motivate the students. But beyond all culture, history and literature, language is for communication and the more possibility for communication and conversation, the more active will the interest and motivation of the learners be. I consider our students lucky to have ^{had} two teachers to communicate with, and really wish it were possible for every language classroom.

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