

LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Emily Spinelli, Keynote Speaker, Reno 1999

As we approach the end of the twentieth century, scholars in many fields are examining their professions in order to analyze the past and predict trends that will affect their profession in the twenty-first century. It is therefore fitting that we in the foreign language profession reflect on our past, explain where we are as a profession, and examine where we need to go in the near future.

As you may know I am from Michigan and I teach at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Dearborn is the home of Henry Ford and the Ford Motor Company and as a result the Ford name and company have quite an impact on our lives. Fairlane, the home of Henry and Clara Ford is located on our campus and serves as a conference center for us. Our campus is located within five minutes of Ford World Headquarters and Greenfield Village and the Automotive Museum created by Henry Ford. By now you are probably wondering what does Henry Ford have to do with foreign language education; I assure you that there is a meaningful connection. Henry Ford is generally given credit for one of the most significant developments of the early part of the 20th century: the movement toward mass production and its related features of the assembly line and interchangeable parts. You may remember that his contributions were considered so significant that in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1973) the supreme being was called "Ford" and people swore and took his name in vain by saying "Oh, Ford!" The idea of mass production had its inspiration in Ford's idea to manufacture a single, standardized, relatively inexpensive car that had wide appeal. Such a universal car depended upon products that were made as much alike as "pins or matches" (Sward, 1948, p. 24). The inexpensive car price was so inextricably linked to standardization and the mechanization of the production process that in 1912 Henry Ford announced the Model T policy that "You can have any color you like so long as it's black" (Jardin, 1970, p. 83). No one complained.

Given the success of the Model T and Ford Motor Company, the concept of mass production, interchangeable parts, and the assembly line spread from the factory and

workplace to other areas and institutions of American society. The American education system also came to rely upon the concept of mass production and standardization. The single curriculum approach with its standardized textbooks, lesson plans, tests, and lack of options became the academic equivalent of the "any color so long as it's black" policy. Within the classroom there was little individualized instruction or adjustment for learning styles. All students were treated as alike as "pins or matches." The intent of the education system was to produce a graduate who had assimilated the same body of knowledge that all other graduates of the system had assimilated. In short, graduates were expected to be uniform and predictable and like a car part a graduate could be interchanged with another graduate with the same major.

The idea of an education system patterned on the assembly line and mass production worked as long as the student body was relatively uniform and as long as the expectations for graduates were relatively uniform. By the late 1980s, the system began to experience tremendous pressure to reform itself to meet the changing workplace and society and the challenges of the approaching new millennium. As a result, one of the major driving forces within the U.S. education system is a change from policies of uniformity and "one size fits all" to policies reflecting individualization and "the customer is always right."

A second driving force in the U.S. education system is demographics. Until the last few years, it was generally assumed that the student body of a given school was a homogeneous unit in terms of ethnic and academic background. The neighborhood school concept tended to rein-



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force this homogeneity. It was simply accepted that most students in a given classroom, school, or institution of higher education "fell within a normative range of skills, aptitudes, motivation, and preparation" (Plater, 1995, p. 27).

Today, however, homogeneity is less and less likely to be the situation in most schools, colleges, and universities. In fact, demographic changes have caused homogeneity to be replaced by extreme diversity in almost all facets of the student body. These demographic changes fall into four distinct categories.

The first category of demographic change affecting our education system is that our collective U.S. student body is now larger than it has been for several years and it will continue to grow. As a result, employment for teachers and instructors at all levels is also expected to increase by some 34% (U.S. Department of Education, 1993).

The second category of demographic change is in the make-up of our student body. The most noticeable area is in ethnic diversity. Presently, about one third of all Americans are persons of color and the proportion is expected to continue growing. Students of color currently represent 30% of the school population nationwide and the percentage of these ethnically diverse students is considerably higher in urban areas. One of the growing areas of concern, however, is that only 13% of the nation's teachers are individuals of color compared to the 30% of the student body. Of perhaps even greater concern is the fact that, in a recent survey, 30% of teachers with one year of experience said that their training had not prepared them to teach students from a variety of racial and/or ethnic backgrounds (Knopp and Otuya, 1995).

In addition to the ethnic and racial diversity, the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary population is showing greater academic diversity due in part to the mainstreaming of physically, emotionally, and learning-disabled students and increasing paths of access to higher education for lower ability students. In the not-so-distant past, differences in academic ability were dealt with by tracking or the separation of students into curriculum patterns where courses vary in content, teaching methods, classroom ambiance, and expectations. It was frankly rare to encounter learning disabled or lower ability students in a foreign language classroom which was perceived to be a domain for the

academically elite. More recent research into individual learning differences has suggested that grouping and tracking are generally ineffective means for addressing individual differences, and indeed may be harmful, for many students (Goodlad and Oakes, 1988). Thus, as we attempt to teach a second language to all students we too must learn to deal with the physically-, emotionally-, and learning disabled students who are in our classrooms.

The last category of change in our student body is in the students' expectations regarding the curriculum. As faculty members and administrators, we have generally assumed that we know student needs and objectives better than they. Based on this assumption, we have, therefore, made curricular decisions for our students. As I mentioned previously, the current trend in business and industry is to place the customer or consumer first. This trend is having far-reaching effects and is extending into other areas such as health care and government. Adults and students alike have become accustomed to having their needs and wants met in most areas of their life.

Therefore, students and/or their parents expect to have an influence on the curriculum and their classes. "While we may not be ready to think of students as customers, or even as purchasers of services, the students and their parents may well behave that way, exercising choices that seem unusual to faculty who are used to prescribing student behaviors" (Plater, 1995, p. 26).

In summary, there are four categories of change in our student population. The student body is larger, more racially and ethnically diverse, more academically diverse, and more insistent that the curriculum and teaching methods be designed to fit individual needs and desires.

Thus, at the end of the twentieth century, the major problem facing the U.S. education system including those of us involved with the teaching of world languages is that curricula and classroom techniques have not yet fully adjusted to these changes in demographics and society. Therefore, those of us in second language education need to ask ourselves what we need to do in order to succeed or even function in this new order. The answer is that we too must shift away from uniformity and standardization in our teaching practices and face the challenges that diversity and individualization bring to our programs

Fortunately, we have some guidelines to help us move in the appropriate direction. Some of our answers will come

from the national *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1996). The *Standards* have been very aptly subtitled: *Preparing for the 21st Century*. As most of you know, these national *Standards* were developed in the mid-90s and were released at the ACTFL Convention in 1996. These *Standards* take into account our changing society and the need to focus on diversity and individualization and are based on a statement of philosophy: I quote from that Statement of Philosophy.

Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are equipped linguistically and culturally to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical (p. 7).

It is, of course, one of the supreme ironies that, at the time when the profession has decided to attempt to teach a second language to all students, the concept of "one size fits all" is no longer a viable option.

What, then, are the options? Many of the options are provided by our *Standards* and the fact that they are organized around the FIVE Cs: COMMUNICATION, CULTURES, CONNECTIONS, COMPARISONS, and COMMUNITIES. As we look at each of these five areas, we will begin to see what we need to do and where we need to go as a profession.

The first standard refers to COMMUNICATION, that is the ability to communicate in languages other than English. The focus of this standard is new: communication is seen in its three modes: interpersonal, interpretive and presentational. It is a move away from the focus on the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing as isolated, independent competencies.

While all four skills are still to be taught, they will be taught as they are used in the real world—linked to each other. Thus, in the interpersonal mode students engage in conversations; that is, they alternately listen and speak. In the interpretive mode they read a variety of types of text and interpret those texts in oral or written form. Students also listen to spoken language or view video and film in the target language and interpret them. In the presentational mode students use the oral skill to give speeches or the

writing skill to prepare reports which an audience listens to or reads at a later time.

The CULTURES standard also provides us with a new focus. Culture is seen as the three Ps: perspectives, practices, and products. This three-dimensional focus will allow us to teach and learn about a culture in a global fashion rather than in the random, haphazard fashion we often currently use. It will also help us teach about the institutions, values, ideals, and mores of a society which will in turn allow students to understand the target culture on a deeper, more meaningful level. It should help eliminate stereotypes and develop sensitivity to the cultures we are teaching.

The standard related to CONNECTIONS suggests that we connect with other disciplines and acquire information by using the language we are teaching or learning. For example, students enrolled in a U.S. History class taught in English could learn more about a given topic such as the French influence on the American Revolution by researching that topic in the French language.

This research will allow that student to acquire a perspective that students studying the topic only in English will not be able to obtain. In addition, the student will be using the target language for a real-world purpose—to acquire information. It puts the study of a foreign language on a par with other disciplines within the curriculum since within the foreign language classroom we will now focus on content, not solely on form. It should be noted that the content-based curriculum of elementary language programs has been focusing on this CONNECTIONS standard for years.

The COMPARISONS standard concentrates on the development of insight into the nature of language and culture. It is the recognition that the study of a second language enables students to learn about the nature of language in general and helps them better understand their first language. Likewise, the study of a second culture and the accompanying exercises in cross-cultural comparisons help students understand the concept of culture and develop sensitivity to the target culture.

The final C refers to COMMUNITIES, the idea that students will participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world. The first part of this standard states that students will use the target language both within and beyond the school setting. Students will interact with speakers of the target language in person or through technology. The second part of the COMMUNITIES standards is

the one that I particularly like: Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enrichment and enjoyment. It acknowledges that the study of languages could be and should be FUN.

Clearly the national *Foreign Language Standards* do not reflect the status quo. They represent a criterion to strive for, something we hope to achieve. The *Standards* outline specific "Benchmarks" for students in grades 4, 8, and 12. These benchmarks will help states establish frameworks, districts establish goals and individual teachers establish unit and lesson plans.

Many states and local districts have already developed or are currently developing standards that are based upon or that correlate well with the national *Standards*. In most instances the philosophy upon which these state or local standards are based as well as the learning outcomes and benchmarks are comparable to those found in the national *Standards*.

As I have shown, one of the important trends for the twenty-first century will be the emphasis on standards-based foreign language programs. But what will a standards-based curriculum consist of? What will our materials look like? How and what will the individual classroom teacher teach?

Obviously, there will be a growing reliance on technology to provide both the materials and the medium for teaching and learning. In the learning scenarios that relate to the *Standards*, students learn the language by communicating via E-mail, by doing research on the World Wide Web, and by interviewing students in other cultures and countries via a satellite hook up.

Instructors teach the target language by obtaining materials from the Internet, by interacting with students and correcting assignments via E-mail or their own web sites, and by using television and distance learning technology. This is not a vision for the future. Such scenarios are already commonplace in many schools from kindergarten to post-secondary settings.

The advantages of technology are many. Distance learning allows schools in remote areas to link to each other and share in the teaching of third, fourth, and fifth-year language courses even though their enrollments are too small to warrant individual classes within each school. The Internet is an incredible resource for instructors and one that provides a continual flow of authentic, up-to-date materials at a very minimal cost. Students can regularly use the Inter-

net in the same way and for the same purposes that native speakers access the Internet in their own culture. Students can also communicate with "key-pals" in the target culture and use the language frequently. At our institution we frequently use e-mail and a type of list-serve in our upper-level classes. Students respond to a reading or question that we provide on the list serve and all students can read the responses and in turn provide their own opinions. In my upper-level Spanish culture and civilization course, I make use of a type of Web site on which we have posted hundreds of digitized slides and images that relate to Spanish culture and civilization. It provides a way for students to review the material outside of class and gives them access to materials that students in previous years did not have. In the upper-level language of business course that I will regularly teach and will teach again this spring, students have to prepare a case study-type report using research and data available only on the World Wide Web. In addition, other technologies are incorporated into our program. Our students in the beginning-level Spanish classes are using a CD-ROM that accompanies the main textbook; the CD-ROM contains a mystery story that they must solve in each lesson. Video, CDs, and laser discs are frequently used in all courses. I cite these examples because I am naturally proud of what is going on in our program but primarily to give you ideas for incorporating technology into your own courses. Sessions at this conference and discussions with colleagues at other schools and institutions should also provide you with additional ideas and models for curricular change.

As for the materials used in our language classrooms it appears that the role of the textbook will shift from being the driver of the curriculum to that of a resource manual. There will be increasing reliance on authentic materials provided by the Internet. Native speakers will serve as key pals or conversation partners via e-mail, web sites, satellite and other technologies not yet available to us. The curriculum will be a series of learning scenarios developed by the individual classroom instructor. These scenarios will be taught with a variety of materials and will culminate in a student-produced or created product in the target language.

With the aid of technology the curriculum does not have to be uniform in all foreign language classrooms. The *Standards* document lists learning outcomes and benchmarks that can be attained using a wide range of materials. Students can learn about narrating in the past by reading

newspaper articles, by listening to radio broadcasts, or viewing films. Likewise, they can produce narration in the past by filming their own TV news report, by writing in a diary or journal, or by creating a student newspaper. In all these scenarios the learning outcome is the same—the ability to narrate in the past; however, the methods and materials vary greatly.

As we focus on Standards-based teaching and consider the idea of K-12 language programs, we begin to realize that articulation is a vital concern. If students are to attain the benchmarks recommended at each level, they must be taught using a standards-based curriculum throughout their language exposure. This curriculum must be joined in a seamless articulation in which each level blends naturally with the next highest level. In addition, we must have longer and longer sequences of language courses available for students. The Standards document clearly advocates a well-articulated K-12 language program. If we want to establish such programs the key phrases that we need to have parents, school boards, counselors, and superintendents understand are “early start; longer sequences; and seamless articulation.” These phrases summarize well what the national Standards recommend.

Another requirement for the success of language programs of the future, is parental and community involvement in program design and support. A parent and/or community Advisory Board can provide the links to funding sources and help obtain the approval of school boards and administrators for language program change and development. For too long language teacher and programs have been perceived as elite and insular. If we want to obtain our place within the core curriculum, we need to change the perception. We need to become involved within the educational community. We need to engage in public relations work and publicize our programs and accomplishments. Often the best advocates for our programs are people outside the profession. It is fast becoming the norm for business, industry and parent groups to lobby for the inclusion of early start foreign language programs in local schools for many business leaders recognize that proficiency in a foreign language is a valuable skill for their employees to have.

A final suggestion for K-12 programs is for the secondary level to learn from the successes of elementary and middle school programs. As I present workshops in school districts and universities around the country, I am frequently

able to observe exceptional teachers and teaching. The most important lesson that I personally have learned from these observations came from a class taught by a secondary-level Spanish teacher who had begun her teaching career as a third-grade teacher. Her focus in the language classroom was very different from that of most teachers prepared to teach exclusively at the secondary level. She focused on global learning. She adapted her lessons to fit individual learning styles and needs. She was not at all textbook dependent. Her lesson plans incorporated a large amount of authentic materials from the target culture. Her semester curriculum was based on a series of learning scenarios that incorporated the teaching of vocabulary, grammar and culture and resulted in student projects. Her classroom was divided into several work centers where students could concentrate on the different language skills and practice the various modes of communication. The classroom was alive and full of energy. Her enthusiasm for the language was infectious; it was evident that the students were becoming independent language learners who enjoyed what they were learning and doing. Pre-service and in-service teachers alike could learn a great deal from elementary teachers in general and from successful instructors in elementary language or FLES programs in particular.

While the *Standards* were written for K-12 foreign language programs, it should be evident by now that much has to happen at the post-secondary level if the *Standards* are to become a reality in K-12 programs. In a word, the post-secondary curriculum has to change. The traditional college or university language program that focuses primarily on the teaching of literature will no longer be appropriate or viable for a number of reasons.

As students graduate from extended-sequence language programs, the students that we see in post-secondary language programs will be more proficient. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages has developed a new set of guidelines that are geared specifically to the younger learner, that is students enrolled in K-12 language programs. These *ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners* (1998), which were released at the ACTFL Convention in Chicago, are developmentally appropriate for the K-12 learner. The K-12 guidelines have several new features: they are arranged according to the three modes of communication: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational and they identify and describe only three performance

levels: novice, intermediate, and a new category called pre-advanced which parallels the Intermediate High level found in the adult Guidelines. These new K-12 Guidelines suggest that students who enter a language program in kindergarten and continue the study of that language through grade 12 can be expected to reach a pre-Advanced proficiency level in speaking. Such students will generally be able to narrate in the past, present, and future; they will be able to initiate, sustain, and close a conversation on a variety of topics and they will be able to function within the workplace.

As these students from an extended-sequence arrive at post-secondary institutions, we will need to change our courses and curriculum in order to meet their needs and expectations. These post-secondary students who feel that they are purchasing a service will demand courses that allow them to continue to use and improve their language skills. They want programs that combine their language and culture skills with business, economics, political science, anthropology, engineering and other professional areas. These well-prepared students do not want classes that focus exclusively on the teaching of literature for its own sake. However, they will enroll in courses that place the study of literature within its cultural context and focus on the reading of literature to aid the understanding of a society.

The second way in which post-secondary language programs must change is in the teacher preparation arena. If we are to prepare teachers for standards-based K-12 language programs, we need to concentrate on developing teachers with better language and culture proficiency. It should be self-evident that in order to prepare students for the pre-Advanced proficiency level, the instructors need to have higher than pre-Advanced language proficiency. The average proficiency level of foreign language instructors must be raised if we are to move forward successfully and improve our language programs. In fact, we really need to change our entire idea about teacher preparation; the formation of a distinguished teacher cannot occur solely within a pre-service teacher preparation program. We must view teacher preparation as a life-long process that begins within a pre-service teaching training program and that continues over time with in-service training and professional development. For foreign language teachers the in-service training and professional development should include immersion programs in the target culture designed to maintain and improve language and cultural proficiency.

The third way in which post-secondary language programs must change is within the Ph.D. programs. In order for undergraduate majors to change and better prepare graduates and teachers for the K-12 programs, the new professorate must have the skills to teach in these revitalized undergraduate programs. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to hire new Ph.Ds who have the knowledge, skills and competencies to teach in an undergraduate program that emphasizes advanced level language and culture, film, and professional language courses rather than the more traditional, literature-based curriculum of the past. In the United States most students enrolled in Ph.D. language programs are trained to teach and work in a research-oriented graduate language program. Such programs constitute a minority of the post-secondary institutions in this country. Thus, the vast majority of the new Ph.Ds trained to teach in graduate, research institutions will never teach in such institutions. They will, however, find jobs in undergraduate institutions that prepare undergraduate majors for K-12 teaching and the professional use of languages. Unfortunately, most of these new Ph.Ds that will be hired to teach in these undergraduate institutions are ill-equipped for that job; furthermore, many resent being there. It is no wonder, then, that the undergraduate programs are so slow to change. Even those of us that want desperately to change often cannot do so because we do not have the personnel to help us develop and teach the new courses.

As foreign language educators we must come to realize and accept the fact that each educational level is dependent upon the other educational levels for its success. Each successive level depends upon a lower level for the number and quality of the students that feed into it. In turn, the higher educational levels depend upon the lower levels to hire their teacher graduates. None of us can exist without the other; we are totally interdependent.

There are many signs that progress is being made in our profession. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages is engaging in a number of efforts to help bring about change in the profession. One of these efforts is a project entitled "New Visions" which is being developed in conjunction with the National Foreign Language Resource Center at Iowa State University. New Visions is a three-year project that will establish priorities and a strategic plan for our entire language profession. Currently, a steering committee has been established and is mapping out the details for a

Planning Meeting to be held in June 1999 near Atlanta, Georgia.

At this June 1999 planning meeting some 40 invited representatives will meet to outline our priorities and draw up an initial set of papers on the changes that need to occur in our profession. Those invited to the planning meeting will represent a broad cross-section of languages, language levels, language organizations, as well geographic regions, and issues of race, ethnicity, and gender. Additional people will be invited to serve as a Board of Reviewers for the documents and ideas that come out of the initial meeting. In June 2000 another meeting will occur to continue the discussions based on documents and ideas endorsed by the Board of Reviewers. The June 2000 meeting is open to all those involved in language education who wish to attend. Finally, during the ACTFL Conference in November 2000 the final document that outlines the priorities and the plan to achieve them will be released and sessions and workshops will be devoted to the New Visions Project.

Another area of development for foreign language education is the creation of guidelines for in-service teachers who wish to apply for Board Certification. Board Certification and certification tests already exist in a number of core subjects at a variety of levels. The program is an attempt to put educators on equal footing with other professionals such as doctors and lawyers who also must pass board exams in order to practice. Board Certification for teachers is, however, quite different that the Bar Exam or Medical Board Exams. Board Certification is not required for admission to the teaching profession; rather it is a title granted to the superior, experienced teacher. Board Certification recognizes that teachers develop along a continuum and that they improve through classroom experience and by completing professional development programs and advanced degrees. Board Certification is a type of acknowledgment and reward for superior teachers for having attained this advanced knowledge and skill in the class-room. Several states have already established Board Certification for experienced teachers and are providing bonuses to those teachers who attain Board Certification. Currently performance standards are being developed for foreign language teachers so that language teachers can also participate in Board Certification and be rewarded for it. The foreign language educators selected to be on the committee to develop the standards have begun their work; the process will take some two years

before it is completed. In the meantime, foreign language teachers can look forward to the day that their achievements after initial certification will be honored and rewarded.

As I stated earlier in this speech, the K-12 student population is increasing and as a result of these enrollment increases, the number of K-12 teachers must increase by some 30%. Combined with the growing number of students, we are faced with the retirement of an aging faculty. Because of retirements and enrollment increases, it has been estimated that we will have to train and hire an additional 35-50% of K-12 teachers within the next few years (U.S. Department of Education, 1993). It is imperative that a higher number of these new teachers represent the diversity of our growing student population.

Many states currently have some type of second language mandate at the secondary level; very few have a mandate at the elementary level. While these mandates vary widely in their requirements, they are having an effect. Across the country enrollments in our language classes at all levels are already increasing dramatically. We also know that the teacher shortage is already upon us. In 1997 JNCL, the Joint National Committee on Languages, conducted a survey about the availability of language teachers; of the forty states that responded, thirty-four said that were experiencing teacher shortages. On an anecdotal level, both at the beginning of this school year and throughout the year, I have received many calls from principals and superintendents desperate to fill their classrooms with language teachers, particularly Spanish teachers. Colleagues at other post-secondary institutions have reported a similar situation.

We are beginning to see an enrollment increase in our teacher certification programs as parents and students become aware of the need for language teachers and the accompanying career opportunities. Since most of us remember all too well the situation of the past decades with declining language enrollments and fears that instructors and programs would be eliminated, we should all be celebrating this change in our fortune. But even good fortune brings its own sets of problems.

Those of us in charge of language certification programs are quite concerned with the need to prepare increasing numbers of K-12 language teachers in the next few years. Because all students in certification programs are required to complete a semester- or year-long student-teaching experience, we need more and more placement sites and cooperat-

ing or supervising teachers. Prior to the student-teaching experience, most pre-service teachers must also engage in "practicums" in conjunction with their education courses. During the "practicums" the pre-service teacher observes an experienced classroom teacher for some 45 or 50 hours during a given semester. These practicums also require supervising teachers and placement sites. It is not an exaggeration to say that in Michigan we have reached a crisis state with regard to finding quality cooperating foreign language teachers and placement sites for practicum and student teaching experiences. We know that a similar situation exists in other states and regions.

In Michigan we are beginning to take action; the Michigan Foreign Language Association, the MFLA, is helping the teacher preparation programs in Michigan in their attempt to locate supervising or cooperating teachers for practicum and student teacher placement. The Board of Directors of the MFLA has recently approved a new award. In addition to the awards for outstanding foreign language teachers and educators, beginning next year, this association will present an award to an outstanding supervising teacher for his or her work in mentoring a teacher candidate. This is an action that can be easily duplicated within other state and regional language associations. If your local, state or regional language association does not yet have an award for outstanding cooperating or supervising teachers, I urge you to develop one. It is a simple, but effective method of rewarding supervising teachers and encouraging others to volunteer to become a cooperating teacher. I also urge all of you in this audience to participate in the development of our future language teachers by becoming a cooperating or supervising teacher. We need your help. We must all remember that we are in the positions we currently occupy because those who came before us were willing to invest time and effort in us. Our teachers, our professors, and our mentors wrote us letters of recommendation, helped us complete application forms, and guided us through the stressful job-search process. More importantly, for almost every teacher sitting in this room, another experienced teacher was willing to take on the responsibility of serving as a supervising teacher for you when you were a student teacher. A cooperating teacher gave up his or her classroom to each of you when you were a young and inexperienced pre-service teacher candidate. It seems to me that one of the best ways to return this favor is by volunteering to become a supervising teacher and thus

invest in the future of our profession.

As I complete this analysis of where we are and where we need to be going as a profession, I hope that I have left you with many suggestions and ideas. We are in a period of considerable growth and strength but the challenges are many. It is only by working together at all levels and with all languages that we shall be able to sustain our growth and solve our problems in the next decade, in the next century and into the new millennium.

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