

Making Sense of World Language Standards:

From Standards through Assessment to Daily Instruction

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	Standards	Assessments	Curriculum
National (ACTFL and language specific professional organizations)	<i>Standards for Foreign Language Learning</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication• Cultures• Connections• Comparisons• Communities (14 languages)	Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Novice• Intermediate• Advanced• Superior <i>K-12 Performance Guidelines</i>	
State (State department of education)	Most state standards based on national standards	May use national assessment instruments to gather state data	Guides to planning curriculum
Local (School district and classroom)	Use state or national standards to identify learning targets for units of instruction and curriculum goals for the sequential program	Teacher created assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning checks• Unit assessments (<i>Integrated Performance Assessment</i>)• Semester assessments	State standards put in context of local program: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades K-12• Grades 6-12• Grades 9-12

Proficiency Levels Needed in the World of Work

K-12 Performance Guidelines	Proficiency Level (OPI)	Functions	Corresponding Jobs/Professions	Who has this level of proficiency?
	Superior	<i>Discuss topics extensively, support opinions and hypothesize. Deal with a linguistically unfamiliar situation</i>	Interpreter, Accountant Executive, Lawyer, Judge, Financial Advisor	Educated native speakers; students from abroad after a number of years working in a professional environment
	Advanced High Advanced Mid Advanced Low	<i>Narrate and describe in past, present and future and deal effectively with an unanticipated complication</i>	University professor of foreign languages ----- Doctor, Sales representative, Social worker ----- Customer service representatives, Police officers, school teachers	Students with masters degrees or doctorates ----- Native speakers who learned Spanish in the home environment ----- Graduates with Spanish degrees who have lived in Spanish-speaking countries
Pre-Advanced Intermediate	Intermediate High Intermediate Mid Intermediate Low	<i>Create with language, initiate, maintain and bring to a close simple conversations by asking and responding to simple questions</i>	Aviation personnel, telephone operator, receptionist ----- Tour guide, cashier -----	Graduates with Spanish degrees who have not lived in Spanish-speaking countries ----- After 6 years of middle/high school, AP ----- After 4 years of high school
Novice	Novice High Novice Mid Novice Low	<i>Communicate minimally with formulaic and rote utterances, lists and phrases</i>	----- -----	----- ----- After 2 years of high school -----

From the paper *La Enseñanza de Español y Otras Lenguas Extranjeras en los Estados Unidos: Cantidad y Calidad* (The Teaching of Spanish and Other Foreign Languages in the United States: Quantity and Quality) presented at the II Congreso de la Lengua Española in Valladolid, Spain, October 18, 2001 by Dr. Elvira Swender of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

NOTES:

1. The levels indicated are minimal proficiency levels for specific job descriptions and have been established by subject matter experts from a variety of agencies, organizations and companies for whom ACTFL provides oral proficiency testing following an analysis of the linguistic tasks and the responsibilities of the positions.
2. The references to how long it takes to reach certain levels of proficiency were written specifically for the study of Spanish, a Category I language. Other Category I languages include Afrikaans, Danish, Dutch, French, Haitian Creole, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Romanian, Swahili and Swedish. For Category II, III and IV languages, one can expect that it will take longer to reach the same levels of proficiency.

Interpretive Communication

Interpretive Communication Is NOT	Interpretive Communication IS	Classroom Strategies and Activities to Develop Interpretive Communication
Translation	Understanding the gist and then deeper levels of details	Students receive sheet with simple illustrations for a story - out of order. Teacher reads story, holding up card with #1 written on it. Students listen and scan the illustrations to find the one matching what they are hearing. When identified, students write #1 on that illustration. Teacher keeps reading and simply holds up #2 when she starts to read that section of the story. Students continue to hunt for the matching illustrations; and so on to the end of the story.
Hunt for trivial details	A focused task (knowing the purpose for listening, reading, or viewing)	Summarize several news stories on the same topic.
Glossed readings; teaching all new vocabulary words first	Use of authentic materials	Write a conclusion to the story or article (before reading or hearing the original ending); then compare the real ending to student's own.
Reading, listening, or viewing in a vacuum	Use of author's perspective and cultural context to complete the interpretation	Write a personal reflection saying "what this means to me" and connecting the passage to other knowledge.
Reading word-for-word	Using context clues; hypothesizing to "get it" (predict, guess, use structural clues to get meaning)	* Draw illustrations to summarize a story read (each student has read one of the two or more stories provided for the class)

Presentational Communication

Presentational Communication Is NOT	Presentational Communication IS	Classroom Strategies and Activities to Develop Presentational Communication
Negotiated communication	One-way communication (requiring a higher degree of accuracy)	Leave a phone message
Random	Practiced, rehearsed, polished, edited (often using a script, rough draft)	Memorized dialogue, skit, or play
Unplanned	Organized (content and flow matter)	Graded rough draft (giving feedback on organization)
Speaking or writing in a vacuum	An awareness of audience (formal/informal; cultural context)	* Tell a story back to the person who drew its illustrations, summarizing the story (telling back a story different from the one you read)
Reliance on circumlocution	(may be) improved by using a bilingual dictionary or spell-check	Write brief descriptions of illustrations on a single topic (as preparation for creating a brochure or article)
Just talking or writing for the teacher	Maintaining attention of the intended audience	

Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal Communication Is NOT	Interpersonal Communication IS	Classroom Strategies and Activities to Develop Interpersonal Communication
Memorized dialogues	Spontaneous (and unpredictable)	Partner activity: Goal is to keep the conversation going on a single topic. Partners have an envelope of questions to pull out when they get stuck. At end of the time limit, student wants to be the partner who pulled out the fewest questions (i.e., sustained on own).
Turn taking	Following-up and reacting to show interest and understanding; maintaining the conversation	
Talking to the camera	Interactive body language: eye contact, gestures, face-to-face	Give each student a question on a piece of paper. Students ask someone else their question. After asking and answering their questions, partners exchange questions and find a new partner to ask/answer questions.
Interviewer asking all the questions	Helping each other (supply words, finish sentences/thoughts)	
Use of bilingual dictionary	Use of circumlocution	"I need ___ ": Partner pulls word out of envelope and says "I need something," and proceeds to describe it without using the word itself until partner says, "Oh, you need ___."
One-way communication	Two-way: an exchange of information, ideas, opinions; requiring negotiation of meaning, use of clarification strategies	* The story "re-teller" and the student who drew the summarizing illustrations work out any errors of the re-telling, and discuss the story, asking questions to get a fuller understanding of the story.
Overly concerned about accuracy before speaking	Focusing on the message	

THINKING ABOUT CULTURE

We can.....

- Teach and assess for knowledge about culture:
 - Who was Lao Tsu?
 - What is moo shu?
 - When did the Opium War begin?
 - Where is Xi'an located?
 - Why is the Great Wall important to Chinese history?

- Teach and assess skills about culture:
 - What do you notice when you see people greeting each other?
 - What kinds of questions would you ask a student in China about his/her school?
 - Compare the concept of "family" in China to the United States.
 - When you are invited to someone's home for dinner, what is an appropriate host/hostess gift?

- Teach and observe the development of positive attitudes related to culture:
 - Language used to compare two cultures
 - Observation rather than judgment
 - Willingness/interest in exploring other languages/cultures
 - Willingness/interest to engage in dialogues for understanding
 - Curiosity about other cultures
 - Appreciation for other cultures
 - Engagement in activities related to other cultures

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