

## Foundations of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines

### Workshop Description:

What is proficiency and how can I focus my instruction on helping my learners continuously develop and strengthen their proficiency? Examine the characteristics of the major levels of the [ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines](#) and identify what changes as learners move through the Low, Mid, and High sublevels across the Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced ranges of proficiency. Apply that understanding to analyze and adjust classroom tasks to guide learners to demonstrate the targeted level of proficiency.

### Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this workshop:

- I can describe the characteristics of the major levels of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines
- I can identify what counts to move from Novice to Intermediate to Advanced and beyond
- I can check tasks that I use for instruction or assessment to ensure they are appropriate for a specific level of proficiency
- I can identify implications of proficiency for my instruction and assessment of language learning

## Workshop Agenda (3.5 hours):

Section and Time	Focus Question and Content
Focus Our Learning  5 min.	Welcome!  We will review the day's agenda and establish meeting norms.
Section 1  15 min.	Focus Question: What is proficiency?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate to define proficiency</li> <li>• Personal Reflection: What role does this understanding of proficiency play in my classroom personally?</li> <li>• What are functions, text type, content &amp; context and communication strategies?</li> </ul>
Section 2a  65 min.	Focus Question: What are the characteristics of the major levels of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine the Major Levels of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines</li> <li>• Small Group Activity: Identify the major level that would match the language expectations of various jobs</li> <li>• Compare classroom-based performance and real-world proficiency</li> <li>• Unpack the sublevels of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, through definitions and examples of the four key components:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Functions</li> <li>○ Text Type</li> <li>○ Content and Context</li> <li>○ Communication Strategies (Comprehension/Comprehensibility)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Small Group Activity: Given the same prompt, generate conversations demonstrating proficiency at the Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced levels</li> </ul>

15 min.

BREAK

Section 2b  20 min.	<p>Focus Question: What are the characteristics of the major levels of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small Group Activity: Sort learners' responses on an Intermediate task to identify which demonstrate Low, Mid, and High in the Intermediate range</li> <li>• Personal Reflection: What do the major levels and sublevels of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines mean for me as I plan instruction or a unit?</li> </ul>
Section 3  60 min.	<p>Focus Question: How can I make sure classroom tasks match the targeted level of proficiency?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small Group Activity: When designing tasks for learners to develop or demonstrate proficiency, which elements of language performance really "count"?</li> <li>• Small Group Activity: Sort tasks into the major level targeted (Novice, Intermediate, or Advanced); create a list of characteristics for designing tasks targeting each level</li> <li>• Small Group Activity: Given a task targeting the Intermediate level, adjust the task down to the Novice level and adjust the task up to the Advanced level. Describe what you changed about the task to make it likely that learners will demonstrate the targeted level.</li> </ul>
Consolidate Our Learning  15 min.	<p>Focus Question: What are the implications of proficiency for my instruction and assessment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Reflection/Post: List one thing you want to consciously DO to develop learners' proficiency and one thing you want to consciously NOT DO to develop learners' proficiency.</li> <li>• Small Group Activity: What do you want to keep in mind about proficiency to help you design tasks appropriate for learners at the Novice, Intermediate and Advanced levels?</li> </ul>
15 min.	Q&A Time