

Guiding Learners to Higher Levels of Proficiency

Workshop Description:

What really counts to move along the proficiency continuum (from Novice, to Intermediate, and towards the Advanced level of proficiency)? What strategies are effective for developing proficiency using each Mode of Communication? Through the lens of the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements, unpack the elements of proficiency and what they mean for planning effective tasks. Experience and analyze a variety of examples from one sample unit of instruction. Identify one class that you are teaching and use that as a lens through which to apply today's learning. Guide your learners to develop the language functions and confidence to move to higher levels of proficiency.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this workshop:

- I can describe the characteristics of Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced levels of proficiency
- I can identify key language functions to focus on to guide learners to higher levels of proficiency
- I can design and/or adapt tasks to match Novice, Intermediate, or Advanced ranges of proficiency
- I can design tasks to develop what learners need to reach their next higher level of proficiency
- I can identify implications of proficiency for my instruction and assessment for language learning

Workshop Agenda (7.5 hours):

Time	Content
Focus Our Learning 20 min.	<p>Focus Question: What happens when we start with USING language instead of learning ABOUT language?</p> <p>We will reflect on the transition to performance-based, proficiency-focused instruction through the use of Can-Do Statements and Essential Questions.</p>
Section One 60 min.	<p>Focus Question: How do we describe and define proficiency?</p> <p>We will explore how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language learning relates to other life skills • proficiency is based on real-world use of language • proficiency differs depending on the mode of communication • learners can be motivated by proficiency
Section Two 30 min.	<p>Focus Question: What should I emphasize to guide learners to higher levels of proficiency?</p> <p>We will examine the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements, revealing the varied elements of proficiency and see examples from the same unit theme across Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced level ranges.</p>
15 min.	BREAK
20 min.	<p>Small Group Activity</p> <p>Examine how questions and answers relate to the Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced ranges of proficiency – and influence task design.</p>
30 min.	<p>Small Group Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissect a Can-Do Statement into its components (Function + Context + How Well)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience using these descriptions of proficiency levels to help design classroom tasks.
30 min.	<p>Small Group Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange descriptions of Interpersonal Communication from Novice Low through Intermediate High • Identify strategies to help learners move to the next higher level • Reflect on what learners need to develop to progress along the proficiency continuum and the implications for your teaching
60 min.	LUNCH BREAK
5 min.	Reconnect to Morning Session
Section Three 60 min.	<p>Focus Question: How can I design more effective tasks to develop my learners' proficiency?</p> <p>We will examine the differences between tasks in each of the three modes of communication (Interpretive, Interpersonal, Presentational), walk through the process of creating customized Can-Do Statements to align with the context of a unit theme, and experience sample tasks designed to develop proficiency through key language functions.</p>
20 min.	<p>Small Group Activity</p> <p>Adapt tasks to match a higher or lower proficiency level</p>
15 min.	BREAK
Section Four 35 min.	<p>Focus Question: How can I connect the three Modes of Communication to help learners "grow" their proficiency?</p> <p>We will use our sample unit to identify language functions</p>

	that learners need to develop to reach higher levels of proficiency, examine representative tasks to lead toward the unit's assessment of the Modes of Communication, and zero in on one lesson from the unit.
20 min.	<p>Small Group Activity</p> <p>For one range of proficiency, create tasks to develop specific language functions, using all three Modes of Communication.</p>
<p>Consolidate Our Learning</p> <p>30 min.</p>	<p>Focus Question: What are the implications of proficiency for my instruction and assessment?</p> <p>We will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How ACTFL proficiency levels compare to scores on proficiency exams such as IB and AP • Reflect on what learners need to be able to do to achieve a specific proficiency target and how they would be able to demonstrate they have indeed met this goal • Identify specific practices to guide learners to higher levels of proficiency.