

**Assessment Plan: Languages other than European Languages (French,
Spanish, Italian, and German) at California State University, Sacramento**
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I. Introduction

In 2005-2006, the assessment committees at Foreign Language Department got together and try to set up students' learning outcome. Kathy Moore, Professor of Spanish, wrote:

Students come to elementary and intermediate language courses with significant background knowledge about the world in which they live, and about their own interests and activities. The new language learning environment relies on this knowledge to use as the springboard to develop the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The culture of the language being studied is integrated from day one in every aspect of language study. Further, whatever the students may know about the culture of the language they are studying is continuously enhanced, refined, and corrected as they move through the language continuum. A global focus of the beginning and intermediate language courses is the connection to the National Standards – Communication, Cultures, Communities, Connections, and Comparisons – the ACTFL Guidelines and then, specifically, 3 – 5 student outcomes for each language course, 1A – 2B.

We adhere to the principles of second-language acquisition: the subconscious process of acquiring language through imitation and ear-training with an emphasis on communicative competence and the conscious process of language learning, focusing on learning the linguistic code and the literacy skills of reading and writing to monitor and edit output.

This document summarizes our department-wide attempt to articulate 1st and 2nd year foreign language programs.

II. Approach to Assess Languages other than European Languages (French, Spanish, Italian, and German)

Table 1 indicates three categories and the number of full-time weeks to achieve professional speaking and reading ability. The following information is from National Virtual Translation Center. The webpage is

<http://www.nvtc.gov/lotw/months/november/learningExpectations.html>

Table 1

Categories	# of full-time weeks to achieve professional speaking and reading ability
Category I: French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, etc.	23-24 weeks (575 – 600 class hours)
Category II: Greek, Hebrew, Russian, Vietnamese, etc.	44 weeks (1100 class hours)
Category III: Arabic, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese*)	88 weeks (second year of study in-country) (22000 class hours)
Other languages German	30 weeks (750 class hours)

* This web page notes: “Languages preceded by asterisks (e.g. Japanese) are typically somewhat more difficult for native English speakers to learn to speak and read than other languages in the same category.

* Lain and Punjabi are not in the list.

The section of lesson commonly taught languages in the California foreign language Framework (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/fl/cf/>) also states “Many people throughout the world speak such languages as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and

Russian.... However, progressing along the Language Learning Continuum in these languages can take longer than making progress in other languages because, in significant part, English speakers find it especially challenging to learn a language with a writing system that is completely different from that of English. Therefore, students may need extended study in the less commonly taught languages.”

Because of the difference in acquisition time, it is reasonable for languages other than French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish to set up a modified version of student outcomes. The student outcome in this document set *minimum* standards outlining what a student should be able to do with the language "on demand."

To set up student outcomes for languages other than French, Spanish, Italian and German, I did the followings:

- Followed the main framework that Kathy and Laurence drafted.
- Reviewed & Incorporated:
 - ✧ National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century. New York: ACTFL, 1999
- ACTFL Proficiency Guideline
- Oral and literacy benchmark created by the Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS), University of Oregon. This website presents oral and literacy benchmarks (generic and Oregon specific). These benchmarks are organized by the National Standard for Foreign Languages' 5Cs (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) and by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' (ACTFL) three modes of communication (Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational). Their web pages are:
Oral benchmark: <http://casls.uoregon.edu/genericoralbenchmarks.php>
Literacy benchmark:
<http://casls.uoregon.edu/genericliteracybenchmarks.php>
- Advanced Placement Japanese language Program – Professional Development for Japanese Language and Culture. 2005-2006 Workshop Material Draft (www.collegeboard.com)

III. Student outcomes for languages other than French, Spanish, Italian and German

Note: I stoke through the needed changes, and added some words, phrases, and sentences using [].

European languages – French, Spanish, Italian, German	Languages other than European Languages (French, Spanish, Italian, and German)
<p><u>1A:</u></p> <p>A. Students demonstrate that they are able to communicate primarily with formulaic speech to list, enumerate, identify, express courtesies, agreement, and disagreement focusing mainly on the present tense and the proximate future within the cultural context.</p> <p>B. Students demonstrate that they are able to begin to create and respond using the language in culturally appropriate ways.</p> <p>C. Students demonstrate that they are able to think critically by manipulating the basic structures of the language to develop meaning in listening, speaking, reading and writing within the cultural context.</p> <p>D. Students demonstrate a better understanding of the culture of the language they are studying through the</p>	<p><u>1A:</u></p> <p>Sections A - C are same as European languages. Some change was made in section D, and section E was added.</p> <p>A. Students demonstrate that they are able to communicate primarily with formulaic speech to list, enumerate, identify, express courtesies, agreement, and disagreement focusing mainly on the present tense and the proximate future within the cultural context.</p> <p>B. Students demonstrate that they are able to begin to create and respond using the language in culturally appropriate ways.</p> <p>C. Students demonstrate that they are able to think critically by manipulating the basic structures of the language to develop meaning in listening, speaking, reading and writing within the cultural context.</p> <p>D: Students demonstrate a better understanding of the culture of the language they are studying through the</p>

<p>cultural context of the language that forms the basis of their study, internet searches in the language and exploration of the perspectives, products, and practices of the culture.</p> <p>ACTFL Guidelines – 1A Level Students demonstrate their language ability from Novice Low to Novice Mid.</p>	<p>cultural context of the language that forms the basis of their study, Internet searches in the language and exploration of the perspectives, products, and practices of the culture.</p> <p>E: [Students recognize isolated words and phrases. Students scan for general meaning in semi-authentic texts or materials (menus, advertisements for travel abroad). (In Japanese) students recognize 46 <i>hiragana</i>, 46 <i>katakana</i>, and 58 <i>kanji</i> characters.]</p> <p>ACTFL Guidelines – 1A: Novice Low ~ Novice Mid.</p>
<p>1B Level</p> <p>A. Students demonstrate that they are able to communicate in culturally appropriate ways using more complex structures while relying heavily on acquired formulaic language.</p> <p>B. Students demonstrate that they are able to understand and respond to simple statements and questions and participate in informal conversation within the cultural context.</p> <p>C. Students demonstrate that they are able to exchange personal information,</p>	<p><u>1B:</u> Sections A, B, & C are the same as European languages. In the section D, the following was added.</p> <p>A. Students demonstrate that they are able to communicate in culturally appropriate ways using more complex structures while relying heavily on acquired formulaic language.</p> <p>B. Students demonstrate that they are able to understand and respond to simple statements and questions and participate in informal conversation within the cultural context.</p> <p>C. Students demonstrate that they are able to exchange personal information,</p>

<p>fulfill routines needs in the four language skills within the cultural context.</p> <p>D. Students demonstrate reading and writing skills that reflect their emerging oral language within the cultural context.</p> <p>E. Students continue to demonstrate a better understanding of the culture of the language they are studying through the cultural context of the language that forms the basis of their study, internet searches in the language and exploration of the perspectives, products, and practices of the culture.</p> <p>ACTFL Guidelines – 1B Students demonstrate their language ability from Novice Mid to Novice High</p>	<p>fulfill routines needs in the four language skills within the cultural context.</p> <p>D: Students demonstrate reading and writing skills that reflect their emerging oral language within the cultural context. [(In Japanese) students recognize 145 kanji characters. Students scan for the general meaning in authentic or semi-authentic materials (e.g. signs, directions, schedule, timetables, personal communications, and short essays), and produce simple text and documents in the target language.]</p> <p>E: Students demonstrate a better understanding of the culture of the language they are studying through the cultural context of the language that forms the basis of their study, Internet searches in the language and exploration of the perspectives, products, and practices of the culture.</p> <p>ACTFL Guidelines – 1B: Novice Mid ~ Novice High.</p>
<p><u>2A:</u> A. Students demonstrate that they are able to communicate more spontaneously using complex strategies and techniques to engage in casual conversation to express ideas and opinions on familiar topics, make plans, and focusing mainly on the present and past tenses within the cultural context.</p>	<p><u>2A:</u> A. Students demonstrate that they are able to communicate more spontaneously using complex strategies and techniques to engage in casual conversation to express ideas and opinions on familiar topics, and focusing mainly on the present and past tenses within the cultural context.</p>

<p>B. Students demonstrate that they are able to create highly accurate frequently used structures using vocabulary that is culturally appropriate.</p> <p>C. Students demonstrate that they are able to think critically and analyze linguistic structures by manipulating the language through listening, writing, speaking and reading culturally authentic texts.</p> <p>D. Students will be able to demonstrate that they are able to reflect and evaluate cross-cultural differences through the cultural context of the language by way of internet searches in the language and exploration of the perspectives, products, and practices of the culture.</p> <p>Level: Intermediate low</p>	<p>B. Students demonstrate that they are able to create highly accurate frequently used structures [add “accurately” here] using vocabulary that is cultural appropriate.</p> <p>C: Students demonstrate that they are able to think critically and analyze linguistic structures by manipulating the language through listening, writing, speaking and reading culturally authentic texts [through listening and speaking].</p> <p>D: Students demonstrate that they are able to reflect and evaluate cross-cultural differences through the cultural context of the language by way of internet searches in the language and exploration of the perspectives, products, and practices of the culture [through the cultural context of the language that forms the basis of their study, Internet searches and exploration of the perspectives, products, and practices of the culture].</p> <p>E: [(In Japanese) students can recognize 250 <i>kanji</i> characters. Students scan for the general meaning in authentic or semi-authentic materials (e.g. memo, notices, short essays), and extract detail from simple sentences in various texts (memos, invitations, letters, short compositions). They can produce text and documents using complex sentences.]</p> <p>Level: Novice High ~ Intermediate Low</p>
<p><u>2B:</u></p>	<p><u>2B:</u></p>

A. Students demonstrate that they are able to communicate in complicated situations and to attempt to discuss topics beyond immediate and personal needs such as current events, politics, business, cultural and moral issues, history and customs. Developing accuracy focuses on sustained control of culturally appropriate language that relies on narrations and descriptions in the present tense and past, as well as anticipated or hypothetical events.

B. Students demonstrate that they are able to continue to create and respond (accurately) using the language in culturally appropriate ways.

C. Students will be able to demonstrate that they are able to think critically, analyze linguistic structures, and reflect on and evaluate cross-cultural differences by developing cohesive written narratives and expository prose through culturally authentic texts.

A: Students demonstrate that they are able to communicate ~~in complicated situations and to attempt to discuss topics beyond immediate and personal needs such as current events politics, business, cultural and moral issues, history and customs.~~ [more spontaneously using complex strategies and techniques to engage in casual and formal conversation to express ideas and opinions on familiar topics. Developing accuracy focuses on sustained control of culturally appropriate language that relies on narrations and descriptions in the present tense and past, as well as anticipated or hypothetical events.

B. Students demonstrate that they are able to ~~continue to create and respond (accurately) using the language in culturally appropriate ways~~ [change to: create highly accurate frequently used structures using vocabulary that is culturally appropriate).

C. Students demonstrate that they are able to think critically, analyze linguistic structures, ~~and reflect on and evaluate cross-cultural differences by developing cohesive written narratives and expository prose through culturally authentic texts.~~ [change to: by manipulating the language through listening, writing, speaking and reading culturally authentic texts.]

D. Students develop a strong understanding of the culture of the language by way of internet searches in the language and exploration of the perspectives, products, and practices of the culture.

Level: Intermediate high

D. Students demonstrate that they are able to reflect and evaluate cross-cultural differences through the cultural context of the language ~~by way of internet searches in the language and exploration of the perspectives, products, and practices of the culture~~ [through the cultural context of the language that forms the basis of their study, Internet searches and exploration of the perspectives, products, and practices of the culture].

E: (In Japanese), students recognize 317 *kanji* characters. Students scan for the general meaning in authentic or semi-authentic materials (e.g. stories, essays), and extract detail from compound/complex sentences in a cohesive paragraph in various texts (letters, short compositions, short essays). They begin to produce text and documents using 3 writing system in a cohesive paragraph.

Level: Intermediate Low ~ Mid

IV. Other useful information

1. ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guideline:

Generic Characteristics of Each Level. As indicated above, the Guidelines define four main levels of language proficiency: Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior.

The characteristics of each level for speaking are as follows.

- **Novice** - The Novice level is characterized by the ability to communicate minimally in highly predictable common daily situations with previously learned words and phrases. The Novice level speaker has difficulty communicating with even those accustomed to interacting with nonnative speakers.
- **Intermediate** - The Intermediate level is characterized by the ability to combine learned elements of language creatively, though primarily in a reactive mode. The Intermediate level speaker can initiate, minimally sustain, and close basic communicative tasks. The speaker can ask and answer questions and can speak in discrete sentences and strings of sentences on topics that are either autobiographical or related primarily to his or her immediate environment.
- **Advanced** - The Advanced level is characterized by the ability to converse fluently and in a clearly participatory fashion. The speaker can accomplish a wide variety of communicative tasks and can describe and narrate events in the present, past, and future, organizing thoughts, when appropriate, into paragraph-like discourse. At this level, the speaker can discuss concrete and factual topics of personal and public interest in most informal and formal conversations and can be easily understood by listeners unaccustomed to nonnative speakers.
- **Superior** - The Superior level is characterized by the ability to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, professional, and abstract topics. Using extended discourse, the speaker can explain in detail, hypothesize on concrete and abstract topics, and support or defend opinions on controversial matters.

For more detail description: Speaking (Revised 1999-PDF) (PDF file)

<http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3325>

2. Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Executive Summary (PDF) (PDF file)

<http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3324>